



PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

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

GERARD BRINGMANN CHAIR · MTA BOARD MEMBER · LIRRCC CHAIR
ANDREW ALBERT NYCTRC CHAIR · MTA BOARD MEMBER
RANDOLPH GLUCKSMAN MNRCC CHAIR · MTA BOARD MEMBER

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KARA GURL RESEARCH & COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATE
JESSICA SPEZIO ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Testimony to the NYC Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Transportation Equity
Lisa Daglian, Executive Director, PCAC
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Greetings, I'm Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC. Created by the State legislature, PCAC is the MTA's official rider advocacy organization. Thank you for holding this oversight hearing today. February 4th was Transit Equity Day, but really, shouldn't every day be transit equity day?

Mass transit drives a more equitable city; but we have not yet gotten where we need to be. Transit is essential for our city's recovery. It needs to be safe, reliable, affordable and accessible.

A safe system is one that everyone feels comfortable riding without fear. Not everyone can afford another option. We support the Subway Safety Plan and its holistic approach to getting services to people in need. We'd like to see more funding in the budget for mental health crisis response and much-needed housing.

Affordability is also critical for a more equitable system. We applaud your commitment to Fair Fares and baselining \$75 million a year. We agree more money is needed, as is increasing outreach so everyone eligible knows about it. We urge the city to consider changing the eligibility criteria to the NYC poverty level, to more accurately reflect the cost of living here. The MTA's fare pilot programs – Atlantic Ticket, City Ticket and OMNY fare capping – are designed to make transit more affordable. We hope to work with you to promote their use and expansion, including our Freedom Ticket proposal that includes free transfers to subways and buses.

Making the system more reliable is key to getting people where they need to go, when they need to get there. That's really true for those in subway deserts who rely on buses. We support the city's pledge for 150 miles of new bus lanes and busways by the end of 2025, along with the Streets Plan commitments. Enforcement is key, and we support legislation to allow the city and MTA to place cameras where they're needed. The MTA's Borough Bus Redesigns are now underway, with Queens up next. We'll be participating in upcoming workshops and urge our Queens representatives and residents to do the same.

But for riders who take long bus trips to the subway, inaccessible stations only add insult to injury. The City's \$3 billion capital investment – and congestion pricing – will support critical accessibility improvements.

Thank you.