



PERMANENT CITIZENS
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**PCAC Testimony Before the MTA Board
By Lisa Daglian, Executive Director
August 26, 2020**

Greetings, I'm Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC).

This board meeting is being convened to discuss the MTA's finances in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know the news is bad – and will only get worse if desperately-needed federal funds don't come through. Without the billions of dollars needed through the end of 2021, you will be forced to take difficult actions including deep service cuts, reduced cleaning, substantial fare increases, harmful layoffs, and a significant reduction in the capital program.

We're all in this fight together. Millions of New Yorkers rely on the city's subways and buses and the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North to get to work – jobs that support our region's recovery and are helping rebuild our economy. As we move into our next normal, it is critical that safe and sufficient service is available to everyone who needs it.

To us, that includes a plan to return to 24/7 subway service. The overnight closures to remove homeless and thoroughly clean cars and stations have been in place since May. With milestones and metrics rightly being the cornerstone of the state's reopening, we urge similar publicly disclosed metrics for restoration of overnight service. If there's a plan for reopening gyms, there should be one for reopening the subway. And since the majority of overnight use has historically been between 4-5a.m., we'd like to see a more immediate option for rolling back closures to restart service at 4.

Riders must feel – and BE – safe whenever they travel. Even with lower ridership, we're alarmed by attacks on workers and apparent upticks in subway crime and vandalism – the former coming as brazen assaults and the latter resulting in train cars being taken out of service when that can least be afforded. While many precautions have been taken to address COVID, we would like to know what plans are being developed to address these important safety concerns.

We know that your efforts in these and other areas depend heavily on funding, and we are committed to fighting this critical fight with you. Thank you.