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**Broad support for Move NY Fair Plan in  
Global Strategy Group poll of voters across 12-county MTA region  
Support grows to 2-1 margin as New Yorkers hear benefits of proposal  
*“Toll swap” would reduce tolls on seven MTA crossings,  
raise billions for transportation, create 30,000 jobs***

New Yorkers told pollsters they support the Move NY Fair Plan – a proposal to tackle the region’s growing transportation demands, in part by an innovative plan to balance bridge tolls across the city – by as much as a 2-1 margin (62%-31%) in a poll released today by Move NY and TransitCenter.

The survey of 1,003 voters conducted by Global Strategy Group in November, showed a plurality of New Yorkers endorsed the proposal to balance the city’s tolls even before they heard the details of the Move NY Fair Plan, and support increased after hearing pro and con arguments.

Move NY’s proposal to fund regional transportation would reduce tolls on seven MTA bridges in New York City permanently in what it called a “toll swap” by restoring tolls on the four East River bridges, which had tolls in the past, and across 60<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan – all via “gateless” electronic tolling. The bonded revenues could bridge the MTA’s current \$15.2 billion capital budget gap as well as fund investments in improving the city’s roads and bridges.

“This poll makes it plain that voters want their elected officials to address our pressing transportation needs,” said Alex Matthiessen, Move NY’s Campaign Director. “It also shows substantial support for the Move NY plan, making it clear that the toll swap proposal should be part of the debate when Albany starts considering its funding options in the New Year.” (See attached memo for full overview of the poll results.)

The group estimates that its funding plan would create 30,000 new, local, and recurring jobs, mostly in infrastructure construction, maintenance and operations.

Specifically, the survey found:

- Even before hearing specific details, New Yorkers favored the idea of a proposal to balance tolls on the city’s bridges and tunnels by a 45%-34% margin. Support grew significantly more enthusiastic (62%-31%) after surveyors offered more details, including benefits of the plan. When given critical statements about the toll swap, New Yorkers still supported the plan by a 55%-40% margin. Support was consistent across the region.

- Support for the Move NY Fair Plan far outpaced support for Mayor Bloomberg’s 2008 congestion pricing proposal, which had support from less than a quarter of New Yorkers.
- Voters express strong concerns about traffic and congestion (82%); high tolls (81%) and the condition of roads and highways (77%) – and said they believed the Move NY plan could help address those problems.

“New Yorkers understand the importance of a good transportation system, and when they are presented with a fair plan to improve it, they grasp that this proposal makes sense for New York,” said David Bragdon, Executive Director of TransitCenter. “They are very aware that transportation is vulnerable to extreme weather, and that transit gaps are cutting off people’s access to the system. They see Move NY as a serious solution.”

First conceived by “Gridlock” Sam Schwartz, and developed with the Move NY team and the input of stakeholders and elected officials across the region, the toll swap plan would mean lower charges at seven MTA crossings in the outer parts of the city, marking the first time ever MTA tolls would be reduced. Drivers would enjoy nearly 50% (E-ZPass) reductions crossing the Verrazano-Narrows, RFK, Throgs Neck, Whitestone, Henry Hudson, and Rockaway bridges (up to a third off for “cash” – i.e., pay by mail – tolls).

The plan also includes a surcharge on metered and on demand “taxis” to ensure that Manhattan residents pay a fair share. Priority is placed on filling transit gaps in underserved neighborhoods by expanding and discounting express bus service, restoring some bus service (cut in 2010), extending City Ticket (discounted intra-city commuter rail service) to seven days a week, and investing in new transit services. (See [www.move-ny](http://www.move-ny) for a full description.)

A broad range of groups have endorsed the plan, including Regional Plan Association, NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign, New York Building Congress, SEIU 32BJ, AAA-NY, New York State Motor Truck Association, and New York City Environmental Justice Alliance.

Of those surveyed, 73% said fixing the region’s bridges, highways and roads made them more likely to support the Move NY plan, with 63% saying they believed the plan would lead to improved conditions.

“A seamless, well maintained and efficient transportation network is the lifeblood of New York economy and an essential component of quality of life,” said New York Building Congress President Richard T. Anderson. “The building community’s support for the Move NY plan is premised on its ability to provide the funds necessary to invest in the City’s public transportation infrastructure, while also creating 30,000 middle-class jobs for hard-working New Yorkers.”

The poll also showed strong support for increased express bus service, with 63% saying they would be more likely to support the proposal if new service is added.

“New Yorkers want fairness, and the Move NY plan would go a long way to making sure that transit riders can get around town affordably and all drivers are treated equitably,” said Eddie Bautista, Executive Director of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance.

“These poll results show that a growing number of New Yorkers believe the Move NY plan is the best option available to get our transit system the revenue it needs. The plan comes with other bonuses too: it will decrease reliance upon debt, fare increases, and service cuts; reduce traffic congestion; improve regional air quality; enhance economic growth; and redress inequity in NYC's tolling network,” says Veronica Vanterpool, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign.

New Yorkers also said they want elected officials to make transportation issues a priority. Nearly nine in 10 (87%) said the condition of roads and highways should be a major concern for legislators, while 78% wanted elected officials to focus on traffic and congestion. Officials should also focus on the cost of tolls (72%) and of subways, bus and rail service (68%), the voters said.

Albany legislators are expected to consider a transportation financing program during the session that starts this January. The survey of 1,003 voters, conducted from November 5-11 using live interviewers, has a margin of error at the 95% confidence interval of +/- 3.1 percent.

