

Keep NYC Free

www.keepnycfree.com

For Immediate Release: July 25, 2021

Contact: Corey Bearak
(718) 343-6779; cell: (516) 343-6207

“Wrong-way congestion pricing” ***says former NYCDOT Commissioner in NY Daily New Op-Ed***

“Charge app-hail vehicles what the yellows pay and raise about half a billion dollars per year...The money can be raised just by passing a law, not by having to implement \$100 million of electronic tolling systems throughout Manhattan.”

Former NYC Transportation Commissioner Lucious Riccio, who has also served on the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, in a New York Sunday Daily News [op-ed](#) on the current congestion pricing tax scheme, emphasized how “this incarnation may miss the whole point of the original concept by failing to focus on the real cause of congestion, while missing a more effective way of raising money for subways and buses.”

Former Commissioner Ricco stated what any reasonable observer recognizes: “With so many people and businesses recognizing they can do business without occupying Manhattan office space, it might not be the best time to make coming to town a more expensive proposition.” Cleaner cars further obviate the environment basis for this [regressive](#) tax and the vehicular congestion since then Mayor Bloomberg’s failed effort to impose the congestion tax directly results not from any growth in passenger car or yellow taxis but from the – as Riccio writes - “100,000 vehicle increase in Ubers, Lyfts and other for-hire vehicles, which, unlike commuters who mark, not only drive in but then drive around all day, adding to congestion exponentially.

Keeps NYC Free maintains that significant flaws remain in the Congestion Tax scheme to require drivers to pay more to access Manhattan south of 60th Street. In fact, to this date, no discernible programs, projects or services that address these disparities exist in the Capital Plan proposed for funding via the toll-tax scheme.

Further, the stated toll-taxes ranges suggested will not realize the \$1 billion the State and MTA need annually to pay the debt service and principal for the \$15 billion in bonds the MTA plans to sell.

Importantly, this regressive scheme does nothing to address the transit deserts in the outer reaches of the City; it disproportionately burdens those in these transit deserts who rely on cars for their every day needs. **Better ways exist to truly address congestion in the central business district, and certainly to raise the dollars we need.**

View the better ways that make sense to truly address congestion in the central business district and raise the dollars needed to resource the MTA to not only pay for needed repairs but also increase access and make the entire system more accessible and equitable for the entire city.

Read the full op-ed by former NYCDOT Commissioner Lucius Ricco, "[Wrong-way congestion pricing](#)" in the July 25, 2021 Daily News.

-30-

View the Appleseed [report](#) for Keep NYC Free at <http://www.keepnycfree.com>.