**MTA Transit Committee Testimony**

**Better Service and Faster Buses: Riders Need a Fordham Road Busway!**

**July 17, 2023**

Good morning! I’m Kara Gurl, Planning and Advocacy Manager at the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC.

A few weekends into the first round of subway service improvements, we’re thrilled to see what’s possible with more investment from the State. The weekend frequency increases on the G, J, and M are already making a difference— as a regular weekend G train rider, I have noticed shorter waits. We can’t wait to see the next rounds of off-peak service increases that better reflect changing commute and travel patterns.

Bus service is also critical to a thriving city and region. The expansion of ABLE in this year’s budget will prove to be transformative in speeding up buses around the five boroughs. It’s clear that cars, trucks, deliveries, and other vehicles blocking buses are the single biggest obstacle slowing down bus riders. ABLE and expanded enforcement must be partnered with dedicated busways and bus lanes, including on Fordham Road. Bronxites deserve faster bus service on one of the busiest bus routes in the borough. According to NYC DOT, buses on Fordham Road traveled at an average speed of 6.3 miles per hour, and Bx12 speeds have declined over the last decade since regular bus lanes were installed—at some areas, buses crawl at less than 4 miles per hour. That’s slower than a chicken and many of the Bronx Zoo animals!

It's clear that DOT’s new watered-down proposal will not provide the speed improvements that Bronx riders need and deserve— we need to see a busway on Fordham Road. Whether you’re headed to the Bronx Zoo, the Botanic Garden, or the many businesses nearby, transit is the best way to get there—and most people already use transit to patronize small businesses! We urge Mayor Adams and Commissioner Rodriguez to move forward with the original Fordham Road Busway proposal.

We also hope the City will further expand Fair Fares eligibility in upcoming years, to 200% of the federal poverty level. Expansion from 100% of the federal poverty level to 120% is a start, but it does not go far enough— we’ll keep advocating until more New Yorkers in need can qualify. Thank you.