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November 21, 2016

The Honorable Bill de Blasio  
Mayor of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Thomas Prendergast  
Chairman & CEO  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
2 Broadway  
New York, NY 10004

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Chairman Prendergast:

I am writing to encourage the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to work with its partners in New York City government to develop a program to provide discounted MetroCards to low-income New Yorkers.

As the MTA Board prepares for another round of fare increases for 2017, it must not leave the most cash-strapped citizens behind. The cost of regularly riding the subway or buses is already a major financial burden for many, and the cost barrier is pushing public transit out of reach for many disadvantaged New Yorkers. While a monthly MetroCard presents a cheaper option in real dollars, many New Yorkers are unable to pay upfront the \$116.50 required each month, and instead are left to purchase single-use rides for \$3, beg for swipes, or risk arrest by jumping the turnstile. We can do better.

An initiative proposed by the Riders Alliance and Community Service Society in an April 2016 report titled "The Transit Affordability Crisis," would allow the issuance of discounted MetroCards to the poorest New Yorkers. As envisioned, the half-price fare would cost \$1.35 per ride and be available to approximately 800,000 individuals who are below the federal poverty level. While the program administration and funding mechanisms would need to be determined, it is clear that there is a role for both the City and State in this initiative. An existing model for implementation could be the discounted MetroCard program for seniors and individuals with qualifying disabilities.

I understand this proposal could have a significant cost, and I am committed to ensuring that any such proposal can be implemented without adding unnecessary cost burdens on all riders. As a State Legislator, I will continue to advocate on the state level

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for increased and sustainable funding for the MTA, including through creative and new sources. For example, along with Senator Martin Dilan, I have introduced legislation (S.6470) that would dedicate 25 percent of the gross sales tax revenue generated through Transportation Network Companies such as UBER and Lyft to the state's transit agencies including the MTA, depending on the origin of the trip. I hope I can count on your support for this legislation.

Many other metropolitan transportation agencies around the world have effectively implemented similar programs for its neediest citizens, including free and half-price transit passes in San Francisco and half-price fares in London.

Thank you for your consideration of this important initiative to support the most vulnerable New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Hoylman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brad Hoylman  
New York State Senate  
27th District

Cc: John Raskin, Executive Director, Riders Alliance  
David Jones, President and CEO, Community Service Society