



THE LEGISLATURE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

March 19, 2021

Secretary Pete Buttigieg  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Secretary Buttigieg:

As members of the New York State Legislature, we want to extend our congratulations on your historic confirmation as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation and look forward to your leadership in promoting a more equitable, efficient and climate-oriented system.

**Here in New York, one crucial part of that vision is implementing congestion pricing. We, the undersigned, strongly encourage your immediate authorization of the plan so we can save our public transit system, reduce pollution and climate-ravaging emissions, and build back better.**

After more than a decade of organizing and advocacy by grassroots organizations, labor unions, elected officials, business leaders and countless residents, and considerable deliberation and negotiation in the New York State Legislature, congestion pricing was adopted in 2019 with plans to fully roll out in early 2021. Despite this exhaustive and democratic process, the policy was stymied by the Trump administration, denying crucial revenue at a moment when our public transit system existential challenges.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority was already facing several interconnected crises before the pandemic, with crumbling infrastructure and inconsistent service resulting in declining ridership. While the MTA recently received substantial federal aid to meet its immediate budget shortfall, our transit system still requires sustainable sources of long-term funding. By charging a small toll on drivers entering Manhattan below 60th Street, the project is expected to raise \$1 billion in annual revenue—funds that will be protected from raids by the creation of a “lock box.” The MTA will also be able to issue bonds against this revenue, generating capital funds for new signaling, subway cars and track repairs, and an expansion of transit options for historically underserved communities. Revenue will be split among regional transportation agencies with 80% for NYC Transit, 10% for the Long Island Railroad and 10% for MetroNorth, benefiting commuters across the region. The Regional Plan Association estimates these projects could create as many as 350,000 full-time jobs across the state.

But congestion pricing is about even more. In cities that have adopted this system, like London and Stockholm, carbon dioxide levels have dropped by 20%. New York is heading the opposite direction, with pandemic-induced fears of mass transit leading to a dramatic spike in automobile traffic across New York City, threatening to worsen air pollution, reverse progress on our climate goals and harm quality of life.

Without congestion pricing, we can expect decreased quality of service on our subways, fare hikes, and increased pollution, all of which impact working class New Yorkers the most.

We urge you to promptly approve and implement this broadly supported and universally beneficial policy.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration,



Emily Gallagher  
Assemblymember, 50<sup>th</sup> District



Andrew S. Gounardes  
State Senator, 22<sup>nd</sup> District



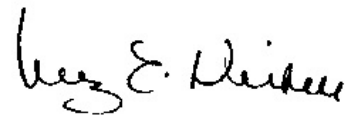
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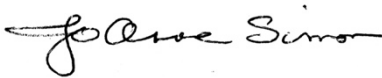
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