**Family Fare Expansion is Another Win for Riders**

**Joint LIRR Metro-North Committee Testimony**

**September 29, 2025**

Good morning. I’m Brian Fritsch, Associate Director at the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC.

New dual-mode locomotives will allow commuters and leaf peepers alike to see the Hudson Valley’s beautiful foliage faster and 85% cleaner. This is complemented by five new Super Express trains flying from Poughkeepsie to Grand Central in under 90 minutes. It’s great to see more and more of these rider-friendly options.

Come January, senior, disabled, and Medicare-eligible riders will be able to access these faster trains for an affordable price thanks to the closing the of the restriction that prevents them from using their discounts in the morning peak. We are very encouraged by the new plan to expand Family Fare to 12 to 17-year-olds for $1 to make taking the railroad cheaper than driving for families. PCAC has advocated for both of these changes for many years, and we are thrilled to see them moving forward.

With on-time performance above 95%, it’s easy to see why both railroads continue to hit post-COVID ridership records. The fare change provides an opportunity to build on this record ridership by better serving riders in subway deserts like Southeast Queens. CityTicket has saved New Yorkers over $100 million driven all-time ridership highs at city railroad stations – some of the only stations to surpass pre-COVID ridership. We continue to urge the development of a CityTicket Weekly, with transfers to subways and buses included in the price.

It’s time to seize on this success by allowing city rail riders to benefit from the cost savings of weekly or even monthly ticket options, the same options suburban riders have. Creating a single City Terminal Zone across both railroads would bring the railroads, now under the same roof at Grand Central, under the same fare structure. New proposed day passes should apply to both railroads, encouraging regional travel in addition to traditional commutation.

Thank you.