

New Yorkers Against Congestion Pricing Tax

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Bill O'Reilly, 212-396-9117

Bill@novemberteam.com

Statement from Susan Lee, President, New Yorkers Against Congestion Pricing Tax

The June 30th Start Date Wasn't Feasible to Begin With and Here's Why

June 11, 2024

“New Yorkers Against Congestion Pricing Tax is grateful to Governor Hochul and various elected officials who support the suspension of the Congestion Pricing Tax indefinitely. Since Governor Hochul’s announcement to pause Congestion Pricing, transit advocates have threatened to hold Governor Hochul responsible for every train and bus delay, and signal failure; however, the Congestion Pricing Plan was not ready for implementation in the first place. The license plate readers are up and activated to track traffic flow but the Federal Highway Administration has yet to approve the final ‘re-evaluation’ of the tolling fee schedule. What has been lost in the discussion is that the MTA cannot go ahead with the Congestion Pricing Tax Scheme without such approval.

“Currently, there are eight lawsuits filed from both New York State and New Jersey. Without a decision from any of these cases, the MTA went ahead with the installation of these license plate readers, which cost \$500M. One of those lawsuits is from New Yorkers Against Congestion Pricing Tax and other plaintiffs from New York City and Long Island including small-business owners and a bipartisan group of elected officials. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed using pre-pandemic data and since then, New York City and the surrounding areas have faced many challenges and changes. Several of the lawsuits, including ours, are petitioning for the more comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement. Apart from the other suits, our suit raises SAPA (NYS Administrative Procedure Act) under which socio-economic impacts and job retention must also be considered.

“If New York wanted to be first in the country to implement a congestion pricing tax, why didn't they get it right from the start? If this was truly about the environment, they should have conducted the Environmental Impact Study/Statement so the public had an accurate understanding of the economic, environmental and equity consequences of Congestion Pricing which were not addressed in the EA.”

###

New Yorkers Against Congestion Pricing Tax is a coalition of residents from diverse neighborhoods around New York City who have initiated a lawsuit to demand that the Federal Highway Administration perform an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to show the real impacts of Congestion Pricing (CP) on our communities. The federal government and the Metropolitan Transit Authority rushed an incomplete Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) instead of applying the more extensive and comprehensive EIS. An EIS would properly examine the three E's: Environmental Impacts, Economic Hardship, and Equity.