

## Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***COMPTROLLER DINAPOLI CALLS FOR EFFICIENCIES — RATHER THAN TOLL HIKES — FOR NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY AUTHORITY***

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***“The Thruway Authority’s toll increase proposal comes at a time of extraordinary challenges for New Yorkers who are faced with rising costs for everything from food to shelter to gas. Raising tolls should be the last option, and the Thruway has more work to do.”***

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### **Same Must Apply to MTA: Group**

*New York-Feb. 24...* State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli hit the nail on the head last week when he called on the New York State Thruway Authority to streamline its operations instead of raising toll prices again on financially strapped New Yorkers, the group Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free today said.

The group urged Comptroller DiNapoli and other leading New York government figures to extend that thinking to the notoriously inefficient Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), whose endemic cost overruns and inefficiencies have become an international embarrassment.

“Kudos to Comptroller DiNapoli for understanding what’s actually happening on the ground throughout the state,” said Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free spokesman Joshua Bienstock. “Working class families are living paycheck to paycheck and finding it nearly impossible to get by. Higher taxes and fees, whether from tolls or through the planned \$23 Congestion Pricing Tax, are like stones to a tired swimmer; any extra bit of weight and they’ll go under.”

Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free recently called for an independent auditor for the notoriously inefficient MTA, and a group of bipartisan members of Congress, including Nicole Malliotakis (R-NY), Michael Lawler (R-NY), and Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ), are seeking Congressional hearings into MTA mismanagement.

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Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free represents a diverse coalition of civic, business, and labor organizations and businesses throughout New York City. We share a simple vision: to keep our city congestion tax free. Our coalition opposes the imposition of tolls to enter the City's (Manhattan) Central Business District ("CBD") via toll readers installed on City Streets or on the City's FREE East River and Harlem River Bridges. Our members previously opposed the \$8 fee (\$21 for trucks) that then Mayor Bloomberg proposed to impose on drivers entering Manhattan below 86th Street and all subsequent iterations of so-called congestion pricing, including the most current scheme that proponents advocate charging drivers as much as \$25 per day (\$125 per week; over \$500 monthly; more than \$6,000 annually) to enter the CBD! Our members urge New Yorkers to deliver a simple message to our legislators: "Say no to any toll-tax fee scheme that seeks to charge us to enter Manhattan's CBD." Many supporters and coalition members propose alternatives that better address traffic issues in our entire City and provide new and fair sources to support mass transit.