

June 26, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

We write in strong opposition to your last-minute attempt to delay congestion pricing. As a coalition of almost 120 organizations and elected officials, we represent the interests of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. We state unequivocally that delaying congestion pricing will endanger the City's future, the region's future, and indeed the future of the State of New York. You must turn on the program on June 30th, as is the law.

Delaying congestion pricing will negatively impact millions of New Yorkers who rely on public transportation every day – as well as businesses and the health and wellbeing of our city and region as a whole. Any delay will result in the continued overflow of congestion on our streets, hurting businesses, workers, and their families; worsen delays for emergency vehicles and response; maintain the deadly status quo of asthma, pollution, and traffic crashes; leave low-income New Yorkers and parents who rely on our bus system in greatest proportion stuck in endless traffic; hurt our ability to reach New York's climate goals; and deprive our transit system of billions of dollars in essential reliability and accessibility upgrades.

Without congestion pricing, the MTA will have to significantly shrink the current capital program, squeeze its operating budget by being forced to borrow money at a higher cost earlier – making more drastic fare increases likely, and inevitably make service cuts that affect the mobility of every New Yorker. It also calls into question the anticipated increases in service on several subway and bus lines that have been promised to start this summer. A decades-long legacy of underfunding and neglect left our public transit system hanging by a thread, resulting in the decay of the 1970s and the Summer of Hell in 2017. With a congestion pricing pause, we are again facing a death spiral of increased delays and outright failures of the system that millions of working people rely on every day. Janno Lieber, CEO and Chairman of the MTA, said the agency would need to prioritize “basic stuff to make sure the system doesn't fall apart.”

We are now at grave risk of not seeing improvements that are critical to delivering a 21st-century transit system for our 21st-century region and that are standard in cities around the world. This includes upgraded signals to increase reliability and frequency and allow for increased service; new rolling stock – including hundreds of electric buses and depot modernization; dozens of elevator and other key accessibility projects across the MTA service area, including subways, the LIRR and Metro-North stations – which will cause a cascading effect on transit accessibility in the future; and key safety upgrades. This is unacceptable.

Congestion pricing is more than just a funding system for the MTA – it's a critical policy to improve the streetscape of New York City and the public health of all New

Yorkers. There are more drivers in New York than pre-pandemic, and a recent report by the Regional Plan Association and Sam Schwartz shows that traffic is the slowest on record. Traffic congestion has long clogged our streets, slowing private automobiles, emergency vehicles, and city buses to a crawl, preventing safe biking and walking, and costing workers, families, and businesses \$20 billion each year. Every day, there are also preventable crashes in the congestion relief zone – with someone killed or seriously injured every 36 hours – and we know that serious injuries and deaths plummeted by over 25% after congestion pricing was implemented in London.

Crashes are also not the only danger that congestion pricing would address. In New York City, PM2.5 air pollution annually results in more than 3,000 deaths, 2,000 hospital admissions for heart and lung problems, and roughly 6,000 emergency room visits for asthma in children and adults. Cars entering the zone fill the air with dangerous particulate matter that pollutes our bodies and sets back our fight against climate change. **Delaying congestion pricing will negatively impact New York City for decades to come – and specifically harm New Yorkers with disabilities, with respiratory illnesses, who rely on the bus, who are aging in place, who are not white, who are parents of young children, and who are working class and middle class – but particularly those with lower incomes.**

Congestion pricing is an effective policy tool to fight many of the biggest issues our region is facing – **it is also the law of New York State and must be implemented on June 30th.** We cannot afford to wait.

CC: Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie; NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins; US Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer; Senator Kirsten Gillibrand; NYC Congressional Delegation; New York City Mayor Eric Adams; New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams; MTA leadership

Sincerely,

Natural Resources Defense Council

Jobs to Move America

New York Building Congress

Evergreen Action

Environmental Advocates of New York

Southeast Bronx Community Council

El Puente

Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York

Transit app

Food and Water Watch

Disabled In Action

New York League of Conservation Voters

America Walks

Staten Island Partnership for Community Wellness

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

New York Communities for Change (NYCC)

Four Freedoms Democratic Club

Court Square Civic Association

The Greater Flushing Chamber of Commerce

Democratic Socialists of America, New York - Eco Socialist Working Group

Move NY

Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC)

Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Reinvent Albany

Riders Alliance

Regional Plan Association

Transportation Alternatives

Families for Safe Streets

Bike South Brooklyn

StreetsPAC

UP-STAND

Oonee

Bike New York

Make Queens Safer

Open Plans

Center for an Urban Future

Neighbors for A Safer Austin Street

Brooklyn Greenway Initiative

Eastern Queens Greenway
KALM Living
Brooklyn Spoke Media
Street Plans, Inc.
Design Trust for Public Space
Five Boro Bike Tour
New Yorkers for Parks
CNU NYC
TREEage
Friends of Cooper Park
HabitatMap
Revolution Rickshaws
It's Easy Being Green
Make McGuinness Safe
Gehl Studio
Kidical Mass NYC
Make Brooklyn Safer
Right of Way
Bicycle Habitat
UP Global
League of American Bicyclists
Harlem River Working Group
Robert M Cohn Consulting Services
play:groundNYC
Churches United for Fair Housing (CUFFH)
DriveRehab
Ciclistas Latinoamericanos de New York
Geraldine Bryant (Neighborhood Organization)
Walkspan
Bike Hoboken
Buro Happold

B.R.A.K.E.S. (Bay Ridge Advocates Keeping Everyone Safe)

Staten Island Therapeutic Gardens

Bait-ul Jamaal House of Community

Everything Goes Cafe

Makerspace NYC

Forest Hills Green Team

Dance Rising NYC

Project for Public Spaces

North Brooklyn Mutual Aid

Hudson County Complete Streets

Park Avenue Block Association

WXY architecture + urban design

OutCycling

Sixth Street Community Center

Kids and Car Safety

Bay Ridge Environmental Group

Major Taylor Iron Riders

Bike JC

Institute for Rational Urban Mobility

Ridgewood Rides

Bike North Bergen

New York City Comptroller, Brad Lander

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Lander', with a stylized, flowing script.

United States Representative Jerrold Nadler, NY-12



Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso



Councilmember Crystal Hudson, District 35



Councilmember Julie Won, District 26



Councilmember Lincoln Restler, District 33



Councilmember Shahana Hanif, District 39



Councilmember Sandy Nurse, District 37

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alexa Aviles', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Councilmember Alexa Aviles, District 38

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tiffany Caban', written in a cursive style.

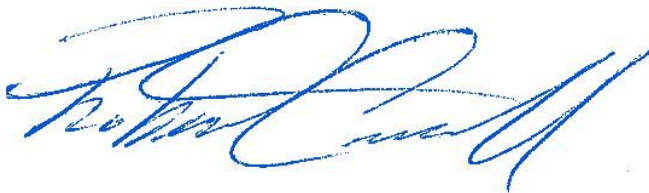
Councilmember Tiffany Caban, District 22

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Erik Bottcher', with a large 'E' and 'B' and a long horizontal flourish.

Councilmember Erik Bottcher, District 3

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Robert Carroll', written in a cursive style.

Assemblymember Robert Carroll, District 44

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Emily Gallagher', written in a cursive style.

Assemblymember Emily Gallagher, District 50



Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, District 74



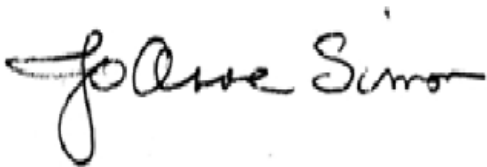
Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal, District 67



Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes, District 51



Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon, District 52



Assemblymember Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, District 34



Assemblymember Tony Simone, District 75

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Sevil". The letters are fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Assemblymember Souffrant Forrest, District 57

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Juan". The signature is very stylized and elongated, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Assemblymember Juan Ardila, District 37

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris, District 12

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Gianaris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Zellnor Myrie, District 20

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zellnor Myrie". The signature is very stylized and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

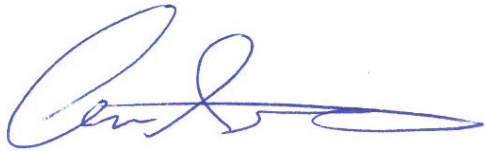
Senator Jabari Brisport, District 25

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Salazar". The letters are fluid and cursive.

Senator Julia Salazar, District 18

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Julia Salazar". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Senator Andrew Gounardes, District 26

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Andrew Gounardes". The signature is highly stylized and cursive.

Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, District 47

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brad Hoylman-Sigal". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Senator Jessica Ramos, District 13

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jessica Ramos". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Senator Gustavo Rivera, District 33

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Gustavo Rivera". The signature is highly stylized and cursive.