**MTA NYCT Committee Testimony**

**“Riders Buoyed by New Subway Safety Initiative”**

**By Lisa Daglian Executive Director, PCAC**

**October 24, 2022**

Good morning, I’m Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC.

Last week was filled with news of horrific crimes in the subways, and unsurprisingly, riders are concerned about their safety underground. That’s reflected in survey responses that show that personal safety and security is their number one concern, and fewer people behaving erratically would encourage more riders to get back on board.

That’s why we were buoyed by Saturday’s announcement about the new Cops, Cameras and Care initiative. Getting riders where they need to go safely is job 1, and by essentially doubling down on funding and adding not just more police patrols and unarmed guards near turnstiles, but changing the way police are deployed, including adding more MTAPD in the mix, and also increasing services, help and beds for those in need, the Mayor, Governor and MTA have shown that rider safety is their #1 priority.

No doubt about it, random attacks and subway shovings by people with mental illnesses are downright scary — but they're also not what the majority of us experience everyday. Still, it's critical that riders' perception of crime and safety matches the reality, and continuing to focus on this issue by increasing funding and support demonstrates that commitment. Since the launch of the SOS program on January 6th, followed by the Subway Safety Plan, we've begun to see improvements but clearly more needs to be done. We're seeing that 'more' with dedicated resources that focus not just on fighting crime, but also getting help for those in need. The fact that there is strong teamwork putting the needs of riders first is key to making it successful — that teamwork in itself almost a first. We look forward to seeing continued progress to get more riders back on board and our city and region back on track.

Thank you.