DEDICATION

To Governor Cuomo: this book would not have been possible without you.
ADVANCE PRESS FOR “SUBWAY HORROR STORIES”

“According to the Riders Alliance, an advocacy group that collected nearly 400 subway ‘horror’ stories last week to push for an M.T.A. capital plan . . . people complained of trains never arriving, of dangerously overcrowded platforms and of unintelligible announcements. The scariest stories involved getting stuck on a train underground.”

“If you’re looking for something to do while you wait for the 5 train, consider writing a tortured memoir about your commute and sharing it with the Riders Alliance, a transit advocacy group.”
– Gothamist, “Subway Fares are Up, and So Are Delays”

“New Yorkers who take the subway Sunday talked about their deep-seated fears of claustrophobia (closed spaces), cleithrophobia (getting stuck underground) and chrometophobia (money) [when] the grassroots transit group Riders Alliance held an event, ‘Subway Horror Stories,’ at the Atlantic Avenue-Barclays Center station.”
– AM New York, “Oh the horror! Subway riders share tales of woe”

“A transit advocacy group has begun a novel campaign it hopes will convince Gov. Andrew Cuomo and state legislators to fund the MTA’s proposed $32 billion capital plan to improve to city’s aging subway system. Members of the Riders Alliance collected ‘subway horror stories’ at Queensboro Plaza in Long Island City during Tuesday’s morning rush hour, part of a weeklong drive throughout the five boroughs.”
– Queens Times Ledger, “Riders Pen Complaints About Subway Service”
AUTHORS’ NOTE

It wasn’t hard to get subway riders to contribute their horror stories when we put out the call. Broken trains, dangerously crowded platforms, mass confusion when trains are canceled or rerouted…with record subway ridership, New Yorkers deserve better.

Our “subway horror stories” can have a happier ending. If Governor Cuomo and state lawmakers fill the $15 billion gap in the MTA’s next five-year capital program, riders will be rewarded with new trains, upgraded equipment that’s less prone to breakdowns, and ultimately more reliable service for millions of New Yorkers every day.

If Governor Cuomo and state lawmakers do not fill the $15 billion gap in the MTA’s capital program, the subway horror may be just beginning. We hope that this book will be the last ever produced because of lack of material in the future—not the first in a tragic series.
SUBWAY HORROR STORIES

The Broken Door
by Thomasin B, Brooklyn

I have been on an F train a few times that has a problem with a broken door. It's the same routine: a door apparently won't shut, and then the conductor yells at everyone on the train to “step in” and “get your bag out of the door,” and “we can't move until the doors shut.” After 10 minutes or so the door somehow shuts, and then the same thing happens at the next station. After the third cycle of yelling and waiting, the conductor tells everyone to get off the train and wait for the next one, which takes another 10 minutes. This has happened to me at least 4 different times!

Misery in Bay Ridge
by Charlotte D, Brooklyn

The R train off peak, especially weekends and nights, is misery. There is no alternative in Bay Ridge except even scarcer buses. And the stations themselves are in terrible shape. Bay Ridge Ave. station floods with every rain, and it snows in enough to cover the benches.
I Got Out and Walked in the Rain
by Jordan W, Brooklyn

I got on the G train at Nassau Ave. The train took 10 minutes to crawl one stop, where it sat on the platform for 5 minutes before the conductor told everyone that it was the last stop. There were no announcements about what was happening, why, or what I should do as an alternative. I got out and walked in the rain to the next nearest train into Manhattan: the M/J at Marcy Ave. When I arrived there, the platform was already full, but I squeezed my way in. I waited for around 10 minutes, as more and more people came, until the first train arrived. It was too full for anyone to get on.

I Risk Being Dropped from English Class
by Maybe L, Queens

Just when you think it can't get any worse than a crowded 7:00am N train that arrives tremendously late, it goes snail pace underground and takes almost 30 minutes to get to 36th Street from 20th Ave. Due to the poor service this/last week, I risk being dropped out of my English class because lateness is counted as an absence.

