**Congestion Pricing Testimony**

**By: Kara Gurl**

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

I’m here today with one simple message: the VAST majority of people ride transit into Manhattan, and they need congestion pricing. Millions of people from around the five boroughs, Long Island, Westchester, and beyond (and yes, even New Jersey!) depend on our trains and buses to get them in and out of the CBD.

Point blank, most New Yorkers cannot afford to own, or regularly drive, a car. It's not at all unreasonable to ask those with the privilege of owning their own private vehicle to pay for the negative impacts they inflict on New Yorkers— fumes and pollution, unsafe streets and roads, constant noise, and congestion at all hours of the day.

We’ve already seen the consequences of entitled traffic-lovers attempting to delay this critical law. Signal upgrades, accessibility improvements, transit expansions, new train cars and buses, and vital State of Good Repair work has already been delayed.

Who do those delays impact? They harm millions of riders just trying to get around the way real New Yorkers do it: on trains and buses. The majority of them don’t have the spare time to take off from work and spend hours at public meetings to speak in support of transit funding, but they are the very people who need investment in better transit.

The people who keep our city running— working class people just trying to get by— are not the same people fighting congestion pricing here tonight.

The proposed tolling structure includes rational exemptions and discounts for people who still must drive, including people with disabilities and low-income frequent drivers. Crossing credits directly into the CBD will help reduce toll shopping and lower the cost for many.

Congestion pricing will fund a better transit system. It’s quite literally the law— it already passed, and we’re at the very end of a decades-long debate, public input, and thorough environmental review process. It’s time to get it over the finish line without further delay, so riders can finally see investment in our transit. Thank you.