

Trump Administration Moves to End NYC Congestion Pricing

Decision kicks off battle with New York officials, who say they won't stop the program

By
[Joseph De Avila](#)
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The congestion pricing plan took effect in January. PHOTO: SARAH YENESEL/SHUTTERSTOCK

New York leaders are gearing up for a fight with the Trump administration over the fate of congestion pricing in the largest city in the U.S.

The Transportation Department on Wednesday said it rescinded its approval of the city's recently launched tolling system in part because the program doesn't offer drivers a toll-free option to access lower Manhattan.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which operates the city's congestion-pricing system, on Wednesday said it would continue to charge drivers traveling in lower Manhattan and would only halt the program at the direction of a court. In a suit against the DOT, the MTA said the agency didn't have the power to rescind the approval.

Sean Duffy, the department's leader, said President Trump had asked him to review the approval of the program shortly after he was sworn in.

“CONGESTION PRICING IS DEAD,” [Trump said Wednesday](#). “Manhattan, and all of New York, is SAVED. LONG LIVE THE KING!”

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul said congestion pricing has dramatically cut traffic and improved commuting times for drivers and for buses. She echoed the MTA’s vow to keep the program running.

“We are a nation of laws, not ruled by a king,” Hochul said. “We’ll see you in court.”

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul responded to the Trump administration’s decision to rescind approval of New York’s congestion pricing system. Photo: Seth Wenig/Associated Press

New York’s toll plan, inspired by cities such as London, Stockholm and Singapore, is the nation’s first congestion-pricing system. The program charges most drivers \$9 to travel in the congestion pricing zone at peak hours, which covers 60th Street to the southern tip of Manhattan. It was intended to reduce traffic and pollution while raising funds for the city’s transit system.

Hochul delayed the start of the tolls in June after years of planning, citing concerns of the costs. She later brought it back with a lower fee.

In November, the Federal Highway Administration, a division of the DOT—which was under the leadership of the Biden administration at the time—executed an agreement with New York authorizing the congestion pricing system to begin collecting tolls. The program went into effect on Jan. 5.

Travel speeds in the congestion-pricing zone have improved since the implementation of the tolling system, according to MTA data. Drivers are saving an average of 20 to 30 minutes driving into the district, the MTA said in its court filing. About 1.2 million fewer vehicles entered the congestion zone in January, it said.

About 35.8 million pedestrians visited business improvement districts in the congestion relief zone from January 5 to January 31, according to the New York City Economic Development Corporation. That is 1.5 million more people compared with the same period in 2024.

In a letter to Hochul, Duffy said the program seemed to focus on generating revenue for the city’s transit system and wasn’t based on what was needed to reduce congestion.

“New York State’s congestion pricing plan is a slap in the face to working class Americans and small business owners,” Duffy said.



Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said he was asked to review the approval of the program shortly after he was sworn in. PHOTO: SAMUEL CORUM – POOL VIA CNP/ZUMA PRESS

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy, a Democrat who has opposed congestion pricing, applauded the DOT's reversal. "The current program lines the MTA's pockets at the expense of New Jerseyans," Murphy said.

Others opposed to congestion pricing include unions representing New York teachers and firefighters.

The MTA asked the court to rule that the DOT's termination of congestion pricing approvals was null and void.

"It's mystifying that after four years and 4,000 pages of federally-supervised environmental review—and barely three months after giving final approval to the Congestion Relief Program—USDOT would seek to totally reverse course," said Janno Lieber, chief executive of the MTA, in a statement.

The Trump administration [has engaged in a number of disputes](#) with New York officials. Earlier this month, it clawed back \$80 million in funding intended to help pay for migrant housing and services. U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi also sued New York officials for what she said was their failure to enforce federal immigration laws.

President Trump has been a fierce opponent of congestion pricing. He said during his 2024 campaign for president that companies won't want to do business in New York with a new toll. "It's been a failure everywhere it's been tried," [Trump said in May](#), not citing evidence.

Democratic public officials in New York balked at the DOT's reversal. Revoking approval for a federal initiative of this magnitude is nearly without precedent, said U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, a New York Democrat.

“I firmly believe that there is no legal basis for the President to unilaterally halt this program,” [he said](#).

Meanwhile, the MTA will continue to collect the congestion pricing tolls.

“The cameras are staying on. We are keeping the cameras on,” Hochul said.

Write to Joseph De Avila at joseph.deavila@wsj.com

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