

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy in New York Submitted to the Joint Legislative Hearing  
on the Transportation Portions of the Executive Proposed Budget for  
New York State Fiscal Year 2019-20  
January 30, 2019**

The Nature Conservancy strongly supports the enactment of congestion pricing in New York City. While congestion pricing is most often considered in the context of transportation impacts -- which include funding essential mass transit upgrades, addressing areas where more public transportation options are needed, and mitigating congestion – there are also significant environmental benefits.

A congestion pricing plan will reduce vehicle miles traveled, and accordingly reduces fuel consumed and the resulting air pollution. New York has never met all of the federal Clean Air Act State Implementation Plan (SIP) requirements, largely because of transportation based pollution – congestion pricing will move us in the right direction to achieve all the benefits of clean air, including many public health benefits. In addition, relieving congestion will have a significant climate mitigation impact as fewer fossil-fuel burning vehicles will be on the road, and emissions generated by constant accelerations and decelerations will be reduced.

Congestion pricing falls into that rare category of policy initiatives that have significant multiple benefits and values. By simultaneously addressing funding shortfalls, public health, urban sustainability, and climate mitigation, congestion pricing is truly a quality of life game-changer, and should be enacted this legislative session.

We applaud the inclusion of a congestion pricing proposal in Governor Cuomo's Executive Budget<sup>[1]</sup>, and thank the many legislators who have already publicly expressed support for this important policy. The Nature Conservancy is a member of the #FixOurTransit campaign, and we look forward to working closely with our partners, the Governor and the Legislature to ensure comprehensive congestion pricing is passed in the coming months as part of this budget.

**The Nature Conservancy in New York**

The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We are tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters and oceans at an unprecedented scale, providing food and water sustainably and helping make cities more sustainable. Working in 72 countries, and throughout New York, including New York City, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. To learn more about our work in New York, visit [www.nature.org/ny](http://www.nature.org/ny) or follow @nature\_ny on Twitter.

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[1] TED Article VII, Part BB