



January 16, 2008

**Testimony of the Women's City Club of New York  
Before the New York City Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission  
Hearing on Interim Report of January 10, 2008**

**Presented by Joan S. Freilich, Chair, Infrastructure Committee**

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in response to the interim report of the New York City Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission. My name is Joan Freilich, and I am Chair of the Infrastructure Committee of the Women's City Club of New York.

The Women's City Club is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that has worked to shape public policy in many areas of contemporary concern since 1915.

We commend the Commission appointed by New York City and State elected officials on its fair and thorough study of ways to improve the quality of life in the City by reducing congestion caused by vehicular traffic.

We support the implementation of a pilot congestion pricing program, along with the improvements in mass transit required to ensure that this program is equitable to all New Yorkers. We believe that, overall, the modifications to the Mayor's plan reflected in Option #2 represent significant improvements, in that they reduce the complexity of the initial proposal, increase net revenues, and more equitably spread the financial impact of the plan over all vehicles entering the Central Business District.

We remain concerned that the Commission does not recommend in its interim report a means of ensuring that the new revenues will be dedicated to mass transit improvements, and urge that such means be specified in the final report. The final report should also reflect strong commitments by the MTA and the State DOT to complete specified transit improvements before the new pricing program goes into effect.

With regard to Option #3, Tolling the East River and Harlem River Bridges, the Women's City Club has long supported tolls on the East River bridges, with the revenues to be used for maintenance and repair of the crossings. However, putting tolls on the Harlem River bridges would raise many new issues of fairness and impact on local communities. Because these and other issues raised by the possibility of tolling the Harlem River bridges have not yet been studied in depth, we believe that Option #3 should not be further considered at this time.

Thank you for your attention.