



Public Comment to MTA Board

Re: Congestion Pricing Is the Law, and Essential to the Health of the Region and State

March 4, 2024

Good morning. I am Rachael Fauss, Senior Policy Advisor for Reinvent Albany. We advocate for more transparent and accountable New York government, including for authorities like the MTA.

Reinvent Albany strongly supports congestion pricing because it's the law, and has been shown globally to reduce motor vehicle congestion, air pollution, and travel times, and will raise \$15 billion to restore and improve transit.

We thank the MTA staff, Governor Hochul, and her team for getting us this far, while weathering an enormous amount of negativity and myopia about congestion pricing, which is on the cusp of being a nation-leading program with vast benefits for the region. Delays and litigation against the program have already had significant costs, including to state of good repair and resignalling projects that are sorely needed to get everyday transit riders to work, health care, school, and more.

Today's hearing is about the toll levels charged by congestion pricing. Reinvent Albany strongly supports the MTA's congestion pricing toll recommendations and appreciates their effort – and the Traffic Mobility Review Board's – to keep toll, credit, and exemption recommendations simple and easy for the public to understand.

We believe the MTA's congestion pricing tolls are pragmatic and fair, and should be adopted as is. We specifically support the flat \$2.50 per-ride toll for app-based for-hire vehicles (Uber and Lyft), which we see as structurally important to the success of congestion pricing.

We also strongly agree with the [Environmental Assessment](#) that the MTA must continually monitor and assess how well congestion pricing is reducing traffic delays and generating revenue, and regularly modify the program so it achieves the best possible results. We emphasize that a core part of this ongoing improvement should be publishing traffic, air quality, and revenue data as open data.

Lastly, we'd like to emphasize three important benefits of congestion pricing, as highlighted in our recent reports:

1. MTA workers doing in-house capital work will get [\\$3.2 billion of the \\$15 billion](#) congestion pricing is required to raise for the MTA's 2020-2024 capital plan.
2. Congestion pricing will create tens of thousands of local jobs throughout NYS. From 2014 to 2022, the MTA directly paid [\\$26 billion to its vendors](#) located in communities across New York State, largely from its capital programs.
3. The MTA [paid New Jersey companies \\$3.3 billion](#) from 2014-2022 for goods and services related to capital construction projects and other needs. Overall, NJ ranks second of all states for MTA spending on outside vendors.

Thank you for your consideration.