

Keep NYC Free

www.keepnycfree.com

For Immediate Release: September 28, 2022

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

“Let’s be honest about congestion pricing” says former NYCDOT Commissioner in NY Daily News Op-Ed

Former NYC Transportation Commissioner Lucious Riccio, who has also served on the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, in a Wednesday, September 28, 2022 New York Daily News [op-ed](#) correctly wrote that the current congestion pricing tax scheme, “is not about congestion; it’s about money” and “will cause a traffic and parking nightmare just outside the zone.”

Former Commissioner Ricco stated what any disinterested observer knows: “this current plan will neither relieve congestion nor reduce pollution, especially with all the carve-outs that are being pushed for the vehicles that are really causing the congestion.” Furthermore, cleaner cars obviate the environment basis for this [regressive](#) tax, with Ricco writing, “As for pollution, today’s cars don’t pollute like yesterday’s did, and with ever more electric cars coming soon, our air is not the main issue.”

As we all know 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. Indeed, Riccio, referring to “the 100,000 Ubers and Lyft the Taxi and Limousine Commission let invade the city without paying the congestion charge of a medallion and \$15,000 in annual fees that the limited number of yellow cabs pay,” wrote he “can’t find one transportation or environmental advocate actively pushing this congestion pricing plan who protested the invasion of 100,000 vehicles.” Nor can any of us!

Keeps NYC Free maintains that significant flaws remain in the Congestion Tax scheme and it requires a full Environmental Impact Statement. In fact, to date, no discernible programs, projects or services that address any disparities exist in the Capital Plan proposed for funding via the toll-tax scheme to require drivers to pay more to access Manhattan south of 60th Street, or those who live there to pay after leaving it to return home.

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, “[Let’s be honest about congestion pricing](#),” in the September 28, 2022 Daily News.

-30-

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