

Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free

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\$2.16 Billion More Reasons Congestion Pricing Tax Isn't Needed; Will Hurt City Communities, Delay Revitalization Efforts

New York-Apr. 7... New York State [will receive](#) an additional \$2.16 billion in federal infrastructure dollars, it was reported today, again negating the need to impose a congestion pricing tax — a prohibitively expensive paywall for low-income New Yorkers — on vehicles traveling south of 60th Street in Manhattan, the group Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free today said. The congestion pricing paywall is scheduled to be implemented in 2023 despite the dramatic drop in business and office activity in Manhattan's central business and financial districts.

“Common sense and logic cry out: ‘Stop the Congestion Pricing Tax!’, and it’s hard to believe our public officials don’t hear them,” said Keep New York City Congestion Tax Free spokesman Joshua Bienstock. “The MTA, one of the most wasteful agencies in New York history, no longer needs the revenue that a congestion pricing tax would provide, and such a paywall would almost certainly hinder efforts to revitalize Manhattan business districts. Moving forward with this exorbitant new tax on New Yorkers makes zero sense; the issue must be revisited before another dollar is wasted on the plan.”

An ominous report recently issued by New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli paints a dire picture for the future of midtown and downtown commercial spaces which are grappling to recover from a Covid-19 pandemic that transformed many work environments from in-person to virtual.

“The Comptroller’s report is clear: midtown and downtown Manhattan will be struggling to rebound for years; adding a congestion pricing tax on top of existing problems could be disastrous,” said Keep New York City Congestion Tax Free spokesman Joshua Bienstock. “New York State needs to rethink congestion pricing, and use the now available federal infrastructure dollars to meet MTA needs. They should be looking at incentives to repopulate our core business sectors, never disincentives.”

The Comptroller's report found that Covid erased nearly \$27 billion in market value within Manhattan's office market this fiscal year alone, costing the state more than \$850 million in lost real estate tax revenue.

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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.