

Cab Gab
by Abe Mittleman

The year is just about over. I hope you all can say that the year 2009 was profitable and that you and your families are in good health. But looking back I must say that this has not been a good year for many drivers for one reason in particular, the MTA tax.

We pleaded with the powers that instituted this that it would have a detrimental effect on our income potential, especially our tips. We hoped we were wrong, but now that this tax has been in effect for almost two months we know we were right. We also protested because it would limit our ability to increase fares for our own needs.

One of the highlights for me this year was when I was given an opportunity to address a committee of NY State Senators about this tax. Although they listened and to some degree agreed with my arguments, unfortunately, it was too late. The tax had already been passed. As the

saying goes: I was closing the barn door after the horse was already out. I was promised that legislation would be introduced to perhaps reverse the injustice. I have yet to see that happen.

So, now that we are all suffering this income loss in our tip money let me reiterate the suggestion that I made when this tax was passed into law in May. Stop using the MTA crossings unless you have no other choice. The \$4.57 E-Z pass toll rate that your passengers are paying is going to the same MTA that is taking your tip money away. Fight fire with fire. Explain to your passengers that you are saving them the toll and in many instances they will give it to you in the tip. I know because I have been doing this all along. It works!

For those of you who are unfamiliar with some of the routes to the airports via the free crossings I will give them to you again.

Hope you have a Happy Holiday Season and Good Luck in the New Year!

JFK-Take Rockaway Blvd to Woodhaven Blvd to Queens Blvd to the 59th street bridge. We know drivers who take this route often. Passengers love it because there are no traffic jams like the ones you have on the Van Wyck. They even tip better because they don't have to pay the MTA toll.

The reverse is true when going from Midtown to JFK. You can take the upper level of the bridge. Exit left on the Queens Blvd and either take Queens Blvd to Woodhaven Blvd or make your first right after the exit and it is two blocks to get on the LIE. You can take the LIE to the Woodhaven Blvd exit and enjoy an easy ride to JFK when you otherwise would have been stuck in traffic on the LIE and the Van Wyck .

La Guardia- From the airport to the upper east side take the Grand Central parkway to the Hoyt Ave exit then to Crescent Street for the lower level or 21st Street for the upper level of the 59th Street bridge.

For destinations downtown take the BQE to any of the

three exits for the Williamsburg Bridge the Manhattan Bridge (Tillary Street exit) or the Brooklyn Bridge.

The Kappock Street Bridge on the Henry Hudson Parkway can be avoided by taking the Dyckman Street exit and then going up Broadway and over the Broadway Bridge at 218th Street.

Remember that all fares, not just airport fares, to destinations that are in Brooklyn, Queens or the Bronx can be achieved in the same manor.

