

New York Daily News - <http://www.nydailynews.com>**Congestion****pricing in N.Y.? No**

By MITCHELL MOSS

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Congestion pricing is a threat to the economic vitality of our city. A plan similar to the one used in London will increase the cost of getting to work for New Yorkers who live in communities not served by mass transit, hurt Manhattan hospitals that treat patients from all five boroughs and make our museums and cultural attractions less accessible to suburbanites.

Clearly, we need to improve air quality and the flow of traffic on our streets. But congestion pricing will not solve either problem. We need to make sure our streets are not used as free parking areas for the limousines that idle outside midtown restaurants and trendy stores. We need to abolish designated free-parking zones for government workers - especially the U.S. Postal Service employees whose cars line the streets near the entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel. And we should strictly enforce double-parking laws and encourage truck deliveries at off-peak hours.

Auto emissions are a serious problem, but the way to deal with air pollution is through federal laws that will compel the auto industry to build cleaner and more efficient automobiles and trucks. We should not let congestion-pricing advocates try to solve the nation's air pollution problems at the expense of New Yorkers.

The best way to reduce traffic congestion is to strengthen our mass transit system. We can begin by modernizing outdated signal and electrical systems, by building the Second Ave. subway and a rail line to the far West Side, as well as providing high-speed rail service in and out of Manhattan.

It's easy to attack cars and the people who drive them to work. Many low-income New Yorkers living in Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx find it cheaper to split the cost of parking for \$13 a day on the periphery of Manhattan than to take mass transit to work. The burden of congestion pricing will undoubtedly be most severely felt on working families who struggle to watch every penny.

Moss is professor of urban policy and planning at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University.