

Keep NYC Free

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For Immediate Release

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Sound Alternatives to Fare Hikes and Tolls Exist

The MTA and the toll-tax supporters continue to FALSELY assert an “all or nothing” scenario that outrageous fare hikes must occur absent passage of the Ravitch scheme which also includes a fare hike and tolling of the free East River and Harlem River Bridges. Nothing remains further removed from the truth. Keep NYC Free calls their bluff. The Keep NYC Free alternative [plan](#) and several other proposals advanced since last Fall clearly offer sound, equitable and fair options to fund transit with NO reliance on an unfair fare hike and no reliance on an inequitable, unfair and inefficient toll tax on our free bridges.

The bottom line remains that annual bridge maintenance costs that the MTA would assume from New York City runs in excess of \$300 million and the costs of installing, maintaining the toll tax collection scheme would cover the rest of the original proposal \$400 million in “costs” and it remains prudent to add to the more than \$100 million in costs borne currently by the City of New York for the former private bus lines now operating as “MTA Bus” that the Ravitch scheme requires the MTA to pick up. Thus, with the original scheme, more than \$2 of every \$5 in toll revenue collected, perhaps as much as \$3 will not fund NEW transit. What a waste! The \$2 toll alternative simply requires the MTA to fork over other revenues to cover the costs of the toll scheme.

This excerpt from today's New York Times covers Mr. Ravitch's pertinent comments that ignore sound alternatives to raising the fare and tolling the free bridges:

“I understand it’s a tough environment and that our recommendations represent painful choices, but there is no way of avoiding a decision,” Mr. Ravitch said. “Doing nothing has consequences.” He said that the rescue plan’s defeat would be “disastrous to the economy and the people of the M.T.A. region.”

{see http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/13/nyregion/13transit.html?_r=1&ref=nyregion}

No reason exists not to discuss the sound alternatives advance by Keep NYC and others. The exclusion of consideration passes beyond the realm of irresponsibility.