**MTA Transit Committee Testimony- Treat Riders with Real Bus Lanes, Don’t Trick Them with Empty Paint Cans and Empty Promises**

**October 23, 2023**

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

Next week is Halloween, but instead of being treated to a smoother, faster trip, riders on the Bx12 were tricked into thinking that some curbside paint was going to sweeten their lives. Simply put, they were pranked. The visions of cars and trucks firmly parked in the clearly painted Bx12 bus lanes are not apparitions, they’re the real deal. It’s time for Mayor Adams and Commissioner Rodriguez to admit it: their arguments against a busway on Fordham Road were all hollow. They’ve painted themselves into a corner.

In July, we testified that buses on Fordham Road traveled at an average speed of 6.3 miles per hour, according to City DOT. Bx12 speeds have declined over the last decade since regular, painted bus lanes were installed, and at some points, buses crawl at less than 4 miles per hour. That’s slower than a chicken and many of the Bronx Zoo animals! It’s time for the city to stop balking and make real progress for the tens of thousands of daily Bx12 riders who are looking for a faster trip, not a slow slog.

In fact, riders across the city deserve to move faster than chickens. We appreciate the work you are doing at Transit, together with transit workers, to move people quickly and safely around town. Now it’s time for the city to meet the Streets Plan mandate.

It’s particularly important that riders know they’ll have reliable transit when congestion pricing comes online next year – and during the increasingly common hundred-year-storms we’re seeing. Investing in our subway and bus network means enhancing resiliency for the future, but also ensuring that the means to traverse the rails and roadways is unimpeded: for buses, that means busways and bus lanes, not empty paint cans and empty promises.

It's incredibly rewarding to see riders getting back on board; they should be rewarded with the fastest, most reliable trip. Not everyone lives near a subway – buses are the workhorse of the transit system. They should be going as fast as thoroughbreds, not left in the painted dust by chickens.

Thank you.