



# Queens Civic Congress

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
MONDAY, JULY 9, 2007

## **QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS QUESTIONS TACTICS TO IMPOSE CONGESTION TAX**

### **Statement by Queens Civic Congress President Sean M. Walsh**

Supporters of the Congestion Tax scheme admitted LAST MONTH to spending THREE MILLION DOLLARS to foist their scheme to charge New Yorkers \$8 (\$21 for truckers) to drive into Manhattan below 86th Street. Now, with a new glossy mailing slated to arrive in many of our mailboxes, they try to paint Queens civic leaders and others who stand against this tax as the devil for opposing their scheme. I for one resent that. I know my fellow civic leaders feel the same way. This buy the fear campaign is nothing less than despicable.

Their latest promotional mailing features a stock photo of a girl clutching an asthma inhaler, with text stating: "She cannot hold her breath waiting for Albany to act." In fact, our state legislators and Governor face no need to act.

A July 5, 2007 Daily News article disclosed the ad is being sent to 350,000 families by a business lobbying group that represents many of Manhattan's wealthiest and elitist companies," explained the QCC President. The flyer says that "over 300,000 New York City kids have asthma - a disease made worse by air pollution and traffic congestion."

The Congestion Tax does not in any way target traffic in the New York City neighborhoods where youngsters suffer from asthma. The South Bronx, East Harlem, South Jamaica, LI City/Astoria, Bed-Stuy all lie outside Manhattan south of 86th Street.

The Queens Civic Congress, an umbrella organization of over one hundred civic and community associations from across the entire borough of the two million plus residents of Queens county, will not stand idly by and allow tax proponents to link their scheme with a cure for asthma.

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Tax scheme supporters hope this mailing will induce our neighbors to call our state legislators to go back into a special session in Albany July 16. Yet, no federal funds sit in any account that New York can tap if our legislators would impose this regressive tax. U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio, chair of the relevant House subcommittee, made clear to our state leaders that Congress authorized no federal funds for this project and the US DOT Secretary lacks any dollars to fund this scheme.

Nothing requires the State Legislature to rush to act by July 16. The USDOT's Federal Register notice indicates clearly malleable timelines to qualify for funding.

This Congestion Tax would take \$2 of every \$5 collected to support the scheme, rather than to improve transit; that's grossly inefficient as a proposed revenue source. This scheme also offers no tradeoff in immediate or near-term mass transit improvements for city commuters; in fact, the MTA admits its system lacks capacity to handle the projected 90,000 riders the congestion tax scheme envisions diverting to rail, subways and buses.

No money. No deadline. No sense. Why then the haste to act? We tell our state legislators: "No to the Congestion Tax".

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Association of Old Forest Hills ♦ Auburndale Improvement Association ♦ Bayside Civic Database ♦ Bayside Clear-Spring Council ♦ Bayside Hills Civic Association ♦ Bayswater Civic Association ♦ Bay Terrace Community Alliance, Inc. ♦ Bellaire-BellVill Civic Association ♦ Belle Harbor Property Owners Association ♦ Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association ♦ Bellerose Hillside Civic Association ♦ Bell Park Manor Terrace Community Council ♦ Bowne Park Civic Association ♦ Briarwood Community Association ♦ Cambria Heights Civic Association ♦ Cherry Robinson Homeowners ♦ C.O.M.E.T. (Communities of Maspeth-Elmhurst Together) ♦ Concerned Citizens of Laurelton ♦ Cornucopia Society ♦ Creedmoor Civic Association ♦ Deerfield Area Association ♦ Doug-Bay Manor Civic Association ♦ Douglas Manor Association ♦ Douglaston Civic Association ♦ Dutch Kills Civic Assn. of Long Island City ♦ East Flushing Civic Association ♦ Federated Block Associations of Laurelton ♦ Federation of Civic Associations of Southeast Queens ♦ Floral Park Community Council ♦ Flushing Heights Civic Association ♦ Flushing on the Hill Taxpayers Association ♦ Forest Hills Chamber of Commerce ♦ Forest Hills Crescents Association ♦ Forest Hills-Van Court Association ♦ Fresh Meadows Homeowners Association ♦ Georgetown Mews ♦ Glendale Civic Association of Queens ♦ Glen Oaks Village Owners, Inc. ♦ Greater Astoria Historical Society ♦ Greater Whitestone Taxpayers Civic Association ♦ Harding Heights Civic Association ♦ Hillcrest Estates Civic Association ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #1 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #2 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #3 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #4 ♦ Hollis Hills Civic Association ♦ Holliswood Civic Association ♦ Hollis Park Gardens Civic Association ♦ Holly Civic Association ♦ Hunters Point Community Coalition ♦ Hyde Park Gardens Cooperative ♦ Jackson Heights Beautification Group ♦ Jamaica Estates Association ♦ Jamaica Hill Community Association ♦ Juniper Park Civic Association ♦ Kew Forest Neighborhood Association ♦ Kew Gardens Civic Association ♦ Kew Gardens Hills Homeowners Association ♦ Kissena Park Civic Association ♦ Little Neck Bay Civic Association ♦ Little Neck Pines ♦ Malba Civic Association ♦ Meadowlark Gardens Owners ♦ Middle Village Maspeth Civic Association ♦ Middle Village Property Owners Association ♦ Mitchell Linden Civic Association ♦ Neponsit Property Owners Association ♦ Newtown Civic Association ♦ North Bellerose Civic Association ♦ North Flushing Civic Association ♦ North Hills Estates Civic Association ♦ Northwest Clearview Homeowners Association ♦ Norwood Civic Association ♦ Oakland Terrace/ Gardens Community Council ♦ Off Broadway Homeowners Association ♦ Our Neighborhood Improvement Association ♦ Parkway Village Historical Society ♦ Queensboro Hill Neighborhood Association ♦ Queens Colony Civic Association ♦ Queens Community Civic Corp. ♦ Queens Village Civic Association ♦ Ramblersville-Hawtree Civic Association ♦ Richmond Hill Historical Society ♦ Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association ♦ Rockaway Park Homeowners/ Residents ♦ Rocky Hill Civic Association ♦ Rosedale Civic Association ♦ Royal Ranch Association. ♦ Southeast Queens Concerned Neighbors ♦ South Ozone Park West Civic Association ♦ Springfield/Rosedale Community Action Association ♦ Station Road Civic Assoc. of Auburndale ♦ Sunnyside Gardens/Harrison Place Homeowners ♦ Surrey Estates Civic Association ♦ Union Turnpike Merchants Association ♦ United Forties Civic Association ♦ United Neighbors Civic Association ♦ Utopia Estates Civic Association ♦ Waldheim Neighborhood Association ♦ Wayanda Civic Association ♦ West Cunningham Park Civic Association ♦ Westmoreland Association ♦ Woodside Community Council