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Queens Chamber of Commerce Still Opposed to Congestion Pricing and Tolls

Just one day after the Bronx Borough President [weighs in against the \(Un\)Fair Pricing toll-tax scheme](#), the Queens Chamber of Commerce restates its long-standing opposition.

Keep NYC Free thanks the Queens Chamber.

ADVOCACY CORNER

Queens Chamber Still Opposed to Congestion Pricing and Tolls

BY VINCENT L. PETRARO



Sam Schwartz, a former NYC DOT official and now a traffic engineer, has been pushing for Congestion Pricing and for tolling the free East River crossings for years. He doesn't call it Congestion Pricing these days, rather he uses terms such as "Fair Pricing" or the "Fair Plan"

but what is fair about charging folks from Queens, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Staten Island and Manhattanites above 60th Street for the privilege of traveling into Manhattan below 60th Street?

Forcing all residents and businesses to pay to come into Manhattan is unfair on its face but beyond that, it is an unfair tax on small businesses and on the middle class residents of the City of New York. Many of these businesses and residents use the current free crossings because they cannot afford to pay the high tolls to travel into Manhattan on a daily basis.

Also, tolling is an inefficient way to raise money for mass transit as approximately 40 to 50% of the money garnered would go to operating and administrative expenses. This would be taking money from small business and middle class residents, and then "wasting" a large portion of it. There are fairer ways to raise money for mass transit instead of on the back of small business

and residents of Queens and other boroughs.

On top of this, many of those who now drive would be forced to move to an already overcrowded mass transit system, leaving the roadways available to the rich. What is fair about that? In conclusion, the Queens Chamber of Commerce will once join with others in the battle against Unfair Pricing and on the right to choose how to travel. Having the option to utilize a tolled crossing or a free crossing is the fairest and best way to keep New York City the vibrant place to live and work that it is and has always been.

Vincent L. Petraro is the chair of the Queens Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Advocacy Committee.

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