

**Testimony of Taxi & Limousine Commission
Commissioner/Chair, Matthew W. Daus**

**Before the City Council Transportation Committee
March 12, 2009, 10 AM**

Preliminary Budget Hearing

Good morning, Chairman Liu and members of the City Council Transportation Committee. My name is Matthew Daus, and I am the Commissioner/Chair of the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC). Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present testimony regarding the Fiscal Year 2010 Preliminary Budget for the TLC. Joining me today is Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration Louis Tazzi.

The TLC's Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2010 is estimated at \$28,790,802. Of that amount, \$22,634,134 is for Personal Service (PS) and \$6,156,668 is for Other Than Personal Service or (OTPS) with a pending PS budget increase of \$487,787 from collective bargaining which would bring the total preliminary budget to \$29,278,589. Although our Fiscal 2008 and 2009 budgets did include a headcount reduction of 28, I want to assure the Council that while the reduction was significant, TLC has taken steps to ensure this reduction has not compromised the quality of services that we continue to provide to the riding public or to our licensees.

Currently TLC has 101,883 licensed drivers and 55,561 total vehicles licensed by TLC. With just over 47,021 current medallion driver licenses, which is a new record for TLC, 52,096 FHV driver licensees and 2,787 commuter van and paratransit driver licenses

issued, the industry continues to grow. The TLC has worked diligently to ensure that operational standards are not compromised as the number of license applications increase. In fact, while overall licensing activity is up almost 30% from two years ago, the wait time at the licensee facility was under 15 minutes in December. One reason for this success is the recent creation of a new Licensee Support/Customer Relations Unit which helps to provide “hands- on” assistance to our licensees while they navigate the licensing process. We employ a bilingual staff of greeters, informational kiosks, and new signage and forms written in “plain language” that are more user-friendly, all helping to facilitate communication between licensees and the TLC.

The TLC Adjudications Division has also actively employed new services and technology to enhance access to the adjudication process. In January, TLC commenced a new telephone consumer hearing process which has both increased demand as well as participation of the general public in TLC’s court process. The TLC is also implementing access to “Language Line” which will provide free language translation services to licensees during the hearing process. Finally, we are actively working on implementing videoconferencing between our Staten Island and Long Island City facilities as well as developing our Web conferencing capacity to increase participation in the adjudications process.

TLC’s current budget reflects several special projects and initiatives, including the “Rules Revision Project”, “Livery Reforms”, “Accessible Dispatch Project”, “Taxi Group Rides” and “Livery Stands”. Each of these programs requires close coordination between the TLC, the industry and interested stakeholders to ensure success. The “Rules Revision

Project,” which is in the second of its three phases, requires continuous outreach and work with our consultants to make our more than 3,000+ rules easier to understand in “plain language”, more concise and better organized.

As a regulatory agency, the TLC has an obligation to ensure that each passenger’s riding experience is safe, comfortable, reliable and convenient. The TLC’s Livery Reform Package will significantly update the way TLC regulates the industry and raise service standards by requiring the display of driver licenses, and the development of a point system to improve vehicle and base owner accountability. Included in this effort is a Livery Passenger Bill of Rights to help ensure passengers are receiving the highest standards of service. The TLC will conduct its own inspection of each licensed vehicle upon licensure and license renewal in addition to the 5 required DMV inspections during a vehicle’s license term.

TLC’s accessible dispatch demonstration project will continue into next year. This program utilizes a dispatcher to link the 238 accessible vehicles with identified riders that use a wheelchair. To date, this program has successfully provided more than 1,150 riders with wheelchair accessible service. The TLC and the Mayor’s Office of People with Disabilities are continuing a public outreach campaign to ensure NYC visitors and residents know about this service.

