**MTA Board Meeting**

**Riders Are Counting on The State to Fund the MTA, Send Thanks in Advance**

**By: Lisa Daglian Executive Director (PCAC)**

**April 26, 2023**

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

On Monday, I said that I was optimistic we’d have a budget by today. Apparently, I was overly optimistic (though the day isn’t over yet!). So, to our elected officials: please, don’t forget transit riders as you put the finishing touches on the state’s FY24 spending plan. We rely on the MTA to get us where we need to go safely, reliably and affordably, but to keep doing that, the MTA needs ongoing, dedicated, and recurring operating funding.

I know we’re all hoping it’s wrapped up in the next day or two so we can get back to other critical matters, aside from playoff fever, such as wondering when the FHWA will finally send over the notice of legal sufficiency and move congestion pricing closer to the finish line. We’ll all breathe a little easier – literally – once it’s in place and besides, those R211s and the next phases of the Second Avenue Subway won’t pay for themselves!

I do want to thank the Governor, Speaker and Majority Leader – and all of our friends in Albany – for ensuring that funding the MTA was a key part of this year’s budget discussions. The MTA also deserves thanks. Janno, you’ve made it a mission to make our elected leadership know that transit is as essential as the air we breathe. The strong leadership and work ethic at every level of the organization is sending the message that funding transit won’t throw good money after bad, it will support the millions of riders across the region who count on it.

On behalf of our Councils, I would also like to say thank you for the personal electric vehicle policy that was discussed on Monday. We look forward to working with you to let riders know it exists and that it’s important for everyone’s safety to follow it.

Onto OMNY. Your renewed focus of looking at the next phases as a major project is welcome: the future of fare payment across the system is OMNY and we need it in place sooner, rather than later. Just like the budget.

Thank you!