Delays on the B, Q, 4 and 5 Trains
by Eli S, Manhattan

Over the last couple of months, I have experienced significant delays on the B, Q, 4 and 5 trains. When a train arrives it is very crowded, causing me to wait for another and increasing my commuting time. It is significantly more uncomfortable to ride as a result. It is unfair to further burden New Yorkers to compensate for a never-closing MTA budget gap. It is in the best interest of NYC's economy, tourism, and public safety, that the state legislature funds the MTA's capital plan. Otherwise, I foresee increasingly dire circumstances, which will negatively ripple throughout the city.

45 Minutes Late to Daycare
by Jessica F, Brooklyn

On March 10, I was stuck on the F line due to a power outage at WTC. One power outage. 45 minutes to go three stops, I ended up having to get off the train to catch a cab so I could pick up my son 45 minutes late at daycare, paying a $40 cab ride to Brooklyn plus late charges from the daycare.

This is Beginning to Feel Like the 70s Again
by Bonnie N, Brooklyn

Going home, one day the MTA announced, as my C train sat at 42nd St., that there was no power at the World Trade Center stop; my conductor urged us to change for something else. So I trekked through two overcrowded passageways to catch a 7 train one stop to get to an F train, which barely had enough room for me to squeeze on. I've been riding the subways regularly since 1968; this is beginning to feel like the bad times in the 70s again.

It's Like a Pack of Sardines
by Sherif S, Queens

I ride the F train from Jackson Heights to Midtown every day. When the trains are running like they're supposed to, it's great. My work commute is about 20 minutes maximum. That is if they're running like they're supposed to. More often than not, I arrive at the platform between 8:15 and 8:30 and it's like a pack of sardines. After being greeted with this wonderful sight, the pushing and shoving starts. How many F trains go by before I can get on, you ask? On normal days, it'll be one train, and I'll get on the
next (that is, of course, if the local train doesn't arrive—dumping even more fellow passengers on the platform).

**Trains Held at the Stations**  
*by Rachel J, Brooklyn*

Over the course of the last year, we have noticed Brooklyn R train service become notably less reliable and much more crowded. The trains are also held at the stations more frequently, adding 15-30 minutes to a trip.

**The Platform Was Dangerously Crowded**  
*by Shale M, Brooklyn*

I was at Lorimer on the L train when I was informed a rail was broken in the tunnel. I took the G back to Broadway, and then the J to the 6. It took about 45 minutes, making me extremely late for work on a Monday morning. This morning, I played a fun game of musical chairs, as I was instructed to switch from the Rockaway-bound train to the Manhattan-bound train, and back again and again at the Bedford L stop. It was one of the most aggravating experiences I've ever had commuting. I spent over an hour trying to figure out what the hell was going on and how I was going to get to work. The platform was dangerously crowded with angry people, and the confusion was just ridiculous.

**35 Minutes to Go One Mile**  
*by Lauren H, Queens*

Each morning I ride the Q69 or Q100 down 21st Street to the F train station at Queensbridge. The traffic has been so bad on 21st Street that my bus ride takes much longer than it would have taken me to walk. The worst was 35 minutes to go one mile! Then of course I get to the F train and I can barely squeeze onto the train because it is so crowded.

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**Hostile and Dangerous for Seniors**  
*by Karalyn S, Brooklyn*

As someone with a disability who uses public transit, the overcrowded trains and long wait times make it almost impossible for me to get a seat. The overcrowded conditions makes commuting more hostile and dangerous for seniors and disabled people.

**I Was Late to School Every Day**  
*by Noelle F, Brooklyn*

From January to the end of March 2014, the 6 train was crowded and delayed every day. It was so hard for me to get to school and I was late every day. I almost got suspended for this because my teacher thought I was cutting. Now I have to go out of my way by taking a crosstown bus to the C train, which takes extra time.
Every Morning Begins with Being Shoved
by Ana N, Manhattan

Recently, every morning begins with being shoved and crammed into the 6 train after already having let two or three completely full trains pass by. I stand on the crowded platform with people pushing past me and worry about falling onto the tracks. I'm a woman in my early 20s and every day I have to stand brushed up against men if I want to be able to get to work on time. For the NYC subway system, this type of service is unacceptable. The people who take the trains every morning during rush hour should be able to expect reliable service.

We Arrived Tired and Cold
by Matteo C, Queens

On March 15, it took me and my wife almost two hours to go from Long Island City to the Upper West Side. Usually on a regular day that trip should take about 30 min if the trains work on schedule. We arrived at our final destination tired and cold.