As mentioned in the Mayor’s recent State of the City Address, there is renewed interest in transportation initiatives that not only decrease the carbon footprint from vehicle emissions but also help to provide additional transportation services throughout the city,

where drivers can earn more money and passengers pay less per trip The TLC, along with its partners at the Department of Transportation and the Economic Development Corporation, are currently exploring potential pilot programs that may utilize multi-fare meters, group rides and designated livery stands throughout the City. The TLC is aggressively working on developing plans for these projects and plans to present these ideas to its Board of Commissioners in the late spring.

To conclude, our testimony today highlights TLC's continuous commitment to better serving our licensees and the riding public through key operational improvements as well as exploring new and exciting methods to deliver TLC regulated transportation services. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I would now be happy to address any questions you may have.

**Testimony of Hilary Ring, Director of Government Affairs
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
before the
New York City Council
March 12, 2009**

Good morning Council members. Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here with you today. I am Hilary Ring, Director of State Relations for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. I am joined by Michael Chubak, Executive Vice President at New York City Transit; and Greg Kullberg, Director of Capital Program Budgets at MTA.

As you know, the MTA is grappling with an extraordinary fiscal crisis. The budget that the MTA Board adopted in December seeks to close a \$1.2 billion gap by increasing fares, in some cases by up to 30%, in order to generate a 23% increase in revenue. The budget also assumes that close to a half a billion dollars of service will be eliminated and that over eleven hundred employees may be laid off.

To make matters worse, our next five year capital plan for 2010-2014, which the law requires us to release this fall, is essentially unfunded.

While much of this has been in the news for months now, I would like to spend just a moment walking you through how we got to where we are today.

As many of you are aware, fares pay for, on average, less than half of what it costs to run the system. Toll revenues contribute about another billion dollars. But, about half of our resources come from a host of fees and taxes levied in the MTA region. The State sends a portion of its sales tax, corporate tax and petroleum business tax to the MTA. We also receive a portion of the real estate transfer tax collected in New York City, and the mortgage recording tax collected downstate.

During the boom years of this decade, these taxes, especially the taxes that result from real estate transactions, were doing spectacularly well. In fact, in several of the last few years, the MTA appeared to be accumulating surpluses from the unexpectedly high growth in the real estate transfer tax. Those monies, however have been drawn down over the over the past few years so that service could be improved and fare increases could be kept as low as possible. Now, the pendulum has swung in the other direction and as the taxes that had been doing so well have fallen off precipitously since the economy went into its tailspin.

At the same time uncontrollable MTA expenses continue to increase. Under the leadership of Executive Director and CEO Lee Sander, the MTA has made massive strides to be as efficient as possible. We have consolidated the management of our bus companies to reduce redundancy and create efficiencies. We have removed an entire level of managers from the subway system and created new line managers to bring

accountability to the subway's operations. We are merging the back office functions of our seven agencies into a new state-of-the-art Business Service Center that will save \$30 million to \$40 million annually. Overall, MTA agencies have cut their controllable expenses by 12%, including between 5% and 10% of their managers and other administrators. One should keep in mind that these reductions are on top of a dramatic increase in ridership which has placed significant additional cost burden on our budget. Over the past dozen years, ridership on the MTA system has increased by 50% and the services and costs needed to address that increase have risen accordingly.

Nonetheless, there are some expenses that are not in our control. Our debt service continues to balloon. In the mid-1990s, the MTA paid about \$500 million a year in debt service. Now, we are paying about \$1.5 billion and in just three years from now, our debt service bill will be about \$2 billion per year, or about 17% of our budget.

In addition, in 2000, the State made the decision to finance the MTA's capital needs, not by coming up with new revenues, but instead by restructuring the MTA's existing debt, issuing more and stretching the payments out into the future.

Pension costs and health care costs continue to increase. And, while fuel costs are low right now, we all know that gas prices will rise again, and that inflation will drive up the costs of supplies and wages.

When all these elements converge, you end up with where we are now -- in a structural financial crisis.

