**MTA Capital Program Testimony-**

**Critical Transit Upgrades Depend on Congestion Pricing**

**March 25, 2024**

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

The CBTC update is like looking into the future of a modern subway system – we like what we see, and we want to see more! Of course, we may not even see next steps on some of the touted projects any time soon without Congestion Pricing. For anyone who likes slow, unreliable service that’s good news. For the rest of us, it’s another indication that Congestion Pricing can’t come soon enough.

The smorgasbord of improvement opportunities for transit, the LIRR and Metro-North, including the decidedly less sparkly but definitely critical State-of-Good-Repair work, will disappear like Cinderella’s coach at midnight without Congestion Pricing.

There is no Plan B for the $15 billion hole that looms large – and none of the naysayers have come up with viable alternatives. And the longer the delays, the more the projects will cost when they come to fruition.

We joined many of our partners in advocacy last week at the East New York LIRR station to call for station upgrades to be included in the next Capital Plan. The station is in dire need of investment, from accessibility to connectivity and lighting. We’re glad to see Broadway Junction will receive much-needed accessibility improvements, but it’s important that the East New York station is included in the equation.

But without Congestion Pricing, accessibility improvements at so many other stations will be put on hold. We’re impressed at the rate of elevator and escalator upgrades around the system lately, and riders with disabilities can’t afford further delay to full ADA accessibility. So many stations still need to be made accessible—hello, Mets-Willets Point!

Congestion Pricing will transform our transit and region. Without it, we’ll see the death spiral of investment delayed and ridership return halted. Let’s get it over the finish line this Wednesday and in court this month. Thank you.