



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Klein Hails Defeat Of Congestion Pricing As "victory For The Middle Class"

JEFFREY D. KLEIN April 16, 2008

Since my earliest days in the Assembly I have fought for middle class families. Whether it's providing a free graffiti removal service and street cleaning to keep our neighborhoods in top shape, or making sure NYC schools get their fair share of education aid, I am committed to providing a superior quality of life for hard working people.

Last week's defeat of Mayor Bloomberg's congestion pricing plan was a victory for Bronx residents. We need to ensure that New Yorkers have a reliable and effective public transportation system *before* we apply what is essentially another tax on the middle class. All New Yorkers deserve the expectation of a speedy and efficient commute. Congestion pricing would've cost Bronx residents \$2,500 or more a year per driver at a time when New Yorkers are struggling in the wake of the housing crisis and a severe downturn in the economy. I have been opposed to congestion pricing since its introduction and will continue to oppose it.

In that vein, I have worked diligently to improve public transportation in the Bronx. Just last year, in response to an outcry from the community, I helped bring major reforms to the 13 express bus routes by working with the MTA Bus Co. to improve on-time service.

As a direct result of my 2006 study, *Stranded at the Stop: An Analysis of New York City Express Bus Service*, the MTA Bus Company added two new stationary dispatchers in Manhattan to better serve the Bronx express bus routes. In addition, there are now three mobile units which travel the Bronx concentrating on reverse rush hours between 6-9 a.m., and Manhattan during regular rush hours between 3-7pm.

Similarly, I have worked with communities to extend existing bus routes as well as repeatedly voting to increase the MTA's budget. As fares and gas prices continue to rise we need to seek solutions which reduce the cost of transportation, not increase it.