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Member of Assembly 64th District

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May 20th, 2019

Chairman Patrick Foye
New York Metropolitan Transit Authority
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dear Chairman Foye,

As the MTA and several elected officials from across the city push the implementation of two-way tolling, I cannot help but remain a skeptic in the absence of any reliable study as to how the measure will affect my constituency in Brooklyn and Staten Island. While I am very much open to the idea of a two-way toll as long as it will truly reduce traffic, pollution and economic impact, data must be presented to the public that support the idea.

In May of 2017, Rep. Dan Donovan requested that your agency study the impact that two-way tolling on the Verrazzano Bridge would have on the Staten Island Expressway, the Gowanus and the streets surrounding them. It is my understanding that the study was completed at the end of last year but its findings were never released to the public for review. I respectfully request that the results of the study be released into the public domain so stakeholders, particularly the toll payers who funded it, can have the opportunity to review it and weigh in prior to any passage of legislation that would change the existing tolling structure. To date, the only published research released into the public domain has been that by civil engineer Sam Schwartz which shows how two-way tolling will reduce congestion in lower Manhattan, but makes no mention of the same relief on Staten Island or directly over the bridge in Brooklyn, where traffic congestion occasionally even causes back-ups on neighborhood streets.

Again, let me reiterate that I am certainly open and cautiously optimistic that two-way tolling will be beneficial to commuters in my district, however we the residents most affected by the Verrazzano Bridge toll deserve concrete evidence that this change will be in our best interest. The lack of transparency that often characterizes decisions made by the MTA has left many rightfully skeptical of any proposition.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this issue. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Assembly

CC:

MTA President Andy Byford