**“A More Integrated, Affordable Transit System:**

**Possible with OMNY and Mobile Technology”**

**Testimony to the Joint Committee on the LIRR and Metro-North**

**May 20, 2024**

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

For the last few months, PCAC has been working to make more affordable, creative, and common-sense fare discounts a reality around the MTA region. From CityTicket Weekly with transfers to Subways and buses, to extending the Senior and Disability discount to the morning peak, to expanding Fair Fares both through raising eligibility to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and applying it to the commuter railroads within New York City, we know that making transit more affordable is a crucial way to expand equity and improve transit.

That’s also why, last October, we released our latest report called Integrate, Simplify, and [OMNYvate](https://pcac.org/app/uploads/2023/10/Integrate-Simplify-and-OMNYvate-Full-Report.pdf)—a vision for using the technological advances that come with OMNY to make fare policy work for every rider on every system—from Montauk to Grand Central to Wassaic. As OMNY continues to gain ground on Subways and buses, we see enormous potential for similar technology to be employed on the LIRR and Metro-North so riders around the entire region can benefit from creative, multi-modal fare options. Call it OMNY, call it whatever you please, just answer the call!

You’ve heard us talk about CityTicket with transfers to Subways and buses month after month, and year after year— PCAC has been on this hill since 2004. OMNY paired with mobile ticketing provides a golden opportunity to give riders discounts and transfers across modes, encouraging people to ride more and showing that the MTA truly is one unified transit network. The name “One Metro New York” says it all, but regardless of the name, someday, riders should be able to take the Railroad to the subway— and even to a Citibike, the ferry, PATH, Bee-Line or NICE bus, if they choose— with fares and discount options that incentivize them to use transit without thinking twice.

A more integrated, flexible, and affordable transit system is within reach, allowing more people to get on board. We’re thrilled to hear more about the MTA’s progress at today’s meeting and look forward to the day “One Metro New York” is fully realized. Thank you.