Two and a Half Hours Late
by Daren R, Bronx

There have been many unfortunate events when taking the D train, but this one was pretty bad. The doors were broken on the D train and every time the train reached a stop everybody had to wait a good six minutes or so because the train conductor was trying to close the doors and call for help. Unfortunately help didn’t come until about three to four stops into my ride. After about ten minutes of long, uncomfortable waiting, we were told to get off the train and transfer over to the B train. This was a problem because the B is a local train. Then for some odd

Trying to Get to College
by Tenzing D, Queens

I take the Q60 bus or R or M train to the Jackson Heights and then a 7 train to LaGuardia Community College. I prefer Q60, because I do not need to change to go to LaGuardia Community College. However, the bus service is very bad. I was waiting and waiting for bus in the morning and the bus never comes even after waiting for more than 30 or 40 minutes. Sometimes when the bus comes, it does not stop. There is no clear reason why this happens. If they raise the fare, it will put more pressure on students and low income earning families who depend on the MTA bus and train services to commute within the five boroughs.

Trains Failing, Rails Breaking…
by Benjamin S, Brooklyn

The mornings on the L train are crazy as it is, with too many people, not enough trains, and delays. The L train tends to have a lot of breakdowns due to either trains failing, rails breaking, or investigations. There are mornings when you are trying to get to work or to an appointment early and you find that trains are jam-packed, and you stand waiting ten or more minutes for one to arrive that isn't as crowded. You also find that in the evenings and weekends, trains are far and few in between. There have been way too many “We are delayed because of train traffic ahead” and “Apologizing for the inconveniences” recently. We need to have better-equipped trains to
accommodate a rising population and New Yorkers moving to farther areas of Brooklyn and Queens.

**Stuck in Between Stations**
by Stephanie R, Queens

I ride the 7 train every morning and I've been having bad luck taking the train anywhere, especially to school. The conductors always change their mind if it is express or local and they are always delayed or stuck in-between stations. My previous experience was horrible—I was stuck in between stations for three hours. I never made it to school—and it took me to two hours to get home. Please before you try to raise the prices, make the commute easier!

**Can't Fit on the First Few Trains**
by Stephanie R, Queens

I have had many crowded-platform, body-crunching, stuck-underground-between-stations-for-30-minutes, and similar experiences, but rather than tell any one story, I'd like to say that I find it sad that on a daily basis, I make a point to get to my station early because I know I most likely won't be able to fit on the first few trains that go by. Even when they are running well, they are packed to capacity, which leads to delays on a regular basis. At least once a week (usually twice) there's some sort of delay on a line that I use (L/G/E/M) that causes me to have to alter my commute. I'm not sure how anyone feels that this is acceptable from a system that we pay to use. I am fine with fare hikes, so long as the result is service that is actually reliable.

**Walked 46 Blocks Home**
by Emily P, Brooklyn

Last week due to melting snow, there were no N, D, or R trains in service going to Bay Ridge from Atlantic terminal. There was no alternate transportation offered, so people who were commuting that way either had to spring for a cab or take the B63 along 5th Ave. Tons of people were left standing in the rain for the bus, and some people like me just gave up and walked home (I live 46 blocks from Atlantic Ave.).

**R Train Moving at the Pace of a Snail**
by Jeff D, Brooklyn

This morning during rush hour, the R train took over 30 minutes to go seven stops from Prospect Ave to Whitehall, which is almost double its estimated commute time of 17 minutes. Thanks for moving at a pace of a snail, R train.

**Pushed Off a Crowded Train and Broke my Fibula**
by Sandra Y, Manhattan

On an overcrowded 4/5 train which was impossible to get on in the first place, I tried to transfer to the 6 train across the platform and no one would move or get out to let me off—if you move to let someone off, you might not get back on. I pushed my way through and then someone shoved me off the train onto the platform. I fell and broke my fibula.

