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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan

December 20, 2019

Polly Trottenberg
Commissioner, NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, 9th Floor
42 Broadway
New York, New York 10041

RE: Discussion of the \$2.50 Congestion Fee Assessed on Yellow Cabs in Manhattan South of 96th Street

Dear Commissioner Trottenberg,

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on December 18, 2019, the board **approved** the following resolution by a vote of 29 in favor, 3 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 not voting for cause.

WHEREAS, the 2018-19 New York State Budget law included congestion fees assessed on for-hire vehicles in Manhattan south of 96th Street amounting to \$2.50 for Yellow Taxis, \$2.75 for non-shared rides provided by Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) and \$0.75 for shared rides provided by TNCs; and

WHEREAS, congestion fees assessed on rides in for-hire vehicles in Manhattan South of 96th Street went into effect in February 2019;

WHEREAS, Yellow Taxis are a critical component of New York City's transportation network, and serve as a lifeline for residents with mobility challenges that are unable to easily use subways and buses due to lack of ADA access, unreliable service and limited service hours; and

WHEREAS, there are no elevators at Lexington Ave. Subway Stations at 68th, 77, and 96th Streets, and only 1 elevator serving the uptown local platform at 86th Street;

WHEREAS, large numbers of seniors reside and utilize services in Community District 8 Manhattan, many of whom may not own smart phones or may not be technology savvy and thus are unable to use TNC services; Yellow Taxis can be hailed on-street and do not require access to or the ability to use smart phones to request rides;

WHEREAS, Community District Eight's hospitals and medical offices are a major trip generator for taxis, serving population groups that are particularly sensitive to the \$2.50 congestion fee;

WHEREAS, the Congestion Fee on Yellow Taxis South of 96th Street is not congruent with the congestion zone that will go into effect in 2021 south of 60th Street, and therefore appears to target certain neighborhoods such as those in Community District 8, including for trips to and from New York City's airports; and

WHEREAS, the Congestion Fee on Yellow Taxis south of 96th Street is only marginally lower than fees assessed on rides provided by TNC operators, creating a disincentive to use a city-regulated transportation service; and

WHEREAS, TNC vehicles have inundated Manhattan with 80,000 vehicles compared to only 13,587 yellow taxis, and have been found to be a major contributor to congestion and reduced vehicular speeds; and

WHEREAS, cruising of for-hire vehicles has more than doubled since 2018, and has been significantly impacted by TNC vehicles that cruise without passengers 41% of the time, impacting congestion and air quality; and

WHEREAS, yellow taxi drivers have struggled with stress and mental health challenges as they have struggled to compete with TNC services and medallion values have rapidly declined; and

WHEREAS, the \$2.50 is a burdensome fee for persons living on limited incomes that have no other viable transportation options for certain trips, and can be viewed by certain groups as a pink tax that most severely affects caretakers and women who choose to use taxis at night for safety reasons;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan calls for the New York State Assembly, Senate and Governor to implement laws that eliminate the \$2.50 fee assessed on Yellow Taxis in Manhattan South of 96th Street.

Sincerely,


Alida Camp
Chair


Craig Lader and Charles Warren
Co-Chairs, Transportation Committee

cc: Honorable Bill de Blasio, Mayor of the City of New York
Honorable Carolyn Maloney, 12th Congressional District Representative
Honorable Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Honorable Liz Krueger, NYS Senator, 28th Senatorial District
Honorable Dan Quart, NYS Assembly Member, 73rd Assembly District
Honorable Rebecca Seawright, NYS Assembly Member 76th Assembly District
Honorable Ben Kallos, NYC Council Member, 5th Council District
Honorable Keith Powers, NYC Council Member, 4th Council District