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**Statement by William Henderson, PCAC Executive Director,
In Support of the Staten Island Express Bus Redesign
College of Staten Island, Williamson Theatre
2800 Victory Boulevard, Staten Island
May 21, 2018**

Good evening, my name is Bill Henderson and I am the Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA. Tonight I am here to speak on behalf of the New York City Transit Riders Council in strong support of the Staten Island Express Bus Redesign Project. This redesign is the first step in reimagining the City's overall bus network. The proposed improvements are long overdue, and we would like to thank the talented staff at NYC Transit for their hard work, abundant public outreach, and a strong determination to get the job done. We also thank our elected leaders, and in particular Borough President Oddo, for their support of this project.

Many existing express bus routes are indirect and include lengthy on-Island travel before beginning non-stop express service into Manhattan. The average express bus route makes 27 stops before leaving Staten Island, but the S79 Select Bus Service makes half as many stops on the Island and travels 13 percent faster. This redesign reduces the per route average of Staten Island express bus stops from 27 to 15, while more direct routing means fewer turns and less time spent on local streets.

Off the Island, nearly half of all current Staten Island express bus riders use routes that serve both Downtown and Midtown. In the morning Midtown riders sit on their buses through downtown stops and congestion, while in the afternoon Downtown riders wait for buses delayed by congestion in Midtown. On some routes nearly 50 percent of running time is spent on congested Manhattan streets. In contrast, routes that travel directly to either Midtown or Downtown achieve average speeds that are 25 to 40 percent faster than routes that serve both areas.

This change, like any other, will require some time for riders to adjust. In exchange riders will receive improved bus speeds and travel times, a more efficient network, improved reliability, and ultimately more daily express bus trips with the present level of resources. Beyond the benefits they provide to commuters, these changes create better connections between the various parts of the city. By improving travel to and from Staten Island, we will be making this a Borough that is not so easy to forget.