**MTA Capital Program Committee Meeting Testimony**

**A 21st Century Transit System for our 21st Century Region**

**By: Lisa Daglian, Executive Director, PCAC**

**June 26, 2023**

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

You’re doing a tremendous amount of work, as we saw in some detail in the Transit Committee meeting. Today’s announcement about the plan to move forward with improvements to Penn Station that focus on the station and the riders now adds to the focus on investing in transit and the millions of people who depend on it.

Accessibility projects (come on Mets-Willets Point!), new signals and equipment, investing in the basic infrastructure that supports the system and expansion projects like IBX and Penn Access are essential to ensuring that we have a 21st Century system for our 21st Century region. But money makes these projects go around and that truly highlights the importance of the funds that Congestion Pricing will bring.

As we await an announcement of its approval, any day now, we still hear from our neighbors in New Jersey who decry its potential effect on them. To the contrary, a better MTA will make for a better commute for New Jersey-ites and Connecticut-ians, not to mention the increasing number of regular riders on subways, buses, Metro-North, LIRR and Staten Island Rail.

We applaud your focus on building quality projects that will make a difference in the lives of riders, but urge you to keep your eye on the bottom line and encroachment of red ink and delays, and any quality-related issues.

We ask that you consider whether there are capital approaches to combating subway surfing — innovative ways to prevent these horrific and growing life and death deeds.

Thank you.