

Keep NYC Free

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

“Congestion Pricing Not the Answer” says former NYCDOT Commissioner in Crain’s Op-Ed

“If (Governor Kathy) Hochul wants to raise money for the MTA and do something about congestion, she should do what Cuomo and de Blasio (and the state legislature, for that matter), didn’t have the courage to do.”

Former NYC Transportation Commissioner Lucious Riccio, who has also served on the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, in Crain’s New York Business [op-ed](#) today (Monday, November 1, 2021) criticized the current congestion pricing tax scheme, calling it “really misnamed.” Riccio wrote, “It will do very little (if anything) for traffic congestion and probably increase parking congestion in some areas.”

Former Commissioner Ricco stated what any reasonable observer recognizes: “that rush hour congestion and virtually all of the daytime congestion can be attributed to the invasion of 100,000 Uber drivers during the de Blasio and Cuomo administrations, who have paid almost nothing for the privilege of destroying the traditional [yellow] taxi industry and hurting MTA bus ridership.”

In place of the [regressive](#) congestion toll tax, Riccio recommends: “Sell permits like medallions to the under and charge them \$15,000 per year the City charges the yellows.” In contrast to the one-billion dollars “required” annually to be raised by the unfair and inequitable toll-tax, the Riccio’s solution resources the MTA by 500 times that amount! – **one-half trillion dollars.**

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.

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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 Riccio, [“Want to fix traffic? Congestion Pricing isn’t the answer.”](#) which appeared on page 9 of the Monday, November 1, 2021 print edition of Crain’s New York Business.

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