

[Never Be Their Fool](#)

Despite an anti-tax environment that puts a cap on property taxes at the apex of current deliberations at our State capitol, whispers continue about the efforts of the congestion taxers to [re-wrap](#) their faulty, inequitable and unfair scheme. Keep NYC Free noted past comments by the [Governor](#) and Senator [Skelos](#) questioning the propriety of this [tax](#). Mayor [Koch](#) also spoke out. Below AAA reminds readers that nothing changed to justify this [tax](#). Let's just sing in unison to the taxers, "[I will refuse to be your fool.](#)"

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Congestion Pricing: The Tax That Won't Die

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It's back. "Congestion pricing" is rising from the grave like a character in a grade-B horror movie. This time around, however, proponents aren't pretending it's about anything but the money. Charging vehicles a fee to enter Manhattan's Central Business District during peak periods is the newest old idea to bail out the MTA at the expense of motorists.

We've heard it—and fought it—before. In 2007, New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg proposed charging cars \$8 and trucks \$21 to enter the heart of Manhattan weekdays between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., promising a greener city. Wrapping congestion pricing in an environmentally correct ribbon, proponents pitched the measure as a green initiative and the more than \$600 million a year that motorists would fork over to the MTA as merely incidental.

But AAA and other critics raised questions about the lack of data backing up the claims. Also, the city's bull-in-the-statehouse tactics to pass the unformed proposal didn't win any friends in Albany. The plan collapsed before it could be brought to a vote by the state legislature.

This time, supporters are favoring a low-key, behind-the-scenes approach, and its green wrapping is more financial than environmental. While there's no concrete plan right now, congestion pricing (or as some proponents brand it, "traffic pricing") raises the same issues today that it did four years ago.

Charging motorists to drive into Manhattan is just another tax. Under the 2007 fee schedule, a daily commuter would pay \$2,200 a year. Because congestion wouldn't be affected until fees rose to punitive levels—so high that only the wealthy could afford to use the streets—the middle-class would be especially hard hit.

How would the suburbs and outer boroughs cope with the traffic and parking if motorists diverted around or parked just outside of the congestion-pricing tollbooths? Would lighter traffic in the Central Business District lead to longer commutes and backed-up traffic elsewhere?

Congestion pricing was a bad idea in 2007, the tough questions still have not been answered, and the only "green" in this idea is the green that proponents hope to lift from motorists' pockets.