



Queens Civic Congress

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QUEENS CIVICS & ELECTEDS: KEEP EAST RIVER TOLL-FREE

The [Queens Civic Congress](#) [QCC] joined elected officials to impress on the NYC Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission the folly of making New York City residents pay tolls for East River crossings they drive across toll-free. QCC President Corey B. Bearak joined City Council Finance Committee Chair David Weprin who organized the news conference, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz and State Senator Eric Adams today (Sunday, December 16, 2007) to make clear the strong sentiment in the Borough of Queens against any toll scheme:

The Queens Civic Congress represents more than 100 civic, community, condo, cooperative and tenant organizations. Our [membership](#) represents almost every community in the borough. Prior to the adoption of our [CIVIC 2030](#) Platform in June, the Queens Civic Congress platform stated rather plainly "Maintain free use of all non-TBTA East River and Harlem River bridges for all city residents." We stated [that](#) in March 2003; the justification remains the same.

Any toll scheme follows a shameful tradition of city fathers imposing fees to cover municipal services covered by the tax levy and failing to reduce the tax levy. East River Bridge tolls represent nothing more than a tax increase on the backs of working and middle class New Yorkers. The major findings of IBO [report](#) issued just this past week – and the New York Times made of note of it in this morning's [editorial](#) – indicate that residents of Brooklyn and Queens would bear the burden of any toll or charge – we call either a TAX – to enter Manhattan's central business district however narrowly or broadly the CBD gets defined. Meanwhile, as The Times editorial highlighted from the IBO report, out of towners get a pass with this latest tax scheme."

If at the end of the day this exercise is all about revenue and not really about congestion and clean air, the Queens Civic Congress recommends to the NYC Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission, elected officials, policymakers, those concerned about congestion and clean air as well as funding mass transit at the level we need, and the public at large, the Queens Civic Congress revenue reforms delivered to the Commission when our transportation chairman James Trent [testified](#) at the Commission's Queens hearing on October 30.

In closing, let me state the relevant plank from [CIVIC 2030](#): *Maintain free use of all non-TBTA East River and Harlem River bridges for all city residents, and oppose any plan or scheme to impose a tax, fee or toll on vehicles to enter Manhattan such as the "fee" proposed by the Mayor as part of "PlaNYC"*.

Queens Civic Congress Members

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