**Three Hours to Get Home**
by Mylin R, Bronx

Although the fares continue to increase, the service is rapidly deteriorating! I left work at 6:00pm and did not get
RIDERS ALLIANCE

home until 9:00pm! An entire three hours trying to navigate the subway system, taking alternate routes, only to be met with inadequate service and crowded slow trains! It is absolutely absurd and something must be done about this. We New Yorkers deserve to have peace of mind and a reliable subway system, particularly when we continue to be hit with fare increases and continue to see no results from the use of our hard-earned money.

The Rats Are On the Steps
by Francine A, Manhattan

I am in the subway every morning at 4:45 am and the rats in this subway station are so horrible that sometimes you can't even walk up and down the steps because the rats are on the steps to the platform. They get really close to people—it's disgusting and dangerous. Please get rid of the rats before someone gets bitten!

Peeling Ceilings and Rusted-Out Columns
by Asya B, Brooklyn

I live by an elevated train (the Brighton Beach B/Q). A couple of weeks ago a huge eight-inch pipe that hung under the overpass fell off and hit the ground right at the crosswalk underneath. It's lucky no one was hurt or killed. The condition of the subway bridges and other structures scares me . . . most of the stations I take, especially Bleecker Street, have awful peeling ceilings and rusted-out columns. I look at them every day and wonder if anyone is inspecting the structural supports to make sure they're in good shape, or whether anyone who rides the subway is taking their life in their hands.

SUBWAY HORROR STORIES

The Q Train Sat in the Tunnel For Half an Hour
by Kamala S, Brooklyn

I have too many horror stories. . . . Shall I tell the one where I was an hour late to an important rehearsal because the Q train inexplicably sat in the tunnel for half an hour with no announcement? Or how about the time I was almost late to a performance because everyone was unceremoniously kicked off a downtown A train and left to wait 20 minutes until another one showed up? Or how about the daily horror of trying to get to midtown during rush hour? Today alone, there was a “sick passenger” on the Q and then “signal problems” on the 5 train. I can't remember the last time I tried to get somewhere when there wasn't an issue. Instead of collecting horror stories, you might have less work gathering good transit experiences because I guarantee there are less of them!

When the C Train Comes, There is No Space
by Liesl E, Brooklyn

I dread commuting to work every day and especially this past month the trains have been overly crowded. I need to take the C train at Lafayette to Spring Street. The train only comes every 10-12 minutes and when it arrives there is absolutely no space. At Canal Street there are often signal problems, forcing riders to go express or walk. Some nights I can't even get home during rush hour because trains aren't running or are overly crowded. I have to take another train line that is completely out of the way. My average commute time has almost doubled.

Standing Room Only at the Very First Stop
by Cynthia D, Bronx

Last week for over 30 minutes there was no 4, 5 or 6 train service. For the past two months even though I get on at
the very first stop (Pelham Bay 6 train) there has been standing room only. I think that it is disgraceful that passengers have to stand up at the first stop. There used to be trains waiting at the Pelham Bay Station but now you have to wait for a train to pull into the station. The bus and subway service has been performing horribly these past few months. It makes me want to get back in my car and drive to work. I stopped driving one year ago because I wanted to do my part for the environment, but with such very poor service I am tempted to go back to driving.

**Took me 90 Minutes to Get to Union Square**
by Alexandra K, Brooklyn

It took me 90 minutes and endless subway transfers to get from Greenpoint to Union Square on March 17, and along the way the subway door smashed my finger. Later today, police stopped my R train looking for someone and I had to get off and walk to another station and find a different route—for the second time that day.

**I Spent a Ton of Money on Taxis**
by Daniel L, Queens

I am an adult student. I have to study on weekends because of my work schedule. During the fall 2014 semester, I spent an incredible amount of money in taxis because the 7 train was being “repaired” and there was no alternative to get to lower Manhattan. The buses that “substitute” the 7 train during weekend closings are not enough and they stop according to the mood of the driver.

**I See Altercations When People Are Crushed**
by Michael J, Brooklyn

Frequently I see altercations and angry actions when people are crushed in like sardines during the morning and evening rush on the F train. It is dangerous and will eventually be a repellant to the very residents critical to the economic vitality of the metro area.

**The E Train Hasn’t Changed Since High School**
by Barbara F, Queens

I’d like to know why the E train runs like garbage nearly every day. It has not changed since I was in high school—and I graduated in 1986!! Signal problems, overcrowding, crawling to its destination—what gives? I find myself taking the express bus more often now, but who can afford $12 a day?! And, speaking of overcrowding, the M train is two cars short, which is why that train is jam-packed. I think bringing back the V or adding the N to our stations would be a smart move.

