



# PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

2 Broadway, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10004  
(212) 878-7087 [mail@pcac.org](mailto:mail@pcac.org)

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JACK CONNORS RESEARCH & COMM. ASSOCIATE

JESSICA SPEZIO ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

## **A “Fare” Shake for Riders Testimony to the MTA Board July 30, 2025**

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

Today you'll discuss biennial fare changes. PCAC has long supported these predictable and incremental increases, critical to funding operations of our essential transit network.

We've seen what happens when funding the system becomes an afterthought. Look at SEPTA, bracing for a more than 20% fare increase and huge service cuts; NJT, hit last year with a 15% increase; and the proposed 10% increase for Connecticut riders. Wouldn't it make sense for it to be consistent with the Metro-North increase?

No one likes a fare hike, but the late Richard Ravitch showed us that smaller, planned increases are critical to keeping the system in good financial health and maintaining good service.

There are also ways to lessen the blow. You've heard us talk about them regularly, some might say ad nauseum.

- Let's celebrate ADA 35 by finally allowing disabled and senior riders to use their discounts during the A.M. peak on the railroads. It's only fair.
- Make the successful CityTicket even better by bringing back the CityTicket Weekly, with free transfers to subways and buses, and having it be the first option that comes up for intra-city travel.
- Create a “mid-kid” fare so 12–17-year-olds don't pay the full adult fare on the railroads, to make traveling by train as a family more affordable than driving.
- Raise eligibility for Fair Fares to 200% of the federal poverty level. It's something Mayor Adams can — and should — do immediately, including funding it on the railroads within the city.

There are plenty of opportunities to enhance affordability, even in the midst of a fare increase. Expanding fare capping is a prime example, and we look forward to more opportunities across the system, and more clarity for riders on how it works.

Thanks to the Governor and Legislature, and your stewardship, we've come a long way from the fiscal cliff. We'll comment on the proposals you raise today and look forward to a "fare" shake for riders.

Thank you.