

Transportation ALTERNATIVES

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Pandering to the Privileged: Congestion Pricing Opponents Ignore Transit-Reliant Majority

New study finds that arguments against pricing are elitist and flawed and that congestion pricing greatly benefits low and middle-income New Yorkers because:

- 1) The supermajority of New Yorkers—especially middle and low income New Yorkers—are transit riders.
- 2) Congestion pricing is by far the most effective way to improve travel for New York's transit-reliant majority.
- 3) In addition to better-quality and lower-cost transit, congestion pricing will return economic, health and quality of life benefits to small businesses and lower-income New Yorkers, who are disproportionately impacted by high volumes of traffic and pollution.

NEW YORK, NY (July 9, 2007): Transportation Alternatives' new study, "The Forgotten Majority: 3 Overlooked Truths About the Impact of Congestion Pricing on New York City's Transit-Reliant Mainstream" shows that the supermajority of lower and middle-income New Yorkers take transit, that congestion pricing is the best way to improve transit for this supermajority, that Manhattan-bound car commuters who live in the four other boroughs and surrounding counties earn at least 23% more than subway and bus riders, and that the ills of congestion disproportionately impact low and middle-income neighborhoods.

"The opponents of congestion pricing are ignoring the overwhelming majority of low and middle income New Yorkers who have no choice but to take transit," says Paul Steely White, executive director of Transportation Alternatives. "This majority deserves faster, more reliable and more frequent bus and subway service and the Mayor's plan would provide that."

Meanwhile, congestion pricing opponents, like NY State Assembly Member Richard Brodsky, whose Manhattan-bound drive-to-work constituents earn on average \$176,231 annually—the highest of any New York county in the metropolitan area—claim that pricing is a regressive tax on lower and middle-income New Yorkers.

Transportation Alternatives' study counters Brodsky and other opponents of congestion pricing with a series of powerful arguments culled from new data and concludes that congestion pricing benefits lower and middle income New Yorkers by ensuring better transit service and reducing the deleterious impacts of congestion that disproportionately effect low and middle income New Yorkers.

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