



PCAC

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**LIRRCC and MNRCC Joint Committee Testimony
Storm Recovery and Thanks
PCAC Executive Director, Lisa Daglian
September 13, 2021**

Good morning, I am Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC. This morning I would like to start with a big thank you to everyone at the Metro-North and the Long Island Rail Road – and across the MTA – who worked tirelessly through recent storms and heatwaves to get riders where they needed to go – sometimes wet and late for dinner, but safely, and that’s job 1. Thanks to you all.

It’s encouraging to see more riders on the rails It’s critical that everyone mask up for our continuing safety. I’d like to personally thank LIRR conductor 6910 for her diligence in that regard. She’s a great model, but enforcement should be in the hands of enforcement agencies.

These last few weeks have been a wake-up call for all of us. More must be done to protect the transit system that is the lifeblood of our region from Mother Nature.

The storms – Henri, Ida and whatever comes next – are a clear indication that new solutions must be found. The fact that most service was restored as quickly as it was is a testament to the hard work of everyone at the MTA. Riders counted on you, and you delivered. Thank you.

But we all saw clearly how fragile is the region in which we live and how dependent we are on our surroundings. Mudslides, floods and even patio furniture can shut the system down – but recent and ongoing investment, combined with hard work and determination, enabled trains to start running again as soon as they did. There were new lessons learned from these storms as compared to Sandy and reconsidering and reconfiguring capital projects to address them to make the system even more resilient is going to need to be a priority.

This will all take money. That’s why it’s so critical that funding come to the MTA from federal, state and local sources, and highlights more than ever the importance of congestion pricing. We will be out in force speaking in support of congestion pricing at the upcoming meetings across the region and urge others to do so as well. Our region – and its riders – need a stronger, more modern and resilient transit system that is going to get them where they need to go through sleet and snow and driving rain for many years to come. Thank you.