**MTA Joint Committee Testimony**

**"LIRR and Metro-North Riders Need Upgrades (and Funding!)"**

**July 29, 2024**

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

We heard earlier today about the next Capital Plan. State of Good Repair for the railroads is a major priority for riders, particularly when it comes to rolling stock. We were glad to see that rolling stock upgrades and state of good repair are a similarly high priority for the MTA in the 2025-2029 Capital Plan. LIRR commuters are fed up with the M-3s—they’re sometimes quite literally held together by duct tape and sharpies. It’s no secret that the mean distance between failures of these ancient rail cars trails the newer fleet, with the exception of diesel trains that also need upgrades.

Riders desperately need new (and more) train cars—this will help improve service, reduce delays, and create an all-around better transit experience on the railroads. And while we’re eager to see M-9s in the next capital plan, we need them sooner rather than later.

Funding delays caused by Governor Hochul’s pause on congestion pricing hurts the hundreds of thousands of riders depending on these upgrades. Ridership is coming back, and we need investment that keeps up so that overcrowding and delays don’t increase.

We also hope to learn more soon about the service plan to keep riders moving when East River Tunnel work begins. This work is important, but it’s also important to get ahead of service outages and be overly communicative with riders about alternative ways to get around.

We’re glad to see ongoing schedule tweaks on the LIRR, this time for Oyster Bay commuters. Continuing to listen to riders and making adjustments to schedules is the key to improving satisfaction.

The next Capital Plan will likely include some exciting, crucial projects that will improve transit for railroad riders. Now, we need dedicated, recurring revenue for the next plan in addition to congestion pricing for the current plan. Thank you.