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Press Release

July 8, 2008

[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

### NYC Transit Statement On Bus Service

#### Response to Straphangers Campaign Report

The Straphangers assertion that our bus customers are being "crushed by crowds" or that customers are "having to wait for more than one bus to go by" does not systemically occur on NYC Transit bus routes. It is equally untrue that NYC Transit has not kept pace with the increase in ridership which resulted from free bus-to-subway transfers and discounted fares. The fact of the matter is that the increase in bus ridership, most of which occurred by the end of 2001, was met with unprecedented increases in bus service.

To meet the demand in bus ridership of the late 1990's resulting from the introduction of MetroCard and its free subway to bus transfers and fare incentives, NYC Transit added more service at the fastest pace of any major U.S. Transit agency in history. From 1997 to 2007, bus service increased by 29 percent with increases on virtually all bus routes city-wide. In addition, the bus fleet size grew by 1,026 buses, a 29 percent increase. Taken alone, the increase in fleet size would rank as the 11th largest bus fleet in the United States, larger than bus fleets in Miami, Boston or Minneapolis. By the end of 2001, the increases in service implemented by NYC Transit appropriately met ridership requirements. Since 2001, bus ridership has increased by only 2.8%, compared with a 4.4% increase in service levels.

Increasing service at such a rapid pace required NYC Transit to absorb \$217 million in annualized costs, including hiring 1,900 new bus operators and 300 bus maintainers. The fleet additions required a \$1.63 billion capital investment in new buses which allowed us to virtually replace the entire bus fleet while increasing its size and diversifying the fleet through the additions of articulated and express coach buses to provide greater capacity. Investments were also made in new facilities, including the Zerega Avenue and Grand Avenue maintenance shops.

Important in this discussion is the fact that in 1996, bus ridership was at its lowest point ever, with 492 million annual riders. The system was nowhere near capacity, allowing for much of the ridership growth since 1996 to be accommodated within existing available capacity.

NYC Transit regularly reviews operating conditions, ridership and passenger loadings to ensure buses are operating according to MTA Board-adopted loading guidelines. Service levels are based on peak direction and peak period travel, and provides for excess capacity in the off-peak direction and at other points along the route. On average, this ensures that buses operate within adopted passenger loading guidelines. Passenger loadings above guidelines can occur due to unusual weather, traffic and construction conditions. Significant traffic congestion is one of the reasons that NYC Transit has initiated the new Select Bus Service in the Bronx along the Fordham Road - Pelham Parkway corridor as a means to cut through congestion in major bus corridors.