**Waited Over 40 Minutes for a 7 Train**
by Emmy P, Queens

I waited over 40 minutes at my stop for a local 7 train only
to have four pass by, too crammed with riders. I wound up having to take a Q32 to Queens Plaza to catch an E train into Manhattan. What would normally be a 35-minute commute to work turned into a two-hour commute. This happened twice within one month. I am frequently late to work because of poor service on the 7 train.

7 is Packed Like a Sardine Can  
by Susan B, Queens

In the mornings, the 7 is packed like a sardine can by the time it gets to 46th/Bliss. I witness a fight pretty much every time I take the train at that hour, simply because it is so crowded. The MTA needs to run more trains. Honestly, I think they do this because the passengers don't have a voice. Thanks for giving us one.

Wait for Three or Four Trains to Go By  
by Melissa C, Queens

The 7 train is packed to capacity and you can wait for three or four trains to pass before being able to squeeze into one. And the notion that we would add to the crowding by building affordable housing over the Sunnyside Yards without considering the local infrastructure is depressing.

Lines for the Shuttle Bus Wrapped Around the Corner  
by Marissa M, Queens

My horror story is when the 7 train was completely shut down for the entire work day and the lines for the shuttle buses were wrapping around the corner. The number of cabs I have taken in order to get somewhere in a reasonable amount of time is ridiculous. I barely want to leave my neighborhood on the weekends because the train never running in full. Why do I pay so much for a Metrocard?

30 Minutes to Go Two Stops on the 2/3  
by Natalia R, Manhattan

The 2/3 express trains have been running at a snail's pace during the morning rush hour. And it doesn't help that they're stuffed to capacity! 30 minutes to go two stops is unacceptable! This happens on the regular.

I Had to Wait for Five G Trains to Pass  
by Simon D, Brooklyn

Had to wait 45 minutes for a Queens-bound G train at Nassau Ave. that didn't have enough room to take on any passengers at all. Because the L train wasn't running into Manhattan, every rider who had been on that line transferred to the G at Lorimer to work around the service outage. Now, the poor little G train only runs four cars. Ever. Rush hour? Four cars. 3:00am? Four cars. You know why I had to wait for five G trains to pass me by until I could board? Each of those scheduled trains had four damn cars. All I ask is more cars on each scheduled G train during rush hour. And then maybe my fellow Greenpointers and I will not have to wait while our feeble, four car G train tries against hope to absorb the teeming masses from multiple eight-car L trains.

40 Minutes Late to Work on Monday…and Tuesday  
by Susan L, Brooklyn

I work off of the 33rd Street 6 train and live near the Graham Ave. L. There isn’t a day that goes by that one or both of those trains are actually running normally. On Monday morning, the L was not going into Manhattan. This meant transferring to the G, then the 7, and then the 6. It ended up making me 40 minutes late to work. I walked to the L on Tuesday and the same exact thing has
occurred. Again, another 40 minutes extra added to my commute. Every day on my commute home, the 6 is so overcrowded or completely down that it skips my station (sometimes two trains in a row skip it), making me wait 15 or more minutes for a train. I often end up taking the 16-block walk down to Union Square to avoid the stress of taking the 6 train. I don't think I've ever hated something more in my life than my two-stop commute on the 6.

The 4/5/6 Platform is Full, and No One Can Fit
by Joshua S, Manhattan

I take the 6 train every day. As everyone knows, the 4/5/6 is extremely crowded, and if trains are delayed during rush hour, then you can't fit into the train when it finally shows up. For the last few weeks, during evening rush hour (around 6:00pm, prime time), the 6 trains have been coming only once every ten minutes! You see the green sign saying, "Next train, 9 minutes," and you want to scream. And maybe the next one is 18 minutes away, but it's 25 degrees outside, so you don't want to walk across town. By the time it shows up, the platform is totally full of people, and there is zero chance everyone can fit in. At rush hour, these 6 trains need to run every two or three minutes, or five minutes max, to hold all the people! Everyone is going to work on these trains—if the subways get worse, peoples' jobs will suffer and the New York City economy will suffer. The subway is the key to the city's prosperity. Don't even think of cutting the MTA budget—it would be a fatal mistake for New York City's economy, and it would be another horrible setback for the middle-class working people who make the city function.

