**Joint LIRR Metro-North Committee Testimony**

**44 New Dual-Mode Locomotives and New PCAC Fare Report**

**December 16, 2024**

Good morning. I’m Jack Connors, Research and Communications Associate at the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC.

It’s great to see 44 new dual-mode locomotives coming to the rescue in the LIRR’s diesel territory. With $1.5 billion coming to the LIRR from congestion pricing – plus new desperately needed M9As in the MTA’s proposed five-year Capital Plan, New York is poised to make the largest investment in rolling stock in MTA history.

This would not be possible without Governor Hochul and the Legislature, who have made unprecedented investments in capital projects and operations.

In this year’s New York State Budget, we hope to see this trend continue. We’re proposing five fare incentives that should be implemented in tandem with congestion pricing and this year’s fare adjustment. We call them “carrots.”

Our “Rider-First Fare Agenda” would make New York more affordable, address fare evasion, and overall simplify fare collection and payment for employees and riders alike.

First, PCAC recommends creating a **weekly CityTicket** with available discounted transfers to New York City Transit. One and a half million CityTickets were sold in 2023, generating $8.1 million in revenue. Let’s build on this success.

Next, there are too many neighborhoods served by the LIRR and Metro-North where cost is a barrier to access. We must **expand Fair Fares to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and to the 39 commuter rail stations in New York City**.

Across the railroads, we hope to see a **“mid-kid” discount** for twelve- to seventeen-year-olds riding with an adult, and finally allowing seniors and disabled riders to use their discounts in **the A.M. peak**.

With congestion pricing and next year’s bi-annual fare adjustment on the horizon, now is the time to give New Yorkers their money and time back. Our “Rider-First Fare Agenda” ensures all riders can access the fastest transit available to them; tackling our affordability crisis head on by making fast, clean transit more affordable for all New Yorkers, especially families and seniors. Thank you.