

**Statement of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee (PCAC)  
to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority on the Access to the Region's  
Core Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

**Tuesday, April 1, 2008**

At a later date in the public comment period we will submit more extensive comments, but I want to make a few comments at this point. The members of the PCAC are concerned that modifications to the original concept of the ARC project will have the effect of constraining the potential benefits of the project. In particular, our members are concerned with the connectivity of the ARC project to other regional transportation resources. While the proposed ARC terminal will doubtless reduce the pressure on Pennsylvania Station and the distance between the new facility and Penn Station is not great, we are concerned that operational flexibility is lost in the elimination of a track connection between the ARC project and Penn Station.

We are also concerned that the potential extension of ARC tracks to the east side of Manhattan is not contemplated in the current project scope. At one point, Alternative G, which would have provided access to the lower level of Grand Central Terminal, was considered the preferred alternative. In its recent report, ARC and NYC: The New Trans Hudson Rail Tunnel – Making It Work Best, the Regional Plan Association concludes that an extension of the ARC project to a point on the east side of Manhattan in or near Grand Central Terminal is warranted.

We believe that, in a climate that demands greater flexibility and interoperability, to build ARC into a separate NJT facility, unusable by Amtrak, from Swift Interlocking to a new deep-cavern stub terminal 170 feet below 34<sup>th</sup> Street would be a mistake.

The PCAC would also wishes to learn more about the basis for the decisions that have led ARC's planners to the current design. We believe that a high level of transparency is consistent with the intent of the environmental review process and urge that all relevant materials and studies, including those that, while still in draft form, have been instrumental in the process, be available to the public.

The PCAC has been a strong advocate for this project and believes that additional capacity is necessary as the west side of Manhattan develops. We also believe, however, that this additional capacity must incorporate the flexibility to accommodate changing travel patterns and believe that it would be short sighted to foreclose possibilities of connections to other regional transportation resources.