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

As state budget season comes to a close—hopefully soon—the time to fully fund the 2025-29 Capital Plan is now or never. Whether it’s through expanding the Payroll Mobility Tax, reinstating the Stock Transfer Tax, instituting a package tax, or another combination of the dozens of funding options we evaluated in our report called “Take Your Pick,” riders deserve investment. We encourage Albany to choose funding options that don’t disproportionately burden low-income New Yorkers or New York City, as the benefits of transit investment support our entire region and state. Riders can’t afford to see our Capital Plan cut or rejected again, especially when the bulk of this plan is essential state of good repair work, accessibility upgrades, and signal revamps.

PCAC also strongly rejects USDOT’s ongoing attempts to kill congestion pricing. Every month, the benefits have become more and more clear—and the worst-case scenarios that opponents like Sean Duffy continue to fearmonger still haven’t materialized! In fact, quite the opposite. Business is up traffic is down and transit riders and drivers are already reaping the benefits. We fully support the MTA’s lawsuit against the administration’s feckless attempts to bring back traffic and congestion, this time by threatening to pull even more funding. The feds should put down their swords and learn to upload the correct documents next time.

Lastly, with the economy and affordability issues front and center for so many New Yorkers, now is the time to expand fare discounts around the region. PCAC’s Rider-First Fare Agenda lays out five common-sense ways to make sure that all New Yorkers can afford transit:

* Expand Fair Fares to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and to the Railroads within New York City;
* Ensure that Seniors and disabled riders can use their discount on the Railroads during the morning peak;
* Create a Family Fare that includes 12- to 17- year olds, who are currently forced to pay the full adult fare;
* And create a Weekly CityTicket with transfers to subways and buses within New York City.

As we continue the transition to OMNY, investing in transit affordability will pay off in the long term by encouraging more riders to get on board. Thank you.