

# New York City Transit Riders Council

2 Broadway, 16 Fl., New York, NY 10004 • 212/878-7087 • Fax 212/878-7461  
E-mail: [mail@pcac.org](mailto:mail@pcac.org) • World Wide Web: <http://www.pcac.org>

Andrew Albert - *Chair*  
Michael Sinansky - *Vice Chair*

*Executive Committee*

William K. Guild  
Stuart Goldstein  
Marisol Halpern

Christopher Greif  
Sharon King Hoge  
Trudy L. Mason

Scott R. Nicholls  
Edith M. Prentiss  
Burton M. Strauss, Jr

William A. Henderson – *Executive Director*  
Ellyn Shannon - *Associate Director*  
Angela Bellisio – *Transportation Planner*  
Bradley Brashears – *Transportation Planner*  
Karyl Berger – *Research Associate*  
Deborah Morrison – *Administrative Assistant*

**Testimony of the New York City Transit Riders Council  
To the Board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
On Proposed Fare Increases  
Baruch Performing Arts Center, Mason Hall, Manhattan, New York, NY**

**December 1, 2014**

Good evening. I am Trudy L. Mason the Manhattan Borough President's representative on the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC). I reside on the Upper East Side of Manhattan and consistently use all modes of public transportation throughout the MTA region.

The NYCTRC is one of three New York State legislatively mandated councils that make up the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC). The NYCTRC met to discuss the fare proposals and the following reflects our thinking:

The fare proposals that are the subject of this hearing contain less severe increases than those of the past and we appreciate the positive concerns of the MTA in formulating them. These fare proposals represent the inevitability of the fare increase that will occur as the cost of providing services rises. However, funding all MTA components including New York City Transit must be accomplished in a way that is fair to riders and takes into account those who are most heavily burdened by fare increases.

Therefore, we believe that a fundamental principle of MTA funding is that those who benefit from our public transit system should share in paying for its operation and upkeep. While this includes subway, bus and commuter rail riders, it should also include motorists, business and real property owners. All who rely on the vibrant economic engine that is the MTA region should realize it is only made possible because we have an extensive and efficient public transportation system.

However, we are concerned that these proposals to increase the fare only affect riders and will continue to shift the burden of funding the MTA onto the system's users. This strikes us as being patently unfair because there are no commitments of increased funding from other stakeholders.

Riders have kept their commitments to financially support the MTA system. However, this structure which supports the MTA is constantly eroded by continuing threats to MTA funding streams, such as the use of what is supposed to be "dedicated transit funds" to meet New York State's general obligations.

MTA riders already pay the highest percentage of operating expenditures of any public transit users in the nation. In 2012, the last year for which national data were available, this figure was 53.2%, compared with 33.2% for systems nationally. Subway and bus riders pay 52.6 % of operating expenditures, while subway riders alone pay a stunning 73.2%. The MTA's proposals presented here reinforce an increase in the proportion of the cost that is borne by riders.

Since we have to choose only between the specific proposals before this Board, we believe that regular users of the system should be less disadvantaged by a fare increase. It is for this reason that we prefer Proposal 1, where the base fare increases from \$2.50 to 2.75, and keeps the bonus concept, rather than Proposal 2, in which the base fare stays at \$2.50, but all bonuses are killed.

While there is no difference in the cost of time-based MetroCards between the Proposals, the roughly one-half of MTA riders who benefit from the MetroCard bonus, especially low income persons who have difficulty paying for weekly or monthly cards, would be harmed by Proposal 2. Those who would seem to benefit most from Proposal 2 would be mostly casual users including tourists, other visitors, and those who only occasionally ride subways and buses.

We strongly urge this Board to consider the interests of its best customers and preserve and expand the bonus incentives that are provided to encourage riders to use the system.

Therefore, we clearly support Proposal 1.

Thank you for your attention to the views of the New York City Transit Riders Council.

<b>Fare Type</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposal 1</b>	<b>Proposal 2</b>
Base MetroCard Fare/ Local Bus Cash Fare	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$2.50
Bonus	5% with \$5 purchase	11% with \$5.50 purchase	No Bonus
Effective Fare with Bonus	\$2.38	\$2.48	\$2.50
Single Ride Ticket (base MetroCard/Cash Fare plus 25 cents)	\$2.75	\$3.00	\$2.75
Express Bus Fare	\$6.00	\$6.50	\$6.00
Cash MetroCard with Bonus	\$5.71	\$5.86	\$6.00
30-Day MetroCard	\$112	\$116.50	\$116.50
7-Day MetroCard	\$30.00	\$31.00	\$31.00
7-Day Express Bus Plus MetroCard	\$55.00	\$57.25	\$57.25
Access-a-Ride Fare	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$2.50