To come up with recommendations on a solution to this crisis, Governor Paterson appointed a commission to examine the MTA's finances and to recommend a means to finance our critical operating and capital needs. Former MTA Chairman Richard Ravitch, whom many of you know, chaired the commission and recommended that the MTA receive new revenues from three sources: a mobility tax on payrolls in the 12-county MTA region, tolls on the East River and Harlem River bridges, and periodic fare and toll increases.

As you have read in the press, the Governor, the Senate and the Assembly are currently negotiating the details of the legislation to implement the Ravitch Commission recommendations.

While we hope that the Legislature reaches an agreement soon, the MTA must also press ahead to ensure that the Authority meets its statutory requirement to be self sustaining. In that regard, the MTA Board is scheduled to meet tomorrow to discuss its financial situation, and again on Wednesday, March 25, to consider increasing fares and tolls and approving dramatic service cuts in order to fund the budget that the MTA Board adopted in December. Both the fare increase and the service cuts will go into effect over the coming months.

So we are at a crossroads.

If the State Legislature does not provide stable, recurring revenues to the MTA the future looks bleak:

- Fares and tolls will rise substantially. The cash fare on New York City subways and buses could go as high as \$3.00. The cash fare for buses in Nassau County, a system that is used primarily by working people with low to middle incomes, would rise to \$3.50. Tolls on MTA bridges and tunnels would go to \$6.50 each way.
- Service will be cut dramatically. Some subway and bus routes would be eliminated entirely and other routes would be eliminated overnights or on weekends. Several downtown stations would be closed overnight. We would drastically scale back overnight service on both the subways and buses, making travel in the off-peak very difficult.
- On the subway, during off-peak hours, we will change our service guidelines. Trains would come less frequently, and would be 25% more crowded.
- And, we could have to lay off over eleven hundred employees.
- Our Capital Program would not be funded, and we would not be able to award new contracts starting next year.
- Work on our major projects such as the Second Avenue Subway would begin to slow.
- And, probably the most ironic, we will be back in the same place again next year again, asking the Legislature for help avoiding a crisis that will be much worse than if it is just solved now.

Compare that scenario to what the future looks like if the Legislature expeditiously enacts funding for the MTA:

- First, our financial situation will have stabilized.
- We will have enough capital funds to continue to invest in the trillion-dollar asset that is the MTA network.
- We will be able to provide new trains and nearly-zero-emission hybrid electric buses for our customers.
- We will be able to rehabilitate the many stations in our system that so clearly need work.
- We will be able to finish the first phase of the Second Avenue Subway, which will greatly relieve overcrowding on the 4,5, and 6 trains.
- We will be able to build new, state-of-the-art, environmentally-friendly bus depots and other facilities.
- We will be able to continue to install new signals in our system that will allow us to run more trains and relieve overcrowding, and provide more information to our passengers.
- We will be able to provide new bus service throughout the City, including new BRT routes and more express bus service.
- We will be able to improve bus service in the counties surrounding New York City and help those counties reduce their property tax burdens.

The MTA is clearly at a crossroads and the State has to determine, and determine very quickly, which course to take.

Every five years, the Legislature has stepped up and made sure that the MTA system, the network that keeps New York moving twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, is financially stable and able to operate efficiently. Times are tough this year. But, times for New York will be even tougher in the future if New York State doesn't adequately fund its lifeblood, the New York region's transit system.

Thank you for your time, and we would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

**JANETTE SADIK-KHAN
COMMISSIONER
NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**HEARING BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
MARCH 12, 2009**

Good morning Chairman Liu and Members of the Transportation Committee. I am Janette Sadik-Khan, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) and with me here today is Lori Ardito, DOT's First Deputy Commissioner and Joseph Jarrin, DOT's Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services. Thank you for inviting us here today to discuss DOT's Preliminary Budget.

