

“So who else is using our funds to promote the congestion tax?”

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Fidler says corp. pushing congest pricing shouldn't get government funds

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[Brooklyn City Councilman Lewis Fidler](#) is fuming that the [Downtown Brooklyn Partnership](#) is pushing congestion pricing while receiving \$2 million a year in taxpayer funds.

Fidler (D-[Marine Park](#)) is a leading opponent in the Council of the controversial traffic reduction plan advocated by [Mayor Bloomberg](#).

The plan, as revised by a commission, is headed for uncertain votes in the Council and state Legislature before the end of the month. It basically calls for charging motorists \$8 to bring their cars into [Manhattan](#) south of 60th St.

According to Fidler, the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership owes its very existence to former [Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff](#), who until last month was Mayor Bloomberg's economic development czar and architect of the mayor's congestion pricing plan.

Doctoroff is now president of [Bloomberg LLP](#), the financial information company founded by Bloomberg.

During a Council budget hearing Wednesday, Fidler charged that Doctoroff spurred the formation of the partnership in 2006 and that the partnership's current staff is larded with former City Hall personnel, four of whom are being paid salaries of \$110,000 to \$220,000.

The highest salary is paid to the partnership's president, [Joseph Chan](#), a former Doctoroff senior policy adviser.

The partnership is a not-for-profit local development corporation created to boost development in [downtown Brooklyn](#). Though not a government agency, \$2 million of its \$3 million annual budget comes from the city. The other \$1 million comes from private business and developers.

Fidler launched his attack during a hearing on the preliminary budget of the [Department of Small Business Services](#), which funds the partnership.

Fidler pointedly questioned [Small Business Commissioner Robert Walsh](#) on whether it was appropriate for the partnership to be lobbying for congestion pricing while being funded by taxpayers.

"I don't see any problem with that," Walsh answered, noting that the partnership also receives private funding.

"You don't see a problem with the city funding an agency that then goes and lobbies on behalf of the pet project of the former deputy mayor who created the agency?" Fidler pressed.

In a statement, Chan said the partnership's board "understands that a strong transportation infrastructure is key to a community's economic viability." And that's why "after thoughtful analysis" it decided to support PlaNYC, the mayor's blueprint for shaping the city of the future. It includes congestion pricing.

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