



**Testimony of Carlos Castell Croke
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New York League of Conservation Voters**

**City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Hearing on Transportation Equity
March 7th, 2022**

Good afternoon, my name is Carlos Castell Croke and I am the Associate for New York City Programs at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV represents over 30,000 members in New York City and we are committed to advancing a sustainability agenda that will make our people, our neighborhoods, and our economy healthier and more resilient. I would like to thank Chair Brooks-Powers for the opportunity to testify today.

In a densely populated city like New York, access to affordable, clean transportation is more than an economic driver and hard sought after resource, it is a fundamental right. We know that transportation is the leading source of emissions in the State and in the Nation, mainly due to personal automobiles and heavy duty vehicles burning fossil fuels. Furthermore, our frequent acceptance and perpetuation of car culture constantly undermines the safety of pedestrians and effectiveness of alternative forms of transportation.

We are so glad that this hearing in particular is being held because while we see transportation intrinsically as a climate issue, it is also clearly an equity issue. Cars are a major source of air pollution, causing respiratory and public health issues. This is the case near New York City's major highways which often run through low-income communities and communities of color. These communities are also often underserved by alternative transportation options and infrastructure designed to protect pedestrians and families from cars. In order to equitably improve our transportation system and fight climate change the Council and the City must prioritize the following initiatives.

The City must continue its comprehensive approach to reimagining street space by implementing the NYC Streets Plan and the 25x25 Plan. Traffic enforcement initiatives, such as speed cameras and bus lane enforcement, are an integral part of both of these plans. These programs and technologies reinforce the use of public and micro-mobility options, protect our residents from reckless drivers, and put money back into our underfunded transit system. The plans also highlight the importance of micro-mobility infrastructure. To achieve progress, we need to pass legislation, such as Intro 2465 from the previous session, to make it easier to build bike lanes.

Lack of safe biking infrastructure is a major barrier to accessing clean transportation alternatives and as we expand bike, e-bike and e-scooter shares we must also build out safe corridors to use them on. These issues are even more prevalent in transportation deserts where cars rule. These underserved communities need safe and reliable alternatives to cars, and should not be forced to endure the constant pollution and traffic accidents that occur in their neighborhoods.

These plans will not only require strong political will to implement, but they will also need funding. This is why congestion pricing must be implemented as soon as possible. With the revenue it generates, we can reinvest in our public transit system while also cutting back on harmful emissions and gridlock in the heart of Manhattan.

All of these pathways forward will improve our City by helping to reduce emissions, increase affordability, and improve safety. We hope the Council will work to fight for these crucial initiatives and plans so we can have a truly traversable and equitable City.

Thank you.