Over the past year we have done everything we can to meet our goals despite these tough economic times. At the direction of the Mayor, DOT was asked to find expense savings of 5% of its Financial Plan during November 2008 and then 7% of its Financial Plan during January 2009 to help close projected City budget gaps. The Preliminary Budget reflects a combined expense savings program of approximately \$50 million annually beginning in FY'10, which we achieved without substantially affecting core programs for the City's transportation network. Some of these savings include \$5.0 million from improved energy efficiencies for the City's streetlights, \$5.0 million from the conversion of traffic signal communications to wireless technology, \$2.5 million from Staten Island Ferry operational efficiencies and overtime reductions, \$912,000 from efficiencies in facility, equipment and maintenance expenditures, and \$23.8 million through restructured parking meter rates Citywide. That said, if the economic downturn continues we may not be able to absorb future cuts without affecting our core programs.

DOT's FY'10 Expense Budget is \$703 million. This funding will provide DOT with the resources to meet the transportation needs of New York City. Specifically, funding to serve the 65,000 daily passengers on the Staten Island Ferry which operates 365 days a year; to maintain and repair the City's 789 bridges located throughout the five boroughs, including the historic East River Bridges that carry approximately half a million vehicles each day; to repave 1,000

lane miles of City streets, which is fifty more than last year; and to maintain the City's 20,000 total lane miles of streets. DOT funds will also be used to power and maintain over 300,000 street lights, 12,200 traffic signals and 1.3 million signs across the City, and to maintain the 45 City-owned parking facilities.

As to the DOT Capital program, at the Mayor's request we deferred 20% of our four-year Capital plan to the outyears as part of the Preliminary Ten Year Capital Strategy released in November. This results in the deferral of over \$900 million in City Capital funds to FY'13 and beyond, including over \$400 million of bridge reconstruction projects and over \$300 million of street projects.

The remaining DOT Capital Plan for FY'09 through FY'13 is \$6.6 billion, to enhance the City's transportation network and working towards a state of good repair for the City's streets and bridges. Our FY'10 Capital Program totals \$1.8 billion and includes the following highlights:

- \$364.5 million for reconstruction of three Belt Parkway Bridges;
- \$172.1 million for rehabilitation of the Manhattan Bridge;
- \$164.1 million for in-house street resurfacing Citywide;
- \$98.8 million for reconstruction of the Roosevelt Avenue Bridge;
- \$16.1 million for pedestrian safety improvements;
- \$11.6 million for reconstruction of East 177th Street in the Bronx; and
- \$3.7 million for the reconstruction of the intersection at Amboy Road and Annadale Road on Staten Island.

Given the City's fiscal uncertainty, we are doing all that we can to maximize revenue from other sources. The Administration is working hand-in-hand with Governor Paterson and our colleagues in the State to maximize the Federal Stimulus funds for New York City.

In addition to the Federal Stimulus bill, we are also preparing a detailed agenda for the next six-year Federal transportation authorization. We are developing both a needs assessment for City projects and, with other large cities across the United States, an aggressive funding and

policy reform platform that acknowledges the leading role cities play in our economy. The federal transportation program is stuck in a badly outmoded framework that fails to concentrate transportation resources where they are needed most and can do the most good - in our metropolitan areas where 80% of Americans live and where two-thirds of our Gross Domestic Product is generated. I head an organization of cities, the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), which is working to address these issues.

Both school safety and streetscape initiatives are elements of DOT's Strategic Plan, *Sustainable Streets*, which we unveiled last year. It explains how we will implement the priorities of Mayor Bloomberg's PlaNYC and deliver safe streets and a world-class infrastructure to New Yorkers. We set ambitious goals in the plan and I am pleased to report that we are on track to meet them.

Safety is the plan's first priority, and we have launched a number of targeted programs that can help us continue to reduce traffic-related fatalities and injuries in the City, which are at an historic low. We now have the safest streets of any big city in the United States and we will continue to drive down traffic fatalities, and have a particular focus on our most vulnerable pedestrians.

