



PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS
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Riders Deserve More Fare Incentives! Testimony to the MTA Joint LIRR and Metro-North Committee February 26, 2024

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

Last month, we learned the results of the Fall 2023 Customers Count Survey. We were intrigued—but not surprised!—to see that on both railroads, better fare incentives are one of the top items to improve to increase overall satisfaction. Better fare incentives were #1 on the list for Metro-North riders and #2 for LIRR riders!

The good news: PCAC knows just how to make that happen! We have three proposals that would give riders the gift of lower fare options—and hopefully could be funded this year by the State, City, and OBTA funds, respectively.

First, extending the half-fare Senior and Disability discount to the morning peak—the only time when this crucial discount currently does not apply. This is a common-sense expansion that would show Seniors and disabled riders that their contributions to the workforce are valuable.

Second, expanding Fair Fares to the LIRR and Metro-North within New York City. Fair Fares has helped riders on subways and buses afford the fare, and it's time for that to apply to the commuter railroads that run through low-income riders' backyards. We'd also love to see Fair Fares eligibility raised to 200% of the federal poverty level—the current 120% is too low for so many riders who have trouble making ends meet and affording the fare.

Third, creating a Weekly CityTicket with transfers to subways and buses. We're so thankful for the recent expansion of CityTicket. Now that riders can benefit from lower commuter rail fares within the city 24/7, more people than ever are taking advantage of the option. Adding a transfer option to subways and buses is a critical step to a more integrated transit system, where riders can use subways, buses, and the commuter railroads on one CityTicket.

Riders made their voices heard, and they want more fare discounts and incentives. We're working with our elected leaders to make it happen in this year's budget. Thank you!