



March 19, 2025

The Honorable Sean Duffy  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

The American Trucking Associations and the Trucking Association of New York represent trucking companies throughout the United States and in New York, respectively. A well-maintained and less congested transportation network is critical to the safe, efficient movement of goods. The trucking industry delivers 73 percent of the nation's freight and 90 percent in New York City using the roadway system, our members' workplace. Accordingly, we fully support the levels of investment necessary to address system deficiencies.

Those who benefit from transportation projects should be willing to contribute to their construction and maintenance. Accordingly, we believe a user-based approach to transportation funding is best. We also support operational strategies that reduce congestion. However, we oppose schemes that discriminate against the trucking industry and force highway users to subsidize projects with questionable value to those making financial contributions. For these reasons, we stand behind the U.S. Department of Transportation's decision to rescind New York's authority to toll drivers operating in Manhattan as part of the city's congestion pricing program.

As your February 19 letter to Governor Hochul stated, while the Value Pricing Pilot Program was created by Congress for the express purpose of demonstrating the potential for variable tolls to influence travel behavior, toll rates under the Manhattan program were clearly established primarily to meet a financial target. In fact, when authorizing congestion pricing in New York law, the legislature mandated that the program generate \$1 billion in revenue to support \$15 billion in new bonding. As you are aware, 100 percent of the revenue is dedicated to funding transit improvements, with none of the money going toward fixing the city's decrepit roads and bridges. Of New York City's 809 bridges, 520 were rated in poor or fair condition in 2023, with five closed and 31 load-posted. Furthermore, the New York City area is home to five of the nation's worst highway freight bottlenecks. Yet, instead of investing the funds that motorists

contributed for the use of the city's streets to improve the roadway infrastructure that drivers depend on, the City chose to spend it on a bloated, overpriced transit bureaucracy.

Unlike passenger vehicles, there is no viable alternative for trucks that must operate in the congestion zone to deliver the essential freight relied upon by businesses, the hospitality industry, and health care facilities, to name a few. Furthermore, trucking companies do not determine pick-up and delivery times; those decisions are made by their customers. Therefore, the same financial incentives that may induce car drivers to choose different travel times or modes of transportation do not apply to the delivery of goods. In practice, the tolls imposed on trucks operating in the Congestion Relief Zone do nothing more than increase the cost of moving freight, costs that are ultimately borne by consumers. This was clearly not the intent of Congress when it created the Value Pricing Pilot Program.

Worse still, the congestion pricing scheme was clearly designed to discriminate against trucks. While passenger vehicles pay a \$9.00 daily fee that provides them with unlimited passage into the zone (a requirement of New York State law), trucks are forced to pay up to \$21.60 each time they enter the zone. Our members report that, as a result, they have increased their rates to offset the additional costs, which are significant and cannot be absorbed by carriers already operating on low margins. It should be noted that trucks already pay a highway use tax and a commercial motor vehicle tax to operate on roads in New York City, taxes that passenger vehicles are not subject to.

The result is higher prices for everyone living, working in, and visiting the city, with the potential for significant job losses. While the Metropolitan Transportation Authority claims reductions in congestion, to date our members report that improvements to delivery times have varied, and overall benefits are minimal and do not come close to offsetting massive operating cost increases.

We would like to thank you for your efforts to halt this ill-conceived, discriminatory scheme. We encourage USDOT to take all necessary steps to ensure that New York's application of tolls is consistent with the Constitution and federal statutes.

Sincerely,



Kendra Hems  
President  
Trucking Association of New York



Chris Spear  
President & CEO  
American Trucking Associations