



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Statement by State Senator Liz Krueger on Passage of Congestion Pricing Bill

LIZ KRUEGER July 25, 2007

"Today's legislative passage of a congestion pricing bill is very good news for the City of New York. My district encompasses much of the proposed pricing zone, and the need to cut the number of vehicles on the streets is clear. Congestion is much more than just an annoyance for drivers—it has far-reaching negative consequences to New Yorkers' health and quality of life.

In my district, for a significant part of the day, senior citizens, the mobility-impaired, and families with young children do not feel safe crossing the street because of gridlock with traffic "blocking the box" at every corner. In addition, ambulances, fire trucks and other emergency vehicles have great difficulty getting to those who need their immediate help.

A plan to mitigate congestion in the City's core has the potential to fundamentally change the transportation practices of the entire region. The commission we have created will ensure that the plan ultimately implemented is comprehensive and allows for maximum results. And a very important part of this plan is allowing the proposal to be first approved by the City Council, the local legislative body, meaning that those who are actually affected by our transportation infrastructure have a direct oversight role.

However, the devil is in the details, and there are a number of pieces left to work out. In the coming months, I expect answers related to:

Implementing a long-term strategy that increases access to, and the reliability of, regional mass transit options, including Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), the 2nd Avenue Subway, and expansion of alternatives to private-vehicles into and out of the City;

Resolving serious concerns about the potential traffic and parking impacts on communities in and around the designated zone;

Ensuring that concerns related to the use of cameras as a means to enforce a congestion zone are sufficiently addressed, and civil liberties protected; and

Re-evaluating the City's flawed parking permit system for government workers and reducing the number of unnecessary vehicles through the confiscation of non-justifiable and fake permits."