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**Statement by Bradley Brashears, PCAC Planning Manager
Atlantic Ticket Field Study (Freedom Ticket) Implementation
At the Finance Committee Meeting
MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
May 21, 2018**

Good morning Board members, I'm Bradley Brashears, and I am here speaking on behalf of the New York City Transit Riders Council regarding the Atlantic Ticket Field Study, the pilot program to the Council's Freedom Ticket proposal.

In 2015, the Transit Riders Council conducted an analysis to establish the number of empty Long Island Rail Road seats, within the city zone. We found over 10,000 empty seats between Atlantic Terminal and SE Queens stations during peak hours. These empty seats generate no MTA revenue and should be priced accordingly.

The Field Study that you will vote on today will have an important and meaningful rider impact. Not only by reducing fares, but also reducing extreme 2+hour commutes – down to 45 minutes. We are talking about parents who have to leave home before their children wake. We are talking about healthcare workers, service industry workers, and those struggling to make ends meet.

Our region has some of the longest commute times in the country. This Atlantic Ticket pilot is capable of substantially reducing many commutes. It does this by allowing SE Queens riders who are far from city subway service to afford taking their closest rail service- the LIRR to the subway at a more affordable rate.

Financially, Atlantic Ticket riders will transform empty, non-revenue-producing seats in an underutilized corridor into income producing seats.

We have worked collaboratively with the MTA since the report's 2015 release, and are eager for the pilot program's rollout. We would like to thank, Chairmen Lhota and former Chairman Prendergast, Bob Foran, Bill Wheeler and Fredericka Cuenca, for seeing this proposal through to this vote.

And we urge you-the Board, to vote in favor of the Atlantic Ticket Field Study. Let's get these seats filled, generate the much needed revenue, and provide fare and travel time relief for so many outer-borough commuters. Thank you!