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*Attachment: Global Strategy Group polling memo*

**To:** Interested Parties  
**From:** Global Strategy Group  
**Date:** 12.13.2014  
**Re:** Voters' views on transportation issues in New York

## **New Yorkers support a new proposal to balance the cost of tolls on bridges and tunnels in New York City.**

New Yorkers support a new proposal to balance the cost of tolls on bridges and tunnels and invest in the region's transportation infrastructure, according to a new survey conducted by Global Strategy Group. Support increases to a two to one margin as voters learn more about the proposal. The specific elements of the proposal provide solutions to New Yorkers' most pressing transportation concerns, leading them to be more likely to support the proposal. Voters have confidence that the proposal will accomplish its goals and want to see their elected officials make transportation issues a priority. Furthermore, the new proposal enjoys significantly higher support than the 2008 congestion pricing proposal endorsed by Mayor Bloomberg.

### **New Yorkers support a new proposal to balance the cost of tolls on bridges and tunnels in New York City. Support increases as New Yorkers learn more about the proposal.**

- Before hearing any specific details, a plurality of voters in the New York area (45%) are inclined to support a proposal to balance the cost of tolls on the city's bridges and tunnels while just 34 percent oppose. Support for the proposal is particularly strong among voters in Long Island (52% support) and the northern suburbs (48%). Both drivers (42% support) and public transit riders (45%) are more likely to support the proposal than oppose it.
- Following a more detailed description of the plan that includes how the proposal will balance tolls by instituting toll reductions on the outer bridges and additions on East River Bridges as well as an explanation of the exact changes to the cost of each toll, support for the proposal increases to a broad majority of voters (56%) and opposition remains about the same (36%).
- Support for the proposal increases further to 62 percent when voters learn about the benefits of the proposal with only 31 percent opposed – a two to one ratio in favor of the proposal.
- Even after voters are presented with criticisms of the proposal, support remains strong at 55 percent. Support is consistent across the region with a majority of voters in New York City (53%), Long Island (57%), and the northern suburbs (57%) favoring the proposal.

### **Support for a proposal to balance the costs of tolls is significantly higher than support for the 2008 congestion pricing plan promoted by Mayor Bloomberg.**

- Less than a quarter of voters (22%) support the 2008 congestion pricing plan to charge vehicles driving into Manhattan below 60<sup>th</sup> Street; 70 percent oppose it.
- Voters in Long Island and the northern suburbs are particularly more likely to support the proposal to balance the cost of tolls over the 2008 congestion pricing proposal. Just 23 percent of Long Island voters and 20 percent of voters in the northern suburbs support the 2008 congestion pricing plan while support for balancing the cost of tolls is 52 percent in Long Island and 48 percent in the northern suburbs.

- Those who drive in the city are particularly negative toward the 2008 congestion pricing plan. Fewer than one in five (19%) support the 2008 congestion pricing plan compared to 42 percent who support the proposal to balance the cost of tolls before learning more about it (38% oppose).

**The specific elements of the proposal provide solutions to New Yorkers' most pressing transportation concerns and therefore lead them to be more likely to support the proposal.**

- When it comes to transportation issues, voters are most concerned about traffic and congestion (82% serious issue), the cost of tolls (81%), and the condition of roads and highways (77%).
- Almost three quarters of the electorate (73%) say that they would be more likely to support the proposal if it achieves its goal of improving the condition and speed of roads and bridges.
- Voters say that the elements of the proposal that address the cost of tolls such as setting lower toll rates during off-peak times than during peak times (69%) and reducing tolls on major and minor bridges in outer parts of the city (65%) make them more likely to support it.
- Sixty-three percent of voters say that they would be more likely to support the proposal because it will add more Express Bus routes and increase Express Bus service.

**Voters have confidence that the proposal will accomplish its goals.**

- Voters believe that the proposal will improve subway performance. More than three in five voters say it is likely that the proposal will lead to investments in subway signal systems to increase the frequency of trains (65%) and expand countdown clocks on subway platforms to all lines (62%).
- More than two-thirds of the electorate (68%) say that the proposal will add more Express Bus routes and increase Express Bus service.
- Sixty-three percent of voters say that the condition and speed of roads and bridges is likely to improve as a result of the proposal.
- Voters have faith that the proposal will address one of their biggest concerns about transportation in the area, the cost of tolls. A majority of voters believe the proposal will succeed in reducing tolls on major and minor bridges in outer parts of the city (51%). Even more believe the proposal will set lower toll rates during off-peak times than peak times (64%).

**New Yorkers want to see their elected officials make transportation issues a priority.**

- More than four in five voters (87%) believe the condition of roads and highways should be a priority for their elected officials.
- Seventy eight percent of voters feel that their elected officials should make traffic and congestion a priority.
- Voters want their elected officials to address the cost of transportation. A majority say the cost of tolls (72%) and the cost of buses, trains, and subways (68%) should be priority issues for their elected officials.

**About The Survey**

Global Strategy Group conducted a survey of 1,003 registered voters in the 12 county MTA service area (Manhattan, Bronx, Kings, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Nassau, Suffolk, Orange, Putnam, Dutchess, and Westchester). The survey was conducted from November 5-11, 2014 using live interviewers. The margin of error at the 95% confidence interval is +/- 3.1 percent. The margin of error on subsamples is greater.