**Testimony to the**

**Metropolitan Transportation Authority**

**on Proposed Fare Increases on behalf of Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council**

**June 2023**

My name is Rosalind Clay Carter. I live in Larchmont and am a regular rider on the New Haven line. I am speaking on behalf of the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council.

If it weren’t for the Governor and the state legislature, we would be having a very different conversation. Because of their bold and overdue action, the MTA is looking at a more certain economic future for the coming years. We thank our elected officials for recognizing the needs of the people by financially supporting transit as the essential service it is.

Who likes a fare hike?? Yet we recognize that supporting the system with smaller planned increases is critical to keeping it in good financial health – and running reliable service to show for it. Even with a fare increase, transit will continue to be more affordable and typically more time efficient than driving, especially once congestion pricing is implemented.

Transit is the key to a more sustainable region and healthier environment. Improvements funded with congestion pricing money will make for a smoother ride, and adding more creative and flexible fare offerings will further encourage drivers to get out of cars and onto transit. The Metro North Railroad Commuter Council will continue to advocate for more, including ensuring that Senior and Disabled fares apply at all times of the day.

We strongly support capping the cost of monthly ticket fares for commuters living the farthest from New York City at $500.

We support the 4.5% increase on weekly and monthly tickets that would still be at a lower cost than pre-pandemic because of the 10% discount implemented last year.

We support capping any ticket increase greater than 6% at a maximum increase of $0.50 per trip.

We also support rolling Atlantic Ticket into CityTicket, but the newly expanded CityTicket must include the option to purchase a weekly ticket that allows transfer to and from subways and buses. Removing the weekly takes away opportunity from people who need it most— instead, it should be expanded so that Metro-North riders within the city have access too.

Transit is essential to our region, our economy, and our environment. With proper investment, we’ll continue to see improvements on Metro-North and around the system. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for considering our input.