Our Safe Streets for Seniors Program is addressing senior pedestrian safety issues - through signal timing adjustments and traffic calming measures - in 25 areas with high senior crash rates throughout the five boroughs. Four of the areas are located in the Bronx, seven in Brooklyn, five in Queens, eight in Manhattan and one in Staten Island. To date, DOT improvements have been made in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, Flushing, Queens and the Lower East Side in Manhattan and we will complete projects in Fordham/University Heights in the Bronx and New Dorp/Hylan Boulevard on Staten Island this summer.

While our Safe Routes for Seniors Program focuses on improving safety for older residents, we are also moving forward on our Safe Routes to School program for young New Yorkers. To date:

- Operational safety measures have been installed at the first 135 Priority Schools;
- Capital construction work is underway for 12 schools and another 32 are in progress;
- The selection of the next phase of schools is completed and detailed studies for safety improvements will be completed for these next 135 schools; and
- The next phase of school safety improvements will include high schools and we expect to release that list in June.

In addition to focusing on seniors and school children, we are actively improving the connections between transportation modes -- subway, bus and walking -- through our Safe Routes to Transit program. This program improves pedestrian and motor vehicle movement around subway entrances and bus stops by making access to mass transit easier, safer and more convenient. As part of this program, we are:

- Installing neckdowns at more than 40 bus stop locations that are located underneath elevated subways; and
- Installing sidewalks along streets surrounding various bus stop locations.

Not only are we working to create safer streets, we are also working to improve the condition of our streets. We are creating better streets by increasing repair work on the City's 20,000 lane miles of streets. This past year, we increased the number of lane miles resurfaced from 950 to 1,000. This is the third increase since 2002 and represents more than a 40% increase in resurfacing lane miles, from 700 to 1,000, in seven years.

In another effort to improve the condition of our infrastructure, we initiated a Comprehensive Street Management Plan to coordinate street work by public agencies, utilities, property owners/developers and contractors. This will reduce the level of disruption caused by street work, streamline street-work processes and improve the condition of the streets. Later this year we will receive specific action plans for improving our asset management, planning and coordination practices.

We are also taking steps to address the impact of truck traffic in our communities.

Toward that end, we are:

- Developing a program to mitigate bridge strikes by off-route and over-height trucks by better marking these structures and improving access to bridge vertical clearance information;
- Continuing to distribute our New York City Truck Route Maps and making them available on line;
- Distributing police officer summons book inserts that map truck routes and show applicable truck rules for all police precincts; and
- Developing an online Over-dimensional Vehicle Permit (ODVP) application processing system to improve the efficiency for trucking companies to request and obtain permits.

DOT is also working hard to ensure the safety of our bridge network. Today our bridges are in the best condition they have been in generations which is due to the City's substantial investment through capital reconstruction projects, preventive maintenance and our inspection program - \$5 billion over the last ten years alone.

We continue to monitor all bridges on a regular and frequent basis and have construction contracts for the last two remaining structures of DOT bridges that are rated "poor" including the Brooklyn Bridge approaches and the 78th Street pedestrian bridge in Manhattan. To assist with inspections, we have also hired a consultant to do underwater inspections for a number of bridges including 19 pedestrian bridges such as the Wards Island Bridge, as part of our existing Bridge Inspection and Repair Program. Finally, using an FHWA grant, two approach spans on the Manhattan side of the Brooklyn Bridge were instrumented with fiber-optic sensors, allowing us to monitor via the internet the behavior of the structure in real time with high precision.

We have spent a lot of time, energy and funding to ensure the safety of our Staten Island Ferry operations and these efforts include:

- Enhanced security at the St. George Ferry Terminal and an updated risk and vulnerability assessment by the Transportation Security Administration and NYPD Counter Terrorism;
- Installation of radar-based location indicators at both ferry terminals. We are also working with the U.S. Coast Guard to install Automated Identification Devices to further enhance terminal identification in periods of reduced visibility;
- Full implementation of our computer-based preventative maintenance system, Maximo which now includes all ferryboats and terminals; and
- Work on legislation to allow Police Department officers to enforce our Ferry Rules of Conduct to improve safety on our ferryboats and terminals.

