

Editorials

Welcome, David Paterson, 55th Governor Of New York

We welcome David Paterson as the 55th governor of the state of New York.

In his years in the state senate and the 14 months he has served as lieutenant governor, Paterson has demonstrated himself to be very skilled at handling the team that constitutes the legislative branch of the state government. His manner is conciliatory and he is known to seek compromise in order to go about the people's business. He has been praised for his ability to work with legislators of both parties. He is knowledgeable and determined: born legally

blind, he retains enough sight in one eye to walk down streets and through buildings without guidance, can recognize faces at a conversational distance and read large print. Given this amount of visual acuity he never learned Braille, and so earned a law degree at Hofstra University by taping lectures and class discussions. Many of the volunteers who read class material to him have spoken with awe and respect of his intellectual abilities. "He knew more about it than I did," a classmate who read some law school texts to him recalled.

Paterson stands out as the first black governor of New York and the first blind person to become governor of any state in all the years of America's existence as a sovereign nation. Either circumstance alone would make his situation remarkable; together, they make him unique. Not only has he found himself assuming the state's highest office, he also has opened the door for other individuals to regard themselves as truly without limitations.

We wish the new governor all success as he takes the helm of the state.

Resident Parking Permit Plan Has No Merit

The more we hear of the congestion pricing plan proposed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg and several colleagues and associates in city government, the more convinced we are that we are on target in opposing it.

The latest corollary to the plan calls for residents of some neighborhoods, especially those near subway stations or express bus stops, to apply for residential parking permits (RPPs) in order to park their cars in the neighborhoods where they live and so distinguish themselves from commuters who drive in, park and take public transportation to their ultimate destination. According to city Department of Transportation Commissioner Janette Shadik-Khan, the RPP program will "ensure that the parking scales are tipped in favor of local residents". We doubt it. This is an awful plan for New York.

Shadik-Khan explained in a release: "Under one possible plan, residents across the city, through their community boards, could request that curbside parking in their neighborhoods be restricted to local residents only for 90-minute periods each weekday. The city would issue annual permits only to those residents who show proof of vehicle registration within the permit area, and the permits would have to be dis-

played in the vehicle.

"This will prevent all-day parking by those who live outside of the neighborhood without shutting out people going to a doctor's appointment, visiting a friend or shopping in the area, while encouraging parking space turnover, benefiting local businesses."

It seems to us that Shadik-Khan's proposal would do the most harm to the people it claims to help: those residents of a given neighborhood who live in that neighborhood precisely because public transportation is readily accessible, even though they own cars. There are those who own vehicles, but use them only on weekends precisely because they can take public transportation to work, school or other destinations during the week. Car owners who live in neighborhoods in this borough and take public transportation into Manhattan are not likely to drive into Manhattan—or across it—unless they absolutely must, especially if a congestion pricing plan imposes a fee, toll, whatever one wants to call it, of \$8 to \$21 for traveling into Manhattan during certain specified hours is enacted. There are those who own vehicles, but use them only on weekends precisely because they can take public transportation during the week. The RPP proposal seems bent on somehow exacting some sort of a parking fee from

anyone who owns a car but for whatever reason elects to avoid a fee imposed for traveling into another part of the city we all call home.

Some private communities in this city restrict street parking to residents, charge fees for non-residents and boot and tow cars that violate community rules. This is their right as private corporations. Public parking on public streets, however, is a different matter entirely.

Shadik-Khan correctly points out that on-street parking is already hard to find, with as much as 98 percent of parking occupied in some neighborhoods. Imposing a plan to require residents to secure permits to park in the same curbside spaces they have occupied without any sort of official notice—except for the occasional parking ticket engendered by violation of alternate side of the street parking rules—whether or not those parking permits come with a fee attached, strikes us as unfairly penalizing those of us who of necessity park on the borough's residential streets.

Congestion pricing already has many drawbacks that make it unfeasible for New York City. The RPP concept is even more unfeasible. This proposal has nothing to recommend it whatever.

one time or another. Now that is when we park our cars and we may be shopping, going to the doctor or just doing errands, when lo and behold, we come out and we find a ding or a dent on our car that wasn't there before.

Well, last week I was out shopping with my wife at Stop and Shop in Little Neck and when we came out, we found our car was hit and had a nice dent on the right front end. The thing that really got to me was that no one even put a note on our car. In my book, that's a hit and run. The thing is, no matter where we have parked our car, our car was dented several times in the last few years while parked. We have spoken to a number of people and they say that has happened to them too. There seems to be an attitude with some drivers and that is if no one is looking, who cares, and they just take off.

I think we all should be good citizens and when we see someone hit another car we should take down their license and put in on the parked car that was hit. For, as the slogan goes. "If you see something say something." For the next car

that gets hit could be your own.

Now as a special note, let me share an experience I recently had: Last December I was driving home to Glen Oaks Village and it was snowing and I hit a patch of ice and hit a parked car early one Sunday morning [mind you, my first in 35 years] and gave that car a slight dent. No one was around and I could have taken off but I would not have been a good neighbor or a good citizen. I stopped and I put a note on the parked car and told the owner what had happened and to call me. He called me and said he didn't even know his car was even hit. We both did what was necessary to correct the problem. He thanked me and said, "It is a shame that there are not more people like you who would do the same."

I hope anyone who reads this might take to heart what I had to say and try to be good neighbors and good citizens.

Sincerely Yours,
Frederick R. Bedell Jr.
Bellerose

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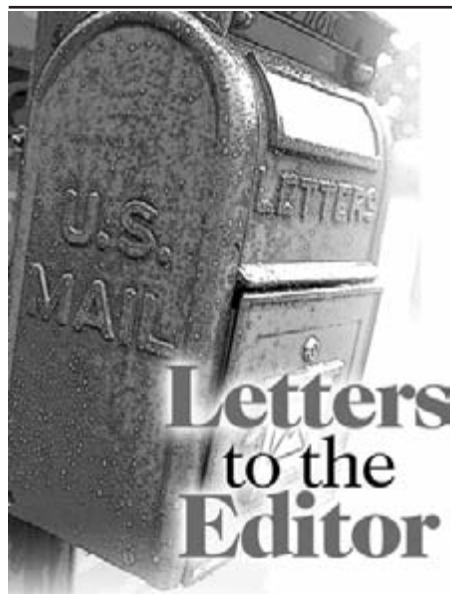
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Don't Dent And Run

To The Editor:

I have a gripe this week and it is something I think many of us surely may have experienced at