

February 8, 2023

Governor Kathy Hochul  
Via email

Re: More frequent transit service for a more accessible New York

Dear Governor Hochul:

We are heartened to finally see substantial capital upgrades that will make the subway system more accessible and we call on you to also support and expand the MTA operations that we rely on each and every day. The public transit system makes it possible for us to access work, education, healthcare and other essential opportunities and services. Frequent transit is essential to improving access because elevators are small and accessible seating areas are limited. Providing more frequent service multiplies accessibility when the space for disabled passengers is limited. More frequent service will cut waits for seating on buses and space on elevators, and speed trips to bring more of New York within our reach. As you approach budget negotiations in the coming weeks, we urge you to make more frequent public transit service a top funding priority.

New Yorkers with disabilities face daily challenges to navigating our dense city. People who cannot climb stairs are excluded from  $\frac{3}{4}$  of subway stations. Our bus network is the slowest in the nation. Paratransit is widely known as Stress-A-Ride, and is the only option for people who can't use the subways or buses to get around. Driving, prohibitively expensive for low income riders, is also a major contributor to global warming and increases congestion, slowing down all riders. Yet every New Yorker has a right to the opportunities the city offers.

Public transit makes life in New York possible. For New Yorkers with disabilities who can access transit, many more economic and social opportunities are available than in communities where transit is less frequent or less extensive. It should go without saying that service cuts or fare hikes stemming from the MTA fiscal crisis would be disastrous for our community. For people with disabilities who are more likely to move around on our crowded streets, whether in our own cars, taxis, buses, or paratransit, public transit makes them passable; without it, no vehicles would move on account of the gridlock. All New Yorkers benefit when as many people who can use transit opt to ride rather than drive, including disabled passengers. We accordingly urge you to adopt a sustainable MTA funding model and fund more frequent transit service in your budget this year.

Sincerely,

Rise and Resist Elevator Action Group  
504 Democratic Club  
Bronx Independent Living Services (BILS)  
Brooklyn Center for the Independence of the Disabled (BCID)

Center for the Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY)  
Disabled In Action  
Downstate New York ADAPT  
Greater New York Council of the Blind  
Independence Care System  
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI)  
NYC Chapter of United Spinal Association  
Staten Island Center for Independent Living (SICIL)  
UP-STAND