



PCAC

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**Joint Testimony of the New York City Transit Riders Council and the Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council to the Board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority on Proposed Fare Increases
The Milton G. Bassin Performing Arts Center at York College
94-20 Guy R. Brewer Blvd, Jamaica, NY**

December 11, 2018

My name is Bradley Brashears and I am a Queens resident, here today representing both the New York City Transit Riders Council (TRC) and the Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council. The Councils are members of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC), and were established by the New York State Legislature in 1981 as the official voice of MTA riders.

As we all know, Amazon plans to locate their HQ2 in Long Island City, in part due to its plentiful transit access. We urge Amazon to show they want to be good neighbors by funding investments in the area's transit infrastructure, including the four closest subway stations and the two LIRR stations. The current MTA Capital Program does not include any station improvements in the area, which will grow with rapid new development and displaced L train riders, in addition to the 25,000 Amazon employees. We know that not all improvements have to take a long time or break the bank; rather, they can be innovative, similar to work done to extend platforms at Forest Hills and Kew Gardens LIRR stations. Difficult fiscal times call for new ways of thinking, and funding.

With that being said, we do understand that a fare increase is likely necessary to keep the city's vital transit system functioning, but there must be a guarantee of **No Service Cuts**. In areas of Queens, like Rosedale and St. Albans, commute times can be well-over an hour each way. We want to ensure that those riders who take the LIRR to Brooklyn have a one-seat ride without having to transfer at Jamaica. These riders already face long and difficult commutes, which service cuts and changes would only make worse.

Clearly, reliable, and sustainable funding sources are needed to fill the MTA's substantial budget gap. New revenues must be identified to keep the system in a state of good repair and to fund new transit options. We strongly support the battle to identify and secure sustainable MTA funding sources, in addition to a minimal fare increase. The system is the lifeblood of the city and must be appropriately funded. Thank you!