It Was 35 Minutes Waiting at 59th Street for a Local
by Amanda W, Brooklyn

I take the Manhattan-bound B train every morning at
train might move at all. After 50 minutes a man in our car collapsed. He was sweating and appeared in serious condition. Fortunately other passengers were able to provide some care. We used the emergency alarm, but there was no response from any train crew, and no one came to investigate. We attempted to use the intercom, but it was not working. After ten minutes we finally moved into the next station. With some help from other passengers, the man seemed to be improving. If he had had a heart attack, I believe he would have died.

**Then The Train Decided to Turn Around Again**
by Angela A, Queens

Swiped on the Manhattan-bound train at 40th St., only to find they shut down service so I had to take the Queens-bound train to 61st St. to get on the express back to Manhattan, which then got stuck between 52nd and 46th St. (for 3 hours)! That train then decided it was going to turn around and go back to 74th St. After a total of nearly four hours and missing a doctors appointment, I walked home to 42nd St. from 74th St. because the buses were so full it was impossible to get on. Worst $2.50 spent ever, and fares are increasing?!

**Dangerously Crowded at Union Square at Rush Hour**
by Rebecca C, Brooklyn

At 8:45am at Union Square on March 20th the door of my packed uptown 4 or 5 train would not close due to a malfunction. The train was taken out of service, which led to the platform being dangerously crowded. I could not have left to find an alternate mode of transportation to work even if I wanted to. While we waited for about ten minutes for the disabled train to leave, two ladies standing next to me began to loudly gripe about how the trains are constantly breaking down and fares are going up. Governor Cuomo needs to stop using the MTA as a slush fund for the rest of the state; New Yorkers are not going to stand for this much longer.

**I Just Turned Around and Left**
by Anonymous, Queens

When I arrived at Grand Central Terminal during the evening rush hour and took the escalator to the 7 train, there wasn’t a floor tile to stand on, it was so packed with commuters going both directions. No one was offering explanations or stopping travelers from going down to the platform. I took the escalator down and took it right back up and tried my luck with the bus.
**It Took Until the Fifth Train to Get On**
by Olivia T, Brooklyn

Every weekday I take the G train from Greenpoint Avenue to Court Sq., then transfer to the E to take me to my job in midtown. In the past year this commute has become so overcrowded that a journey that used to take 20 minutes now takes over an hour. There just aren’t enough trains to accommodate how many people take the G to the E/M/7 in the mornings. I’ve lived off the G train for years, and everyone knows it’s a bit of a running joke. But a lot of people live only near a G train (one of the few places in central and north Brooklyn that is still relatively affordable) and rely on the G to commute. It seems like more and more people join my commute every month. For weeks now I’ve waited on the platform for 20, 30, 45 minutes, watching packed trains go by—this morning, it took until the fifth train to be able to get on. Because of this I’m late to work constantly, and leaving earlier just means waiting on the platform at Greenpoint for longer and longer until I can shove myself onto a train—usually around 9:30am (I got to the station at 8:40am this morning).

**Two Hours on the E Train to Queens**
by Raymond K, Queens

On March 11, it took me two hours and ten minutes on an E train to go from the World Trade Center to Forest Hills! At least twice a week I suffer through extraordinarily lengthy delays along the Queens Corridor. Thankfully, I have an understanding employer. But so many others do not. So are we just supposed to suck it up and expect to constantly be late to everything always? That is a horrible way to run a system that carries 6 million riders a day. Albany needs to provide the MTA with a vast increase in funding to accommodate the MTA’s Capital Program. It can’t be, nor should it be, the primary responsibility of the ridership to bear the brunt of the costs associated with maintaining the system. The state’s largest city, with the nation’s largest public transportation system, deserves better.

