

Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free

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CONGESTION PRICING TAX WILL EXPEDITE COLLAPSE OF CORE MANHATTAN BUSINESS DISTRICTS: GROUP

Classic Example of Cutting Off Nose to Spite Face

New York-Apr. 26...The New York Times released a major, front-page story today about the continuing collapse of Manhattan's commercial business districts post Covid-19; implementing a \$23 Congestion Pricing Tax to enter Manhattan south of 60th Street by vehicle will almost certainly make things worse, the group Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free today said.

New York's core business districts — midtown and the financial district — have been major tax revenue providers for New York City and New York State historically, but with the popularity of remote work spurred on by Covid, the City and State are losing billions of dollars in tax revenue that used to be generated by daily office visitors. Adding a \$23 paywall tax to enter the districts will, logically, exacerbate the remote work trend, the group asserts.

"This is a tragic case of New York cutting off its nose to spite its face," said Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free spokesman Joshua Bienstock. "Governor Hochul, Mayor Adams, and, especially State Comptroller DiNapoli, understand the dire projections for Manhattan's business districts, yet they continue to insist on implementing a new driving tax on the exact area of the city they are purportedly struggling to revive. It makes zero sense. They also now know that a Congestion Pricing Tax will simply move traffic and car exhaust to other areas of the city, particularly low-income communities of color, but they don't seem to care."

The group called on the City and State to shelve the planned Congestion Pricing Tax to incentivize, rather than disincentivize, workers to return to their desks in the city.

"There are so many reasons to halt this ill-conceived paywall tax into Manhattan's business districts; only stubbornness is keeping it on the table," Mr. Bienstock said. "This supposed revenue generator may be the eventual death of New York as the nation's business capital. It's time to call it off."

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[Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free](#) represents a diverse coalition of civic, business, and labor organizations and businesses throughout New York City. We share a simple vision: to keep our city congestion tax free. Our coalition opposes the imposition of tolls to enter the City's (Manhattan) Central Business District ("CBD") via toll readers installed on City Streets or on the City's FREE East River and Harlem River Bridges. Our members previously opposed the \$8 fee (\$21 for trucks) that then Mayor Bloomberg proposed to impose on drivers entering Manhattan below 86th Street and all subsequent iterations of so-called congestion pricing, including the most current scheme that proponents advocate charging drivers as much as \$25 per day (\$125 per week; over \$500 monthly; more than \$6,000 annually) to enter the CBD! Our members urge New Yorkers to deliver a simple message to our legislators: "Say no to any toll-tax fee scheme that seeks to charge us to enter Manhattan's CBD." Many supporters and coalition members propose alternatives that better address traffic issues in our entire City and provide new and fair sources to support mass transit.