**Testimony to the**

**Metropolitan Transportation Authority**

 **on Proposed Fare Increases**

**June 2023**

Good evening. I am Karen Hamilton, a SE Queens resident, and lifelong transit rider.

I am speaking on behalf of the NYC Transit Riders Council.

We recognize the efforts of Governor Hochul and the state legislature prevented a five  and a half percent increase.

We understand planned, incremental increases are needed for good financial health and continuity of services.

We realize this 4% increase is happening in post COVID environment, with      Inflation, reduced peak ridership and different commuting patterns.  We understand increases can present financial hardship to riders.  While there will be an increase in fare costs, riders will see increases in midday, evenings, and weekend service on lines with off-peak growth. Attracting riders with safe, frequent, and reliable service is important to the system’s recovery. Improvements funded with congestion pricing revenue will help ensure those goals. Riders need to see transit as a good value financially.

We advocate more creative and flexible fare offerings to encourage ridership.

We support the proposed OMNY rolling seven day weekly fare capping over the current fixed schedule and the introduction of a monthly fare capping pilot.

We support the lower $1 proposed increase to the weekly Metrocard.

We support rolling Atlantic Ticket into City Tickets as long as the option to purchase a weekly ticket with included transfer to subways and buses remains. The weekly version is vital to commuters not directly served by subways.

We support raising eligibility to Fair Fares to 200% of the federal poverty level and expanding Fair Fare discounts the NYC commuter rail stops. We support increasing outreach and simplify the application.

We support the continued efforts to make the subway and commuter rail stations ADA compliant.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for considering the remarks expressed.