



November 15, 2024

Greetings –

This week Governor Hochul announced that congestion pricing will go into effect this coming January with a daytime charge of \$9 per passenger vehicle to enter the Manhattan central business district. I have been a strong supporter of congestion pricing for New York City since it was first approved by myself and my colleagues in the State Legislature in 2019. I strongly advocated against the Governor’s decision in June to unilaterally “pause” congestion pricing and I believe it is the right decision to move forward with implementation at this time.

New York’s congestion pricing initiative is the first of its kind in the nation and marks the City a leader in trying to tackle the challenges that traffic congestion poses for cities. The authorizing legislation provided that congestion pricing revenues would be used to leverage \$15 billion in financing for MTA’s capital program. The benefits of a well-designed congestion pricing program are clear – reduced traffic and improved public transportation that will lead to a more livable, prosperous, and sustainable city. New York City’s vibrancy and that of the entire metropolitan region depends on a high functioning mass transit system and relief from traffic-clogged streets, bridges, and roadways. City residents, especially working-class New Yorkers, and suburban commuters depend on public transportation and we simply cannot afford to let the system deteriorate. Those who insist on driving into the City or must do so for work will also benefit from the reduction in traffic and improvement in air quality that congestion pricing will bring.

Saving the PS 889 After School Program

When school officials and parents from PS 889 in Kensington came to me at the end of last school year distressed that funding for their free after school program option had disappeared for the upcoming school year I knew I had to do all I could to help. Thanks in part to the efforts of my staff and the Speaker of the Assembly and his staff, we were able to provide emergency funding for the PS 889 community to reinstate their free after school program. I was pleased to join the school community

this week to celebrate this critical win for the PS 889 school community and I am proud to have made it happen.



New York City Drought Watch/Brush Fire Safety

The State and City have declared a Drought Watch for New York City and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection is calling on residents to [conserve water](#). In response to the drought and the fire that occurred in Prospect Park last Friday, the City has temporarily banned grilling in City parks - smoking and open fires remain illegal. You can see the FDNY tips for preventing brush fires [here](#). You can sign-up for alerts

from the City at emergencies and city services at [NotifyNYC](#). As always, if you see smoke or other signs of fire you should call 911.

HEAP Benefit Available Now

The 2024-2025 Regular HEAP benefit opened on November 1, 2024.

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) can help eligible New Yorkers heat their homes. If you are eligible, you may receive one regular HEAP benefit per program year and could also be eligible for emergency HEAP benefits if you are in danger of running out of fuel or having your utility service shut off. The newly expanded Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) helps families with incomes up to \$76,681 pay their energy bills. [For more information and to apply, click here.](#)

If you have any concerns about any legislative or community issue, please email me at carrollr@nyassembly.gov or call (718) 788-7221.

-Bobby

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