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Supporting the Region's Riders With Investment in Transit January 5, 2022 (revised January 6)

Governor Hochul's focus on regional transit investment will make a real difference in the lives of riders. Projects like Third Track, Penn Access, and an improved Penn Station are investments in our future, as is her commitment to congestion pricing to get it all done. The good news that Second Avenue Subway phase 2 is moving into the engineering stage, just one day later, shows that the momentum is real. These priorities will help reshape our regional transit maps to expand service to those who don't currently have it.

We're also elated that Governor Kathy Hochul is taking action that may finally breathe life into what was conceived of as the Triboro Line, and will now move forward as the Interborough Express. Increasing connectivity between the outer boroughs is a vital step to creating the 21st century transit system our region and riders deserve. Directing the MTA to begin environmental review and consider the best transit option for the corridor is an important next step in the process that could benefit hundreds of thousands – if not millions – of New Yorkers. Connecting Brooklyn and Queens by using miles of underutilized existing rail infrastructure will be transformative in increasing the mobility and equity of our region. More than 900,000 riders in the outer boroughs who live along the line will have access to hundreds of thousands more jobs and opportunities, while helping address the inequities highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It will save countless people countless hours of travel.

Of course, there is much to consider during the next steps of the process, including: can the proposed Interborough Express line connect to whichever mode is chosen for access to LaGuardia Airport, whether it be subway, bus rapid transit, or even a new AirTrain? How will the line interact with the Penn Access project, and with Amtrak's Hell Gate Bridge and schedules? As the Bronx is no longer part of the plans for this Interborough Express, how can the MTA best improve connectivity between the Bronx and Queens? Whether it's with a direct bus route, a stop through Penn Access or further extension of the Interborough, Bronx riders should be considered.

Throughout this process, riders deserve transparency to ensure that the MTA is held accountable and can deliver this transformative rail infrastructure to the outer boroughs as quickly as possible.