

Here We Go Again

Periodically, someone speaks, perhaps from the hip, ignorant of local history and politics, without doing the research, or choosing to ignore the undisputed facts. And Keep NYC Free responds to properly educate the misinformed one and anyone who might accept the misinformation. For example, look at our post, [The Song Remains The Same](#) from last March; or [You're The Next Fool! \(Reprise\)](#) last February or [You're The Next Fool!](#) as 2009 ended. Deputy Mayor Goldsmith's recent New York 1 News [interview](#) brought to mind the closing lyrics of a [song](#) penned by Eagles bassist/ vocalist [Timothy Schmit](#):

*Ooh – Could it really be it's not the same
Looking' back behind is such a silly game
But here we go again*

As we stated several times here (and elsewhere) Congestion Pricing – what we more properly call the Congestion Tax – remains “the faulty policy that no amount of messaging can correct.” The scheme just does not achieve what the supporters claim. Worse, the Deputy Mayor talks of the congestion tax as a solution to current congestion most likely the result of the administration's plaza schemes with all their attendant lane closings, re-routings and revised bus routes, and having little relation to increased traffic. Throughout the past debates Keep NYC Free [documented](#) how the scheme and its variants failed.

No change in Deputy Mayors or mouthpieces fixes the inefficiencies, the unfairness, and the unsoundness of each of the schemes.

For the Deputy Mayor's convenience – if he really cares about the economy and steady revenues for the MTA, we recommend he add to this summer's required reading list the Keep NYC Free [plan](#).

[See next page for the transcript of the Deputy's Mayor's comments]

<http://transportationnation.org/2010/07/21/ny-deputy-mayor-congestion-pricing-terrific/>

Full transcript here:

Elizabeth Kaledin, NY1: What about Albany? Specifically let's talk about it in relation to congestion pricing. You are on record as saying you like the idea, you're in favor of it. It was a knock-down fight between Mayor Bloomberg and Albany. Many of the people representing our suburban residents were extremely angry about the idea and it went down in big defeat for the mayor. Is there any chance that congestion pricing could be brought back and do you have the political stomach to deal with the crew up there?

Goldsmith: Well let's think about this. Yes, I thought and think it's a good idea. I thought what the Mayor did would be a terrific thing for the city and would have avoided, had it been implemented, a number of the really painful MTA cuts that are occurring now. I think the fact that there are so serious cuts raises the possibility of it being considered again.

I'm not a New York City — let alone New York State — political expert. So I can't make the decision about whether the mayor should expend political capital to try it again. I'm willing to play my part, if he decides to, and try to work through the negotiations of how it could be in everyone's best interest and how it could be rounded off a little bit. Whether or not he decides to take it on we haven't had that explicit discussion. I'm happy to help but it's not my political reputation that would be on the line.

Kaledin: Would you recommend he expend the political capital and take it on?

Goldsmith: I can't make that evaluation. My recommendation would be — it was a very valuable policy suggestion on his part, it's even more valuable now. I don't have the political background in New York to say "let's make the case."

Kaledin: But as an urban planner and someone who's interested in the future of cities and their development, would you say this kind of thinking is the kind of innovative thinking that makes cities better places to live? And makes them grow economically?

Goldsmith: Absolutely, it's an imperative. Congestion is an issue. It's not just — it's not really to me even just the revenue from congestion pricing that makes it so exciting. The issue is you've got a limited number of transportation mechanisms and different ways to get around. Both how you get around and where you are driving or what subway you are taking or what bus you are on. And how New Yorkers use those resources will have to be very efficient for the infrastructure to maintain the number of people. And congestion pricing causes people to think differently about how they consume those roads and consume those bridges and so it's a very important signal to the populace.