



NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT
RIDERS COUNCIL

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EnABLEing Buses (and Riders) to Move Faster! NYC Transit Committee Testimony

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

Although a little late, I'd like to recognize our heroes on wheels. March 18th is Transit Driver Appreciation Day, an annual event to celebrate public transit vehicle operators. Speaking on behalf of the New York City Transit Riders Council, we think that every day should be Transit Driver – Transit Operator – Appreciation Day. Thank you for your service!

We are glad to see increasing ridership on subways and buses; it's a trend we hope continues as more people go about getting to their business – and pleasure – by transit. Safe, clean, reliable and frequent service will keep bringing New Yorkers back onboard and encourage our neighbors and visitors to venture back as well. Keeping riders safe – as the numbers bear out – will hopefully continue the virtuous cycle of rider return. Increasing service frequency will convince even more people to get back onboard – funded once financial doomsday has been headed off. We know there are heady and heartening negotiations underway in Albany that will affect every rider.

We're urging that even as the future of the MTA's financial surety is being discussed, there is also movement to make the ABLE program permanent and expand it to include other violations. Comptroller DiNapoli pointed out last week that: *MTA bus speeds are among the lowest of any major transit system nationwide, with average speeds systemwide only surpassing nine miles per hour in five months between January 2019 and January 2023... recent improvements in bus lane violation enforcement may...help to improve bus speeds.*

Your own survey found that improving wait times for buses would increase rider satisfaction, and shorter wait times would encourage people to ride more often. Increasing ticketing of bus lane violations, blocked bus stops and double parkers would, well, be just the ticket and enABLE buses – and all traffic to move more quickly. Talking to you, emergency vehicles! Those tickets work: recidivism is unbelievably low, with only 5% of violators committing more than two violations. It would mean we'd be able to say, "If you're not a bus, stay out of the bus stop AND if you're not a bike, stay out of the bike lane!"