

# Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **CASINOS? REVITALIZATION? RESIDENTIAL ZONING? Plans for Manhattan Stymied by Congestion Pricing Tax: Group**

*New York-March 8...*As New York City and New York State discuss ideas to revitalize fallow Manhattan commercial real estate, a major obstacle stands in the way: a punishing and ill-conceived congestion pricing paywall slated to come into effect next year.

The tax, which will cost an estimated \$9 - \$35 per vehicle traveling south of 60th Street, would make plans to [rezone](#) midtown Manhattan buildings for residential use, attract [casinos](#), and get New Yorkers [back into offices](#) destined for failure if congestion pricing goes through, the group Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free today charged.

The group also said that billions of federal dollars provided to New York State for transportation infrastructure negate the argument for a congestion pricing tax entirely.

“When you tax any behavior you get less of it; that’s Economics 101,” said Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free spokesman Joshua Bienstock. “In this case the City and State would be proactively discouraging both residential and commercial activity south of 60th Street, the very areas of Manhattan they ostensibly want to revive. Tell us how that makes sense.

“A tax on drivers is a bad idea for so many reasons,” Mr. Bienstock continued. “In addition to hurting low- and middle-income New Yorkers living in transit deserts, this regressive tax would massively increase traffic north of 60th Street in Manhattan and in the outer boroughs, redirect carbon-belching trucks into communities of color, and, perhaps most urgently, build a paywall to enter Midtown and Downtown Manhattan. It defies common sense.”

Mr. Bienstock pointed out that The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is losing tens of millions of dollars each year to bus and subway fare evaders, and recovering those fees would provide even more money for transportation infrastructure.

“The MTA doesn’t need to impose a new tax on New Yorkers to shore up its budget,” Mr. Bienstock continued,” it simply needs to enforce fare collection and to cut down on the waste for which it’s infamous.”

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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 East River and Harlem River Bridges.