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CITIZENS UNION URGES NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE TO ENACT CONGESTION PRICING

**Good Government Group Encouraged by Plan's Recent Modifications
*Supports Action by City Council but Believes Further Changes in Final Plan are Needed***

Citizens Union today announced its support for congestion pricing and urged the New York State Legislature to pass congestion pricing legislation with a number of additional changes. The historic good government group has just now finished its internal review of the January 31st commission plan and the state legislation introduced last week. The review resulted in the organization's board of directors voting yesterday in support of congestion pricing with modifications.

The civic group is gladdened to see that the current legislation, which received the support of the City Council on Monday, has been made progressively fairer and stronger, addressing some of the concerns which Citizens Union had about the initial proposal put forward by the Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission (TCMC) in late January.


Dick Dadey, executive director of Citizens Union, said, "Congestion pricing is needed not only to mitigate traffic congestion and curtail pollution, but also to fund necessary and needed improvements to the city's public transportation system. We are pleased to see that the plan has been made fairer over the past few days, but still feel additional changes are needed. Chief among them is the creation of an oversight panel of independent experts charged with ongoing review of the program and its implementation." Dadey further said, that "Like so many New Yorkers, Citizens Union knows that much of what is being proposed is an experiment that holds the promise of success. We are willing to support taking that risk, but ask that the program be subject to independent and periodic review to ensure that the promises made are in fact achieved."

In addition to supporting a "lock-box" mechanism for dedicating revenues to public transportation improvements, a residential permit parking program, the creation of a mechanism for tax relief for limited income drivers, and the reduction a toll offset for certain drivers unless the NY/NJ Port Authority enters into a \$1 billion subsidy agreement with the MTA, Citizens Union also urges the following:

1. Creation of an Independent and Expert Panel to Conduct Ongoing Review of the Program,

- Even Further Expansion of Bus Rapid Transit Above Its Planned Initial Implementation,
3. Exemption for Certain Charities, and an
 4. Appropriate Level of Environmental Review is Undertaken in Accordance with State Law.

Citizens Union's full analysis and position on the issue of congestion pricing is available on line at www.citizensunion.org



Citizens Union of the City of New York, a non-partisan force for good government for more than 100 years, works to inform and engage New Yorkers, to ensure local and state government values its citizens, addresses critical issues, and operates in a fair, open, and fiscally sound manner.

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