**A Cop Had to Intervene on the R Train**
by Gabriel M, Manhattan

One time last year, when I still lived in Brooklyn, I was waiting for a Manhattan-bound R train at my stop, 25th St. First it was five minutes, then ten, then 15 minutes. This wasn’t really cause for alarm since the average wait time for the R train was about 12 to 15 minutes, but by 20 minutes everyone started to get agitated. We started asking the MTA employee in the token booth what was going on and he said nothing; the train was coming. Another ten minutes and everyone was crowding around the token booth trying to find out what was going on and the guy stuck to his story—the train was coming and a 30 minute wait for the R train was “normal.” It turns out a broken-down train had been stuck at 36th St. It took 35 minutes for someone to think to call the MTA employee in our station and tell him, and then he tried to leave without even making an announcement. It got ugly. Several riders angrily confronted him. If not for the intervention of an undercover cop, I believe it would have turned physically violent. The system is obviously broken, and instead of wasting money on something that we can live without, like an AirTrain to LaGuardia, Gov. Cuomo needs to allocate those funds to something that affects the daily lives of millions of New Yorkers.
Trains Randomly Go Local, So I Get Out and Walk  
by Maria D, Manhattan

Commuting to work every morning, I have to let two, 
sometimes three, trains pass by before there is room 
enough to board. There are so many people on the

platform I'm afraid someone will fall off. On the 
weekends, either the uptown or downtown train doesn't 
stop at my station at all. Also, on weekend nights express 
trains randomly go local—until just before my stop— 
meaning I have to get out and walk ten blocks late at night. 
Why is track work taking years and years? The service is 
terrible, unsafe and an embarrassment for what is 
supposed to be “the greatest city in the world.”

I Missed My Job Interview  
by Jasmine R, Queens

I missed my job interview. This was the most 
unprofessional, embarrassing thing to happen. I had a job 
interview for an academic internship that I needed to use 
for experience, especially for my law school application. I 
knew I could not rely on the MTA and I always like to get 
to an interview early, so I left one hour early—and I was 
still late. I had to text the person conducting my interview 
one hour later. I could not explain how frustrating, and 
embarrassing this was.

The Train Just Sat There... For 45 Minutes  
by Lauren T, Manhattan

A couple of months ago, I paid my fare for an evening trip 
on the Brooklyn-bound B train and descended two levels 
of dirty stairs to find my train in the station. Hooray! But 
the train sits. For 30 minutes I wait. No announcements 
are made, no MTA employees are present to explain the 
delay. When I approached the conductor, he said, "There's 
a problem at West 4th St," but did not elaborate. The 
MTA website stated only that there were delays on the D, 
A, C, E, 1, 2, and 3. After another 15 minutes, I give up, 
forfeit my fare, and try to find a taxi for a $40 ride home.
It Took Me 15 Minutes Just to Leave the Station  
by Caroline S, Brooklyn

On March 16 and 17 the L train—the only train for miles in the densely populated Williamsburg, Greenpoint, and Bushwick area—shut down during rush hour due to rail damage. Twice. Two days in a row. It took me 15 minutes just to get off the train and out of the station because of the mass exodus. From there it took me over an hour to get to work via alternative routes. My commute is usually 25 minutes. This type of major delay happening once is bad enough, but two days in a row is unacceptable. This is especially egregious because there has been continuous night and weekend construction on the L for almost all of 2015, but nothing seems to be fixed.

Trapped Between Stations on the R Train  
by Laura B, Queens

I was on my way to an event I organized in Midtown, when the R train I took from Elmhurst stopped. It remain stopped for over an hour. We were told repeatedly over the subway system that there were signal problems and that they apologized for the inconvenience. I missed my event and it was very embarrassing. What if someone had a medical emergency? The thought of being trapped in the middle of a dark subway track for hours on end is panic-inducing and unfair.

People Were Shoving the Man With His Baby  
by Cecilia M, Brooklyn

The other day I was delayed almost two hours because of the L train. First we were told it wasn’t running around Broadway Junction, but then it started to run again—only to move very slowly due to problems at Bedford. Then we were told to get off at Bedford with hundreds of people already at the station, making it a huge crowding issue. We waited and waited until all of a sudden a train appeared. We were all getting pushed and shoved to the point where people were getting hurt. I saw a man holding his baby in one arm and pushing the stroller and it looked like he was getting shoved. There was no one there to talk to anyone directly or even try to manage the situation. This happens often and it’s unacceptable. It’s unfair.

