



2 Broadway, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10004
(212) 878-7087 mail@pcac.org

GERARD P. BRINGMANN CHAIR (SUFFOLK COUNTY)
LARRY RUBINSTEIN VICE CHAIR (NASSAU COUNTY)

NASSAU COUNTY
BRYAN PERANZO

SUFFOLK COUNTY
SHEILA CARPENTER · MARILYN N. POTERSON

LISA DAGLIAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
BRADLEY BRASHEARS PLANNING MANAGER
SHEILA BINESH TRANSPORTATION PLANNER

March 9, 2021

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We are writing on behalf of tens of thousands of beleaguered Long Island Rail Road commuters to ask for your immediate intervention to restore service to previous levels on the LIRR. The “service adjustments” we were told to expect are actually major cuts that are more than an inconvenience, they present safety concerns due to overcrowding conditions that can lead to virus spread – and tension among riders that is making a bad situation worse. The schedule that has been imposed looks more like a May 2020 shutdown schedule than a March 2021 schedule that should reflect the region’s reopening.

As LIRR commuters, we’ve been facing death by a thousand cuts: in December, the LIRR announced a 10-percent reduction in service that was implemented on January 25th. At the February MTA Board meeting, we learned of additional “right sizing” that would be implemented on March 8th. We took a wait and see approach to those changes as we understand the important infrastructure work that will be undertaken during some of the outages. However, what we’ve seen is people waiting for trains that don’t come, packed, standing-room-only trains, commutes extended by anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours – and a clear threat that people will abandon the Rail Road and get into their cars, perhaps for good. These cuts send exactly the wrong message at exactly the wrong time. They will drive people away when we need them to come back.

The same essential workers who were riding the trains a year ago are still riding today: are they any less essential now? They should not be subjected to service cuts of this magnitude a year after they began their heroic daily journey. Neither LIRR workers nor riders should have to face the overcrowded conditions that could put them in jeopardy. We know that additional federal funding has come to the MTA that can help stave off these cuts, and that restoration of funding is being discussed as part of the state’s FY2022 budget. The \$15 million that would be saved by this latest round of cuts – while not insignificant – could certainly be found within these funds.

Elected officials from across the state and in Washington D.C. have called for restoration of LIRR service. We are asking you to add your voice and fix this problem now. Riders are counting on you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gerard Bringmann

Gerard Bringmann
Chair,
Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council

Cc: Pat Foye, Chairman and CEO, MTA
Phil Eng, President, Long Island Rail Road