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**Testimony of the New York City Transit Riders Council to the  
Board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
on Proposed Fare Increases.  
College of Staten Island Center for the Arts, Williamson Theater  
2800 Victory Boulevard, Staten Island, NY  
December 3, 2018**

My name is Bradley Brashears and I am representing the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC). The Council is part of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC), which was established by the New York State Legislature in 1981 and is the official voice of NYC Transit riders.

Every day, more than 33% of Staten Islanders endure commutes that are over an hour. We understand that a fare increase is likely necessary to keep the city's vital transit system functioning, but there must be a guarantee of **No Service Cuts**. Service cuts would make these commutes even longer and more untenable. Staten Islanders already face fewer transit options and unique commuting challenges that need to be considered in any fare decisions. The selected option must offer the fairest deal for transit's most frequent customers.

In August, Staten Island's express bus service was redesigned to better connect residents to Manhattan job locations. With much rider input, NYC Transit has continued to make adjustments by restoring some stops, adding new routes, and tweaking existing routes to match ridership demands. Additional options for the North and West shores must be considered as population and jobs grow. Staten Islanders need more service to get into the city and around and through the borough to employment centers, not less.

Clearly, a reliable, sustainable funding source is needed to fill the MTA's looming and substantial budget gap. New revenues must be identified to keep the system in a state of good repair and to fund new transit options and routes to keep the borough competitive. While Congestion Pricing is absolutely a part of this sustainable funding package, it is just a drop in the bucket of what's needed. The MTA cannot possibly dig its way out of this financial morass with a one-pronged approach. We strongly support the battle to identify and secure sustainable MTA funding sources, in addition to a minimal fare increase. The system is the lifeblood of the city and must be appropriately funded. Thank you!