**MTA Board Meeting Testimony**

**Investments in the MTA and Riders**

**By Lisa Daglian, PCAC Executive Director**

**January 26, 2022**

Good morning, I’m Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC. Janno, congratulations on your first official Board meeting as Chair, and welcome Commissioner Velez. We look forward to working with you.

Today you will be voting on a number of contracts that will support, maintain and improve the system for riders on subways, buses, the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North. They include supporting the second phase of the Second Avenue Subway, improving connecting services for Metro-North, maintaining, inspecting and repairing LIRR and Metro-North escalators, professional services for SEQRA or NEPA related to congestion pricing…and the list continues.

These investments are critical for providing safe and reliable service, bringing trains to underserved areas, and for state of good repair and the overall well-being of the transit network that is so important to our region. Together with hard work, improvements in technology and a focus on customer service, investments like these have paid off with record OTP for both Metro-North and the LIRR. We’re seeing a similar return on subways, with all lines back in action and a reduction in delays.

More importantly, however, you have a social contract to ensure that riders are safe while using the system. We are encouraged by the commitment from the Governor and the Mayor and the NYPD and MTAPD and the MTA to work together to do just that. They say if you always do what you’ve always done, you always get what you always got. It’s time for something new. The concerted approach to information-sharing and deployment we heard about are needed to make us feel – and be – safer. We’re looking forward to seeing how SOS will work across the system, and how local providers will be engaged. The blueprint for success should have many pages, and many parties. It should not have many fingers pointing at each other when something goes wrong, but a single point of responsibility per region. The state and city should staff up across agencies, including at the MTA, to show riders that they are the priority.

An investment in riders is an investment in the transit system and in the entire region. That’s the vote of confidence we need to see. Thank you.