



# MNRCC

METRO-NORTH RAILROAD  
COMMUTER COUNCIL

2 Broadway, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10004  
(212) 878-7087 [mail@pcac.org](mailto:mail@pcac.org)

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## **Statement of the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council to the Metro-North Railroad- Long Island Rail Road MTA Committee**

**Monday April 27, 2015**

Good Morning. I am Randy Glucksman, Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council Chair and PCAC Chair.

I am speaking to you this morning to alert you to a NJ Transit proposal, released just last week, to eliminate two trains, one of which serves Rockland County riders. The train in question, #1601, departs from Hoboken at 12:45 AM and 10 minutes later from Secaucus Jct. and serves a variety of riders. The previous train departs from Hoboken two hours earlier at 10:42 PM. On a few occasions I have needed to stay in Manhattan past 10:35 PM and without the 12:45 AM I would not have had a viable transit option to get home. Riders attending sporting events use the 12:45 AM when games run into overtime. One rider who frequently attends games at Madison Sq. Garden told me that without this later option, he would be constantly looking at his watch in order not to be stranded. He also said that it would take away his enjoyment of being at the game. Others spending an evening in Manhattan or elsewhere for dinner or theater also benefit by retaining this train on the schedule. I should add that after speaking with commuters this morning, the consensus is overwhelmingly that they would not be happy if this late-night train option was taken away.

No East of Hudson Metro-North line has a two-hour service gap during the late evenings or ends service as early as 10:42 PM. The final trains on the Hudson, Harlem and New Haven Lines depart from GCT at 1:50 AM, 1:53 AM and 1:56 AM respectively.

In June 2010, when there was an approximate 25% NJ Transit fare increase paired with service cuts, the first inbound train, Train #1600 (4:56 AM from Spring Valley), was eliminated. Commuters, who used to be in Hoboken at 6:05 AM and via Secaucus Jct. in NY Penn Station at 6:19 AM, now arrive 10-15 minutes later. Train #1600 still has not been restored.

About 20 years ago, I attended an NJ Transit fare increase hearing where service cuts were also proposed. A former Metro-North vice-president of planning also attended and stated that if NJ Transit wanted to eliminate some Pascack Valley Line trains it was their option, but the contract with Metro-North required that the trains be operated in New York State even if those trains ran non-stop in New Jersey. No changes were made to the Pascack Valley Line schedule.

NJ Transit also plans an approximate 9% fare increase for October 1, which may also affect some NY State riders on the Port Jervis and Pascack Valley Lines. This comes on the heels of the March 22, 2015 Metro-North fare increase.

Pascack Valley Line cannot afford to lose any more service. Each weekday, there are a total of just 18 Eastbound and 21 Westbound trains on the Pascack Valley Line. Comparatively, the

Hudson Line (my favorite line to ride in the metropolitan area) runs 18 Southbound trains every day before 7:15AM.

It has been well documented that despite the fact that Rockland County residents pay the same rate of MTA taxes as those living in the other 11 MTA counties, they receive far fewer MTA services. To allow Train #1601 to be eliminated would be egregious and I ask that the Metro-North Committee take all steps to intervene on behalf of its Rockland County riders.

Thank you.

Randolph Glucksman

