



# Queens Civic Congress, Inc.

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President

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To Queens City & State Delegations.

My name is Harbachan Singh, President of the Queens Civic Congress, an umbrella organization that represents over 100 civic associations throughout the borough. The Queens Civic Congress was formed in 1997 primarily to unite civic groups to improve the quality of life and to preserve and protect the residential areas of our borough and to help members fight overdevelopment and inappropriate development in their communities.

We wish to register our strong opposition to Move NY's recently re-introduced 'Fair Tolling Plan' which purports to impose tolls on the East River Bridge Crossings, ostensibly to provide funding for MTA operations and maintenance while reducing some fees currently imposed on the MTA crossings. The proponents seem to believe that the current proposal would somehow mollify the failed congestion pricing schemes of the past.

On behalf of the Queens Civic Congress member organizations spanning our borough, we must register our strong opposition to placing tolls on the East River bridges or any proposal which would impose tolls on the few remaining free crossings to Manhattan for the following main reasons:

Firstly, the imposition of tolls would inarguably create both a physical and a psychological barrier between the outer boroughs and Manhattan. This would further diminish the century old concept of a unified city composed of equal boroughs. The New York City's boroughs were intended to nourish each other and form a preeminent city, but the additional expense to residents and businesses and the psychological barrier of tolls will harm that objective.

Secondly, such tolls would undoubtedly create an undesirable restraint which would hamper inter borough industry and commerce where outer borough residents access Manhattan goods and services. There are numerous businesses that make daily or more frequent trips between the boroughs and tolls would place an unnecessary expense burden on them. In addition, many residents from Brooklyn, Queens or the Bronx, would on weekends take one of the bridges to a show, museum, gallery, shop or restaurant. That trip would seem much less inviting if they have to pay a toll.