Increasing the mobility and efficiency of our transportation network is another priority for DOT. One of the best ways we can improve mobility is by making sure that our streets are used in the most effective manner possible, and we are moving on that goal with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority by implementing a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) program around the City. Last June, New York City Transit began service on the first “Select Bus Service” route, as we are branding our first phase of BRT, on the Bx12 route in the Bronx and Manhattan. This service features new red bus lanes, transit signal priority to give buses an advantage at intersections and prepayment fare collection that lets buses operate more like subways. This service has been a strong success:

- Ridership has increased by 30% over the previous Limited stop service, with over 4,000 new riders per day using the Bx12 bus on Fordham Road;
- Travel times have improved by up to 24%; and
- 98% of customers are satisfied or very satisfied with the service.

Last fall we built on the success of the Bx12 and implemented a first set of bus priority improvements on 34th Street, including new bus lanes and soft barriers that provide an extra rumble of reminder to drivers to not illegally cross into the bus lane. These bus lanes are the first step towards our long term vision of providing fast cross-town bus service, improving express bus service, providing new pedestrian space where it is desperately needed. We are also continuing development of additional Select Bus Service corridors, including routes on 1st and

2nd Avenues in Manhattan, Nostrand Avenue in Brooklyn and Hylan Boulevard on Staten Island. This summer, we will be undertaking a study of bus operations in Jamaica, Queens, so that we can improve bus and traffic flow in this bustling business district – and we will continue to include bus priority where appropriate when we look at new street designs.

The success of our BRT program is largely dependent on how quickly and reliably we can move buses which, in turn, relies heavily on enforcement. But as we all know, the Police Department cannot be everywhere at once and so we are again pursuing legislation in Albany this session that would allow us to implement a Bus Lane Camera Program. The Program would be modeled after our Red Light Camera Program and would target vehicles driving illegally in BRT bus lanes during certain hours of the day. I want to thank the Council for giving this bill a Home Rule Message last year and I hope that we can count on you again this year.

We are also making strides in reducing congestion by better managing our curb space. In October 2008, DOT implemented a pilot parking program in Greenwich Village called PARK Smart to see if we could increase the availability of parking spaces and improve traffic flow by reducing double parking and the amount of time spent “cruising” for parking. When demand for parking is high, the meter rate increases – and when parking demand is lower, the rate returns to base levels. We will work with other communities that are interested in testing similar pilot programs in their neighborhoods.

Our efforts to improve mobility also extends to bicycles. In fact, over the past year, there has been a 35% increase in commuter cycling in the City. We are on pace to reach PlaNYC’s goal of 200 new lane miles of bicycle facilities by the end of fiscal 2009 – with about 80 installed last year. Not only are we installing more lane miles, but we are doing so by bringing some of the best practices in bicycle design to the City.

To encourage cycling as a means of transportation, it’s important to not only provide the necessary infrastructure, but to also provide safe places where cyclists can park their bikes. In this regard, we installed 1,200 new bike racks Citywide last year for a total of nearly 6,000 racks

which puts us significantly ahead of pace to meet PlaNYC's goal of installing an additional 400 on-street bike racks per year. We also hope to collaborate with the Council on the bike access legislation to require commercial buildings to allow persons to enter with their bicycles.

We have also moved forward on greening our transportation system - from creating green spaces, to utilizing recycled asphalt, to reducing emissions from our vehicular fleet and ferries, to maximizing the energy efficiency of our streetlights.

