



August 7, 2020

Mr. Tim Cook
CEO
Apple, Inc.
One Apple Park Way
Cupertino, CA 95014

Dear Mr. Cook,

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has been working around the clock in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to welcome riders back to our system as our region – with the highest transit ridership in North America – reopens. As a key part of these efforts, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo mandated the use of masks on public transit. Public health experts agree that face coverings play a crucial role in limiting the spread of the virus.

We know Face ID does not work with masks and that Face ID is not required to use Express Transit in Apple Pay to pay the fare with our new OMNY contactless payment system. However, we have observed customers removing their masks in order to unlock their iPhones with Face ID in order to use their devices for other purposes, when standing on the platform and riding our buses, subways and commuter railroads.

We understand security is of paramount concern, and we share that value. While Apple has enabled the passcode unlock feature to appear on the user's screen much sooner when Face ID doesn't open the device, we are asking Apple to take these efforts a step further. As more customers return to mass transit, not just in New York, but around the world, we need a solution that works for everyone.

We understand Apple is working to address the issue and know that Apple has a range of technologies at its disposal as a global leader among tech companies. We urge Apple to accelerate the deployment of new technologies and solutions that further protect customers in the era of COVID-19. Upgrades enabling users to unlock their phones while keeping their masks securely covering their nose and mouth would be beneficial in all public spaces, not just on public transportation.

Additionally, notifications alerting users to your recent Face ID modification to allow easier passcode entry would also help encourage people to keep their masks on. The MTA is willing to collaborate on messaging – whether through in-device notifications or digital or print signage in our stations and on our buses and trains.

Here in New York, physical counts confirm that more than 90 percent of customers on subways and buses are wearing face coverings. At this time, there have been no coronavirus clusters traced back to public transportation anywhere in the world, and we want to ensure that continues by driving mask usage by MTA customers even higher.

Thank you again for Apple's commitment to public health and safety during this unprecedented crisis.

Sincerely,



Patrick J. Foye
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer