



PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

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**PCAC Testimony to the MTA New York City Transit/MTA Bus Committee
Delivered by Lisa Daglian, Executive Director, PCAC
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Good morning, I'm Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC. As we continue to see pandemic ridership records shatter, and trains and buses get more crowded, we're also continuing to hear the unfortunate – but earnest – message, "We're running as much service as we can with the crews we have available." Now that Transformation has ended, it's time to rebuild.

We're hoping for an update on how many of the 700 retirees you've reached out to have taken you up on your offer to return and help get riders where they need to go. Also, how is the new class of hires coming along? How is the revised training going? Have you found further ways to safely condense the schedule and get people on faster?

We know that crew shortages are not a New York-specific issue, and we've seen incentives offering thousands of dollars for new hires in other states. Is the MTA considering that? Bringing in experienced retirees for a limited time is a great way to get more people in and up to speed quickly for a rapid roll-out, but in the long run it's essential to develop a strategy for retention and long-range staffing.

The same is true for all of Transit and the MTA. Succession planning is essential for the health of the agency and benefit of riders. Operations planning, Maintenance-of-Way, Arts for Transit, Communications, Finance – and definitely HR – all need robust staffing. It's imperative that the agency be able to fully function and that it doesn't fall into a hole in a future downturn or emergency situation.

It's great that riders are getting back on board and we're looking forward to even more people returning to work, school, and whatever life will look like in our next normal. Ensuring that there is enough service to get us where we need to go is key to getting people back on transit. Having enough people to run the buses and trains that make our region run is a critical part of that equation. Clearly, funding is going to be an ongoing issue, and we urge you to support operations funding at the federal level to help fund the hiring you need to do and the service we need now, and into the future. We will continue to support you in whatever way we can.