



PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

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MTA Central Business District Tolling Program
Public Meeting: The Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island
Testimony by Bradley Brashears, Planning Manager, PCAC
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Good morning! I am Bradley Brashears, Planning Manager at the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC). I am also an avid runner from Queens, where I begin my day early alongside increasing car traffic heading into Manhattan's core – making my run even more difficult and dangerous. As I play roulette with cars every morning, the more I realize the need for congestion pricing now, more than ever. Congestion pricing is the only feasible way to substantially raise funds for the MTA without raising rider fares, bringing in a steady stream of money for key improvements for the region's transit system. Especially in the wake of low ridership thanks to COVID-19 and worsening climate change, the billions of dollars that congestion pricing will bring could not be more important for riders across the system.

Particularly relevant this Climate Week, the environmental benefits of congestion pricing cannot be understated. As we tragically learned from historic storms and flooding this summer, the MTA needs infrastructure funding as it's faced with the herculean task of building a resilient regional transit system that can withstand the forces of extreme weather. We already know that efficient, reliable transit is the way to get drivers out of their cars; congestion pricing will bring in the billions of dollars we need to repair our transit while also improving air quality, decreasing traffic around the five boroughs, and making New York a less car-dependent city.

Outer borough residents have infinite reasons to be excited about congestion pricing. Thousands of essential projects – and jobs – will rely on the \$15 billion it will bring in when bonded, including modernizing signals on 13 subway lines, building new elevators in 44 more stations, adding thousands of new buses and train cars, repairing century-old infrastructure, and expanding bus service. Constant bumper-to-bumper traffic can be a thing of the past, bringing a better quality of life and faster bus commutes to communities not just in the CBD, but all over the city. Riders deserve reliable and frequent service across our subways, buses, and commuter rail. Finally, thanks to congestion pricing, the 21st century transit system New Yorkers desperately need is in sight.