We are transforming underutilized road space into active public spaces and walkable destinations as part of DOT's Public Plaza Initiative which has both short- and long-term components. For the short-term, 22 "pipeline" plaza projects are already in some stage of planning, design or construction; and four of them have already been completed including: 9th Avenue/14th Street Avenue in Manhattan; Manhattan Avenue/Newtown Creek, Brooklyn Plaza, and DUMBO Plaza in Brooklyn. The long-term component of the initiative involves working with community partners to identify new sites in communities that lack open space and redesign them to make permanent plazas. In June 2008, we launched a competitive application program that allows community partners to suggest plaza sites; locations that have underutilized or excessive road space. 22 nonprofits submitted applications and we will be advancing the most qualified and strategic of those projects. We are confident the Plaza Program will improve neighborhoods by providing an improved, greener public realm.

Additionally, as we work to bring City streets into a state of good repair, we are doing so in environmentally sensitive ways. DOT's asphalt plant located on Hamilton Avenue in Brooklyn is a national leader in the use of recycled asphalt pavement or RAP. Nearly half of all asphalt used in DOT resurfacing projects is manufactured at our plant and the material produced contains 40% RAP and we are working to increase that percentage. This has resulted in savings to the City of approximately \$10 million annually in reduced asphalt costs, while reducing over 300,000 local truck miles traveled each year.

We have also been working to expand our ability to resurface our roads by acquiring a second asphalt plant in Queens. The ULURP application for this acquisition is currently before the Council. This action has received unanimous approval from the Community Board and City Planning Commission and is supported by the Queens Borough President. Given the need for asphalt in Queens, and the previous and continuing history of supply uncertainty, now is the time to acquire this property and so I urge all of you to support it so that we can continue to bring our streets into a good state of repair in a sustainable, green fashion.

We are also greening our fleets. DOT operates one of the largest vehicle fleets in the City that includes light and heavy-duty vehicles and we have an active alternative fuels program. We have 567 light duty hybrids currently operating in our fleet, and expect 10 diesel hybrid utility trucks within the upcoming year.

Our ferryboats are also part of our plan to green our program and we continue to move forward with Local Law 3 of 2008 that codified our use of Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel and best available technology for our Staten Island ferry fleet. At this time, I am happy to report that 50% of our fleet has received engine upgrades. Looking ahead we will continue to stay on the cutting edge of new pollution reduction technologies.

Finally, we are maximizing the energy efficiency of all street lighting and signals through our green lighting initiative, and as I mentioned at the beginning of my testimony, our PEG initiatives included \$5 million in savings resulting from these improved energy efficiencies. DOT lights New York City's streets with over 250,000 cobra head luminaires and we are in the process of switching to more energy efficient lighting to help reduce the City's greenhouse gas emissions and save taxpayer dollars over time. Upon completion we will have changed all 254,118 cobra heads which will result in electricity savings of 71,299 megawatt-hours per year and commensurate greenhouse gas emission reductions.

As you can see, DOT is moving forward on many fronts, while at the same time doing more with less during this period of economic uncertainty. We have made great progress towards the goals outlined in our Strategic Plan and PlaNYC -- to make the transportation network of our City safer, less congested, greener and better. Whether we are filling this winter's potholes to ensure a smooth ride...painting school crosswalks to better protect our children...or fixing our bridges to ensure their stability for years to come, we are determined to stretch every dollar to better protect and improve the lives of New Yorkers.

Thank you again for inviting us here today, at this time I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Housing Works, Inc.

FY10 NYC Budget Hearings – Transportation Committee
March 12, 2009

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the clients, staff and volunteers of Housing Works. Housing Works is the largest community-based HIV/AIDS service organization in New York and in the United States; we are also the nation's largest minority-controlled AIDS service organization.

Our clients and other New Yorkers who are in need will be casualties of this economic crisis in more ways than many policy makers realize. The fare hikes and service changes that the MTA has proposed are one of the most significant, because it affects the very basic need for people to access services.

The fare hikes that the MTA has proposed for 2009 hurt those who already have a difficult time affording their transportation. For example, by proposing "solutions" that make it more expensive for those who purchase their Metrocards one ride at a time, it will be more difficult for those who struggle the most in these times of economic downturn. People in our city who are poor, unemployed or on a fixed income should not fall victim to the shortfall in the MTA's budget. Their needs must be considered as the fares and services are changed.

