

Regular New Yorkers just want to say no to the congestion tax and its variant toll/tax plans.

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NEW YORK POST

CAR-FEE PLAN DRIVES COMMUTERS TO RAGE

By **PATRICK GALLAHUE**

January 17, 2008 -- Angry commuters slammed Mayor Bloomberg's plan to charge drivers up to \$8 to enter most of Manhattan yesterday.

About 100 opponents showed up to a public hearing at Hunter College to discuss a revised plan that includes several alternatives to the original congestion-pricing scheme, including bridge tolls, lowering the boundaries of the zone from 86th to 60th streets and tax and fee hikes on parking.

"Sealing off Manhattan and creating a tolled moat around [Manhattan] really is a slap in the face to all the taxpayers who live in the outer boroughs," said Robert Friedrich, of Glen Oaks Village in Queens.

The mayor released the set of alternatives to his congestion-pricing plan last week, estimating it would raise hundreds of millions of dollars for mass transit.

But Assemblyman Micah Kellner (D-Manhattan) countered, "We cannot be lulled by assurances that the MTA will take care of everything."

One Brooklyn community group in support of the proposal claimed that among those who stand to benefit the most are the poor.

The Pratt Center for Community Development analyzed census data for the five boroughs and claims that two-thirds of commuters who travel more than an hour each way to work earn less than \$35,000 a year compared to only 6 percent who make more than \$75,000.

"The mass-transit system is failing those of us who need it the most," said Silvett García, of the Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice in The Bronx.

Additional reporting by Mary Cuddehe