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'Tis the Season to Communicate Upcoming Fare Changes Joint Committee Testimony December 15, 2025

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

I had the pleasure of riding Metro-North to and from the city twice over the Thanksgiving holiday and I'm looking forward to taking it again over Christmas. With record on-time performance and travel times faster than Amtrak, it's no mystery why more and more New Yorkers are opting for the New Haven Line over I-95 traffic – and the same goes for the Long Island Rail Road.

I was surprised that, after logging well over four hours on the New Haven Line, I didn't encounter any information on screens or at Grand Central Terminal about the fare policy changes set to take effect January 4th. We also voiced those concerns in a letter to the board and leadership last month and were pleased to see that you've since launched tabling events across the MTA service territory. That said, more forthright communication is needed on digital screens, around stations, and to the press. Some of the changes will require riders to change their ticket-buying habits, so it's important to communicate these changes more clearly.

Victories for riders like expanded Family Fare to 12-17-year-olds and half-fares in the A.M. peak for senior, disabled, and Medicare eligible riders deserve their moment in the sun. So too do day-passes and the much narrower ticket validity window that together fundamentally change the ticketing model of the railroads.

With so much going for the railroads, every effort made to familiarize riders with the upcoming changes now is a down payment on more satisfied customers in 2026. 'Tis the Season to Communicate Upcoming Fare Changes! Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year to you all. Thank you.