



**Metropolitan Transit Authority
Public Hearing on
MTA Proposed Changes in Levels of Service, Student Fares, and Crossing Charges**

**Testimony by Marc Ameruso, Assistant Secretary
Manhattan Community Board One**

**Thursday, March 4, 2010 at 6 p.m.
Fashion Institute of Technology Haft Auditorium
Seventh Avenue at 27th Street**

Good evening. I am Marc Ameruso, Assistant Secretary of Manhattan Community Board One (CB1). Thank you for the opportunity to testify on an issue that is so important to all downtown residents.

At its full board meeting on December 15, 2010, CB1 unanimously voted against proposed cuts to the Student MetroCard program and Access-A-Ride service. Many New York City public school students depend on the cards to commute to out-of-district specialized schools, and even those students in our district who have been zoned for Baruch Middle School must take a subway to reach their districted school. Eliminating the Student MetroCard program would therefore negatively impact a significant portion of students in our district.

CB1 also has a significant senior population that depends on Access-A-Ride and current MTA bus and subway routes. The proposed cuts to Access-A-Ride service would greatly impair the travel of seniors and disabled people, particularly in light of the proposed closures of station entrances and exits and cuts in service to downtown Manhattan.

On February 18, 2010, the MTA presented to CB1's Quality of Life Committee a number of proposed cuts to service downtown. While our members expressed concerns about various proposed cuts and service reductions that the MTA is planning, CB1 believes that the cuts planned to the M22 bus line would most severely affect Lower Manhattan. The proposals include eliminating vital service on weekends and eliminating the route between City Hall and Battery Park City. CB1 unanimously passed a resolution at its monthly meeting on February 23, 2010, strongly protesting these cuts.

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Currently, the M22 is the only MTA bus that directly connects Battery Park City with City Hall and the Lower East Side. It is therefore an important route in our district for which there is no viable alternative. Residents in Battery Park City often take this bus to shop in the Lower East Side for groceries, and Lower East Side residents can take the bus to visit Rockefeller Park or Battery Park with their families.

Our senior community residents are particularly vulnerable to service cuts to buses. Currently, the M22 stops right outside the Hallmark of Battery Park City, an assisted-living facility for seniors, many of whom are infirm and cannot walk all the way across town to pick up subways at City Hall. The alternative, which would require multiple transfers around the tip of Manhattan, would present a severe and undue burden for seniors, extending travel time significantly and exposing seniors to the elements on days of poor weather.

In summary, CB1 is extremely concerned about the MTA proposals. Public transportation is one of the most essential services in New York City. MTA services are an integral part of the lives of downtown residents and workers. We urge you not to make any cuts to the M22, to preserve the Access-A-Ride and Student MetroCard programs, and to reconsider the onerous cuts proposed for bus and subway service in Lower Manhattan.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.