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NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT
RIDERS COUNCIL

2 BROADWAY, 16TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10004
(212) 878-7087 • mail@pcac.org

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Testimony to the Transit Committee Recognizing the Improved Subway Performance, the Hard Work Behind It And the Need for Funding

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Good Morning, I'm Ellyn Shannon speaking on behalf of the New York City Transit Riders Council. The Council would like to recognize New York City Transit's hard work and dedication under the direction of Andy Byford that has helped us see a 32% improvement in on-time performance. While there is still a very long way to go, which President Byford openly acknowledges, it's important to take a moment to value the improving state of the subway. Transit's ability to identify root causes of delays, and to safely speed up trains and address timer calibrations have all contributed to the system-wide improvements.

However, we must also recognize that it will be impossible to sustain these improvements without adequate funding for the operating and capital budgets. Every New Yorker has a vision of the kind of system we want to have, and the Fast Forward Plan puts that vision within our grasp. Only the legislature, the Governor and the City can make it happen.

Next year's nearly \$500 million operating deficit and the current hiring freeze create problems. We have seen it before. Important vacancies go unfilled, critical trainings don't happen, and important accountability departments shrink. The fare increase must go forward and sustainable funding must be found for the Operating Budget.

Funding the Capital Program's Fast forward plan is equally as important - The major delays show, that fixing the signals and crumbling infrastructure in Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan and the Bronx at a more rapid rate is critical to reducing every day slowdowns and major delays. We hope the elected officials are watching and listening and working hard to identify stable funding streams, including Congestion Pricing. We'll be in Albany this week, to help them understand how important this funding is. Thank you.