It’s Gotten Worse While I’ve Lived in New York  
by Cynthia F, Brooklyn

My story is that of the daily struggle—just trying to make it to work on time so that I can afford to stay here in NYC. I spend more time on the train, with more delays, overcrowding, and more breakdowns than are acceptable. It’s gotten worse over the seven years I’ve lived in NYC. Funding now for maintenance and improvement of the MTA helps make the city an affordable place to live for people like me who commute on the subways and buses everyday. Please fund the MTA—now and in the future.

There Were No Announcements  
by Michael D, Brooklyn

Two consecutive mornings—March 16th and 17th—the Manhattan-bound L train had no or limited service past Bedford Avenue during A.M. rush hour. On both days, there were no announcements on the trains or platforms until the L reached Lorimer or Bedford stops. The announcements at Lorimer and Bedford suggested taking the G train or going back into Brooklyn to Broadway Junction for the A train. But why did we not get that announcement stops and many minutes earlier? Inconsistent and insufficient communication from the MTA during delays is unacceptable. Accurate and immediate announcements on all platforms would be a
It’s Lucky No One Has Fallen on the Tracks
by Yana D, Manhattan

I ride the 2/3 from 116th Street to Wall Street. So many times this winter the 2/3 is severely delayed during the evening rush hour. You don’t see the delay until you make it down to the platform because there are no displays you could check before swiping. I am also hearing impaired, so I don’t get any of the announcements. The platform is tiny. They allow it to become so overcrowded that it gets ridiculously dangerous. I think it’s pure luck nobody has yet fallen on the tracks or been trampled in that crowd.

9 Months Pregnant and Stuck in the Tunnel
by Ana K, Queens

On December 11th, 2014 during rush hour, I transferred from the N train to the M at 34th Street subway station. The train stopped in the tunnel between 34th Street station and 23rd Street station. I was nine months pregnant at the time and not feeling well. The female conductor was very nice, calling the control center and asking for help, but to no avail. After an hour and twenty minutes the train finally evacuated the passengers. We were maybe thirty feet from the 23rd street station but they wouldn’t let anyone get off the train earlier.

37 Weeks Pregnant & Letting 6 Trains Go By
by Casey R, Brooklyn

I am 37 weeks pregnant. During the morning rush hour, I often have to allow multiple overcrowded 6 trains to go by before one arrives that I can safely ride in my condition. I am 15-20 minutes late to work as a result. This happens at least twice a week.

Stuck For Three Hours After Power Failure
by Leslie L, Queens

I was stranded on a very crowded 7 train this winter when the third rail lost power. Passengers, packed like sardines into the subway cars, were standing on the train for more than three hours. The MTA has been doing work on the 7 line for the past few years, leaving us without any service for many weekends. Many of the people in my neighborhood work in the service industry in Manhattan (hotels, restaurants, performing arts venues). The lack of subway service makes it very difficult for them to reach their jobs on the weekend.

At 77 Years Old, I Need Accessible Subways
by Constance L, Brooklyn

I am 77 years old and need more accessible subways, particularly at the cultural center of Brooklyn, the Brooklyn Museum, which has been on the list to be made accessible for many years. Additionally, the system is far too expensive for low-income families and young people. This is supposed to be a city with transportation for all. I spent a good part of my life advocating for renovation of the Franklin Ave. Shuttle. Now let’s find a way for everyone to be able to use the system.
Late For My First Day of Work
by Frank R, Westchester

It was my first day in the new office in Long Island City. I was depending on taking the 7 from Grand Central to Queens to get there on time. I had confidence that even though it was Monday morning and the 7 hadn't been running over the weekend through my stops, it would be running as promised, after 5:00am. It wasn't. Heavy delays were reported after I had been standing on the platform for a few minutes. An MTA employee just threw up his hands and said he wouldn't hold out for the 7 to run anytime soon. I do not pay the MTA $289 for monthly Metro-North and $112 for monthly subway service to be late on my first day of work.
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ABOUT THE RIDERS ALLIANCE

The Riders Alliance is a grassroots organization of subway and bus riders, pushing for better service at affordable fares and a stronger public investment in mass transit. Visit us on the web at www.ridersny.org.