The proposed increase to the Access-a-Ride fare is particularly of concern for Housing Works. New Yorkers who have disabilities rely on Access-a-Ride. More than doubling their transportation cost forces them to take on an unfair burden. In addition, many of our clients live in the outer boroughs, far from accessible subway stations or close bus stops. They rely on Access-a-Ride, and will not be able to afford the fare increase. Many who cannot afford the change will instead become more isolated and will not access services that they need.

It is not just our clients who will suffer in these tough economic times. In October, Governor Paterson stated in remarks about the budget that charities will have to pick up much of the burden while the state and city deals with its fiscal crises. But with budgets tight and everyone trying to stretch their resources to provide services, non-profit organizations will be significantly impacted by our clients' need for transportation. Housing Works and other social service organizations across the city provide Metrocards to clients so that they can attend doctor and dentist appointments, meetings with case managers, mental health care, substance abuse treatment and other essential life-saving services. Our clients budget their Metrocards carefully so that they can make meetings and appointments, being sure to reserve a ride at the end of the night for their next day's needs. Every ride is precious, and every ride is an essential part of their health care. For someone living with HIV or AIDS, making it to a doctor's appointment is not only important, it is life-saving.

In a time when new contracts for services no longer include transportation, the MTA fare increases will create unbearable strain. If the fare is drastically increased, say to one

proposal of \$3.00 per ride, non-profit social service organizations would suffer a drastic hit, increasing the cost of providing their clients with transportation by 50%. For Housing Works, that would mean an **additional \$250,000** just for the increased fare. It is an impossible budget strain. For many organizations, it would no longer be possible to provide the Metrocards for clients that they currently provide. If our clients who are HIV-positive do not have transportation, they cannot seek health care and other services. Many clients will fall out of the care that is necessary to survive, and many will not be able to maintain their physical or mental health. This burden is not acceptable in a fiscal crisis, because those who are poor will suffer the most as jobs become scarce and services are more greatly needed.

Housing Works proposes that as drastic increases are made to the single ride or base fare, that the City and the MTA hold non-profit organizations harmless from the fare increase. Allow agencies with 501(c)3 status that purchase Metrocards in bulk to purchase the newly valued cards at the current rate. This would allow us to continue to provide our clients with much needed transportation, while not forcing already strapped social service organizations to take on the financial strain of the increase in subway and bus fares.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We hope that you will take New York's most vulnerable people into consideration as you make recommendations.

Kristin Goodwin, Director of NY Policy and Organizing
Housing Works, Inc.
57 Willoughby Street, 2nd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

347-473-7450
k.goodwin@housingworks.org

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/12/2009

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MATTHEW DAUS

Address: 40 Rector Street, 5th Floor, NY 10006

I represent: NYC TAXI + L HOUSING COMMISSION

Address: _____

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: HILARY KING

Address: 347 MADISON

I represent: MTA

Address: _____

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GREG KULLBERG

Address: 347 Madison Ave

I represent: MTA

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MICHAEL CHUBAK

Address: 2 Broadway

I represent: MTA NYC TRANSIT

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lori Ardito, First Deputy Commissioner

Address: _____

I represent: DOT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jametta Salik-Khan, Commissioner

Address: DOT

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Joseph Javrin, Deputy Commissioner

Address: _____

I represent: DOT

Address: _____

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/12/09

Name: TWEEDS Phillips (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 21 Sackett St Brooklyn NY 11231

I represent: Taxi + Limousine Commission

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/12/2009

Name: IRA Goldstein (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: NYC Taxi + Limousine Commission

Address: 240 Reckart St. 5th Fl. NY, 10006

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

Public

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kristin Goodwin

Address: 57 Willoughby St. Brooklyn, 11201

I represent: Housing Works

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

Public

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mr X irfndbmt@gmail.com

Address: BOX 5 MANHATTAN NEW YORK 10034

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms