

Cab Gab

by Abe Mittleman

Bridge Tolls

As I write this I'm sick thinking about what I'm reading in the news papers. Despite all the legal hurdles in the way of tolling all the free bridges into Manhattan, it appears that the only argument that is raging in Albany is how much they should charge us.

These tolls are unfair to every New Yorker who is not a user of mass transit. These tolls are unfair to the taxi industry. These tolls will cause us to lose business. These tolls will cost us more to operate. Mass transit should be paid for by it's users. Why should our passengers have to pay for someone else's subway ride? Why should we have to pay to enter and exit Manhattan to begin or end our shifts. We are there to serve the public. It is unfair to charge us to do this.

Andrew Weiner, who is running for mayor has the right idea. In a recent letter to the NYS assembly he recommended four things to save NYC residents from these unfair tolls.

1. End Waste by Cutting MTA Overhead 10% a Year For Four Years.

It is time to do more with less. There are over five thousand administrators at the MTA with plans to expand this number. This number can be reduced. The MTA has vast real estate holdings. These assets are luxuries in times of need and should be trimmed.

2. Sensible Tolls on The East River and Harlem River Bridges Limited to Non-NY Residents

A \$4.15 toll on the East River and Harlem River bridges on non New York City residents would raise an estimated \$391 million a year. This would equal and replace the commuter tax that was eliminated in 1999

3. Give Control of The MTA to New York City

Virtually all passengers on the MTA trains either live in NYC or are commuting to NYC. Currently the MTA board gives minority status to NYC representatives.

4. Make The MTA Transparent and Accountable by Opening It's Books

There needs to be 100% transparency about how the agency is spending its money.

I'm going to tell all my passengers to vote for Andrew Weiner.

Don't Lose CC Fares

Does your Credit Card service provider compensate for lost revenue if Credit Card transactions are not accepted and passenger does not pay because they don't have cash when this happens? Mine does!

Recently my driver phoned me and told me of a fare he had where precisely what I just described above happened. I contacted my provider. I was informed that in this case where the equipment did not work as it should have that even though the Credit Card information was in the system the passenger could not be charged.

I was informed that this was a case where the car did not have a good connection. Since by TLC mandate the equipment in this case has to auto accept the transaction, the service provider will compensate for the transaction. We were then given credit to our account.

So, my advice to all drivers would be not to write off these transactions that appear to be lost. Inform your garage or your service provider when these transactions. Demand action. Know what you are entitled to.