

**Testimony of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA
at the MTA Board Meeting
on the Retirement of Thomas F. Prendergast
Board Room, MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, New York, NY**

January 25, 2017

Good morning, I am Ellyn Shannon the Associate Director at the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA.

As many of you know, the PCAC has been around since 1981. We've seen Chairmen come and go. And I want to tell you, from that vantage point, we know that Tom Prendergast is exceptional.

Now, Tom, I don't mean to put you on the spot, but I'm going to.

And the reason I'm going to is because people need to understand that there are *great* leaders in government and you are one of them. I would like the press to capture how people feel about you.

You've made the MTA stronger, and you've made its people stronger, too. We all know many of the things you've done for the MTA, but I want to single out three times that we were most proud to have you as a leader.

The first was during Superstorm Sandy. Sandy was unlike anything New York had seen before and caused unprecedented damage to the MTA system. Your handling of the aftermath was so

noteworthy it appeared on the front page of the *New York Times*. Your leadership and your team made that happen. Thank you for guiding us through that storm.

And the second was the opening of the Second Avenue Subway. We now have trains running on the Second Avenue Subway. People have been waiting 100 years to say that. And you are the one who got it built. Thank you for helping us find the light at the end of that tunnel.

And the third time is every interaction you've had with the PCAC.

You've listened to us — *always* with respect — and when you disagreed, you didn't just dismiss our ideas, you pushed us to make them better. You've always been transparent on where you stood and why and in doing so you've made us better. Thank you for your honesty and respect.

Tom we hate to see you go.

You've been a teacher — with your vast, *vast* knowledge of the system and how all the parts and people work together. You support your reasoning with facts and you've shown us the importance of being dedicated to making it work.

Nobody wants to see you go, but each of us is a better advocate and a better person, for having worked with you.

Thankfully you are leaving a legacy behind. You brought greater accountability that ensures that legacy will continue to improve after you have gone. You introduced an asset management system that when brought to full scope will make the MTA more efficient and reliable and is really the key to future Capital Program successes.

So Tom, on behalf of all the people who admire and will miss you, on behalf of the PCAC, I just want to say *thank you*.