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[ATA Statement on Congestion Pricing]

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Statement from ATA President and CEO Bill Graves

The New York City proposal to charge motorists for driving into Lower Manhattan is being touted as a cure for gridlock and pollution. But in reality, such pricing schemes are unfair, ineffective and ignore our real transportation needs. Even in London, home of the model urban congestion pricing scheme, new reports show congestion is just 8 percent below its pre-program levels and continues to rise—and this is after spending nearly half of the \$14 charged per vehicle for entering the city's center on overhead.

The premise is that congestion pricing will give motorists better road access for a price. In many instances, however, congestion pricing does not markedly reduce congestion; it just raises revenues — or taxes. In New York, motorists would pay \$400 million for a mere 6.3 percent reduction in traffic. The cost is disproportionately high compared with the benefits gained. Not to mention, motorists have already paid taxes to use these roadways.

At its core, congestion pricing is designed to change driving behavior. However if there's no change in driving behavior, there would be no benefits related to congestion and pollution mitigation.

Proponents of congestion pricing say drivers have choices. But many motorists cannot change their work hours or child-care needs. Not everyone has access to public transit. The motorist's alternative to paying more at the toll booth will be to find another route that is time-consuming, shifting congestion to other roads and neighborhoods.

The same will hold true for truck drivers. Because shippers, not trucks, determine delivery times, trucks will simply shift from tolled bridges and tunnels to un-tolled routes and other roadways outside of the congestion zone boundaries.

In short, congestion pricing increases cargo transportation costs and hurts the economy. Higher manufacturers' and retailers' operating costs mean higher costs to consumers for everything from gasoline and clothing to food. Fuel taxes are a much more efficient way to fund new infrastructure that effectively reduces congestion.