



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0419-2022, **Version:** *

Res. No. 419

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to amend state law to make implementation of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's congestion pricing plan, also known as the "Central Business District Tolling Program," subject to a statewide ballot proposal.

By Council Members Borelli, Hanks, Carr, Louis, Yeger, Ariola and Paladino

Whereas, Congestion pricing is a program in which vehicles are charged a fee to drive in certain designated high-traffic areas; and

Whereas, In April of 2019, the New York State (NYS) Legislature enacted the "MTA Reform and Traffic Mobility Act," requiring that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority design, develop, build and run a congestion pricing program officially entitled the Central Business District (CBD) Tolling Program, with toll amounts to be set by a Traffic Mobility Review Board established by that law; and

Whereas, The CBD Tolling Program would impact all streets and roadways south of 60th Street in Manhattan, except for: FDR Drive, West Side Highway/9A, Battery Park Underpass, and any surface roadway portions of the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel connecting the tunnel to West Street; and;

Whereas, In August of 2022, the MTA completed the required Environmental Assessment (EA) of the program, which evaluated the potential effects of the program on specific industries and persons, while also laying out seven hypothetical tolling schemes, and how each one would impact traffic in New York City (NYC) and revenue for the MTA; and

Whereas, Among its key findings, the EA found that, depending on the tolling scenario, the program would have the potential for: disproportionately adverse effects on low-income drivers who do not have an

alternative transportation mode for reaching the Manhattan CBD, and taxi and For-Hire Vehicle drivers in NYC; and increases in all studied pollutants in the Bronx, Richmond (Staten Island), Nassau, and Bergen Counties; and

Whereas, In addition, the EA indicates that in all seven tolling scenarios, with the exception of one scenario for the I-95 in New Jersey, there will be an increase in the annual average daily trips and the daily number of trucks on the Cross Bronx Expressway at Macombs Road in the Bronx, the I-95, and the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge; and

Whereas, Although, as of October of 2022, the exact amounts of tolls have yet to be set for the CBD Tolling Program, based on the seven different scenarios proposed by the MTA, tolls for regular automobiles could range from \$9 to \$23 per trip into the CBD during peak times, \$7 to \$17 for off-peak and \$5 to \$12 for overnight; and

Whereas, The next step in implementation for the CBD Tolling Program is for the EA to be approved by the US Federal Highway Administration (FHA), however, the adverse impacts identified by the EA have furthered concerns regarding if the CBD Tolling Program should proceed to being fully implemented; and

Whereas, Among other things, concerns around the CBD Tolling Program include: the implementation of such a program not resulting in a large reduction of traffic in the long term; the revenue from the program not resulting in large-scale transit improvements for the MTA; and negative health and environmental impacts to outer-borough communities; and

Whereas, As the NYS Constitution requires certain issues of significant public interest to be approved by the voters through statewide ballot measures, such as when seeking amendments to the state constitution or approval for certain bond issuances, it is important for an issue such as whether the congestion pricing program should be implemented to be included as a referendum question on the next ballot, in an effort to ensure that New Yorkers truly support the implementation of such a program; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to

amend state law to make implementation of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's congestion pricing plan, also known as the "Central Business District Tolling Program," subject to a statewide ballot proposal.

KK
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