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To the editor:

The Times asks NYC and State elected from Brooklyn and Queens (and others who may oppose tolls and other parts of the Ravitch Commission scheme) to “come up with other ways to maintain and improve the enormous city transportation network.” (Editorial: Keep the City Moving, Friday, December 5) Such a plan already exists. Unlike the Ravitch plan that disappointingly lets Albany and City Hall off the hook, our coalition [plan](http://keepnycfree.com/media/files/2008-10-15_Recommendations_MTA_Financing.pdf) (http://keepnycfree.com/media/files/2008-10-15_Recommendations_MTA_Financing.pdf) makes both the State and the City step up to the plate. Significantly, it identifies specific revenues that empowers the city and the state to devote funds to that core responsibility such as the state imposing modest four-cent gasoline levy (\$255 million) and an increase vehicle registration fees (\$250 million) and the city increasing fines for illegal parking (\$75 million), raising parking meter rates (\$50 million) and charging more realistic fees for the use of street space by construction contractors and utilities (\$500 million). In addition, we propose measures that raise significant funds to support mass transit, both operating and core capital program needs, including a non-resident income tax that apportions its proceeds between City and suburban transit projects (\$1.8 billion) and a modest real property tax surcharge on properties that benefit from mass transit (\$741 million).

Today's economic climate needs no initiatives that would choke our local economy. Imposing tolls where New Yorkers cross for free risks serious economic results. MTA, Port Authority and NYMTC data show the deleterious impact that higher tolls on tolled crossings imposes.

The fairness argument raised during the misguided attempts to impose the congestion tax still applies to any imposition of a toll tax. Bottom line, tolls choke the economy and the city and state must no longer avoid their duty to pay up for transit. These remain key weaknesses of the commission proposal.

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Keep NYC Free

Read the New York Times editorial at
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/05/opinion/05fri3.html?ref=opinion>