

alter their routes or combine some trips; and

Whereas, Congestion pricing schemes have been successfully employed in areas other than transportation, such as airline ticket pricing and public utility pricing; and

Whereas, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) funded a Congestion Pricing Pilot Program in which up to five congestion pricing experimental projects nationwide were authorized; and

Whereas, While two of these authorized projects, one in Lee County, Florida and one in Houston, Texas, are still largely in the planning stages, a third project was implemented in San Diego in December of 1996; and

Whereas, San Diego's congestion pricing project has experienced considerable preliminary success as demonstrated by the fact that as of March 1997, the project had attracted and kept eighty-four percent of its "Express Pass" permit holders; and

Whereas, The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), ISTEA's successor, continues to provide funding for what was formerly known as the Congestion Pricing Pilot Program, to up to fifteen new State and local value pricing programs; and

Whereas, The California Private Transportation Company successfully implemented congestion pricing on a road in Orange County, California called "SR 91 Express Lanes"; and

Whereas, "SR 91 Express Lanes" are administered by an electronic toll system which charges varying tolls depending upon the time of day and permits vehicles containing three or more persons a discount; and

Whereas, Through early 1998, eighty-six thousand people had purchased transponders to access the "SR 91 Express Lanes" and twenty-five thousand commuters chose to pay the toll each day to avoid the more congested State Route 91 which runs parallel to it; and

Whereas, Beginning on September 30, 2000 the New Jersey Turnpike will implement a variable pricing system effective throughout the entire length of the highway which is designed to reward drivers who avoid driving during rush hour by charging them lower tolls; and

Whereas, Similar congestion pricing schemes have been successfully integrated into transportation systems in foreign countries, such as Canada, Singapore, Norway and France; and

Whereas, Toronto, Canada's sixty-nine kilometer stretch of road called the 407 Express Toll Route, which opened on June 7, 1997, provides an excellent example of the success of congestion pricing; and

Whereas, Through August 3, 1999 over three hundred thousand transponders were purchased for travel on the 407 and the average speed on that roadway was approximately twice that of adjacent highways operating without a congestion pricing program; and

Whereas, Successful implementation by many of the aforementioned congestion pricing programs indicates that the need for tollbooths or "cash baskets" could be eliminated as tolls could be debited electronically via interaction between a microchip embedded in an in-vehicle transponder and an overhead antenna attached to a roadway sign displaying the current toll amount; and

Whereas, Vehicles would not be required to appreciably reduce speed when passing through these "toll" areas as the implementing technology is capable of processing vast numbers of vehicles per hour.

Resolved, that the appropriate committee of the City Council hold hearings on the feasibility of implementing congestion pricing at toll bridges and tunnels within New York City.

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