



PCAC

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**PCAC Testimony to the
Board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority
on Sexual Assault – May 22, 2019**

Good Morning, I am Ellyn Shannon the Associate Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA. As advisors to the MTA on behalf of their riders, we very much appreciated Commissioner Ferrer's comments on the sexual assault problem on transit, at Monday's Transit committee meeting. It is because of those remarks, and the interest expressed by Committee Chair Feinberg, that we are raising the topic today – we will have a more detailed report, including recommendations, in the coming weeks.

Unfortunately, if you are a woman in New York, chances are you have experienced a sexual assault on the subway or know of someone who has. And we also know it goes beyond women. Yet it remains inadequately addressed on many levels by the entities who can make a difference. In fact, we don't really know the full extent of the problem, due to the substantial underreporting and because these assaults when they are reported, are not clearly identified in the monthly briefing books. We would like to see that changed, as well as the way they are addressed. Based on input from victims' experiences, we have begun an in-depth review of how sexual assaults are handled, including good practices from other transit systems. They range from awareness campaigns to deterrents to reporting processes and penalties.

The conversation that began on Monday prompted us to speak up today, but our work has been ongoing – and is not yet done. We are committed to working with you, as well as NYC Transit, the Transit Bureau, our elected officials and riders themselves, who can help others by knowing what to look for as well as having a system in place that is thorough, yet compassionate. We can offer insight and guidance into the conversation and will be reaching out to meet with you to discuss our findings and recommendations to support the real changes that must be made in order to deter sexual assaults.