

**New York City Environmental Justice
Public Testimony
MTA Board Meeting
9/21/2020**

Good Afternoon members of the board, my name is Renae Reynolds, Transportation Planner for the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance; which was founded in 1991 as a citywide membership network, linking grassroots organizations from low-income neighborhoods and communities of color in their struggle for environmental justice.

On behalf of NYC-EJA and the ElectrifyNY coalition the purpose of my testimony today is to express our continued support of the MTA and the tremendous efforts of our essential workers in sustaining of our mass transit system, and to echo the call for 12 Billion dollars in federal funding to ensure the survival of our buses and subways.

We Encourage the MTA to continue to take measures to ensure the health and safety of its riders while avoiding additional cost burdens on its customers, who have suffered tremendous loss due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The pandemic made clear the particular vulnerabilities faced by environmental justices communities, who have experienced higher rates of morbidity, with research indicating how death rates have been compounded by the impacts of poor area quality. We face a dual crisis in ensuring transit service that avoids contributing to public health threats.

We must express our concern about the recent announcement that the MTA has contracted Clean Energy Fuel corps to provide Renewable Natural Gas for 800 natural gas buses and hope that this is not a signal of MTA stepping away from its commitment to fully electrify its bus fleet by 2040.

While we understand the constraints the pandemic has placed on the authority the MTA cannot afford to compromise on our clean transportation future. Deeper investments RNG would be half measure that will only lead to our continued reliance on dirtier technologies and extractive infrastructures. Analysis by the American Gas Foundation examining the Mid-Atlantic region shows that RNG is unsustainable. There is not enough biogas potential to make it a viable fuel alternative.

We encourage the MTA to work with its riders, and allies in the transit advocacy space to secure federal funding and ensure that resources are used to advance the 2040 electrification goal, which would provide much needed economic stimulus through manufacturing and jobs creation, while contributing to the long term health outcomes of our people and our climate.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns and to express our continued support for the survival of our mass transit system.