

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Brian Hutchings <behutchings@msn.com>

To: Rep. de la Cruz, Joe <joe.delacruz@cga.ct.gov>; Kate Rotella <kate.rotella@cga.ct.gov>

Cc: Notollst Info <info@notollst.org>; Marc Fitch <marc@yankeeinstitute.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020, 09:27:54 AM EST

Subject: Re: No Tolls Connecticut ! Friday Draft Hearing

28 Jan 2020

Dear Joe and Kate,

I was reading the draft toll bill and I don't see how it will help save the commuters and taxpayers any money for road and bridge upkeep. The first major mistake would be signing the reciprocal agreement turning us into a collection agency for the Massachusetts Turnpike and New York State Thruway.

I say the best bet would be no tolls, no reciprocal agreement and let Massachusetts and New York suffer their losses since they should have been playing fair all along and had eliminated the tolls on both the Turnpike and Thruway by the early nineties under the original deal like they were supposed to do.

The second major mistake will be and Rhode Island has already committed it, the DOT and/or State claims they have no money for any road and bridge projects and uses the threat of the intimate danger of bridge like the Gold Star is falling down to rush illegal truck only tolls through the session and before any toll gantries are up and all the lawsuits adjudicated, the DOT will have committed the State to so many road and bridge project contracts that far exceed the inadequate and/or unsustainable toll projections.

Just because other Northeast states already have tolls doesn't make tolling public highways or bridges Wholesome & Reasonable and Joe do you understand the current situation in Pennsylvania with the public policy failures of financing the Commonwealth's Statewide P3 Rapid Bridge Repair Program with turnpike toll money, which includes bridges not part of the turnpike system?

I have sent in many e-mails that related to Highway Financing Failures AND the Pennsylvania Turnpike since last spring's public hearing but never any response and in the Commonwealth where they toll all vehicles, and their toll authorization plan failed to sustain their statewide P3 rapid bridge repair program and their Turnpike Commission is now over \$12 billion in debt trying to cover the payments to PennDOT and has had to raise the turnpike toll rates for 12 years in a row now, how do you expect to properly sustain a truck only program here?

Also truck only tolls are illegal and it's only a matter of time that the court will say that if Rhode Island wants to toll they will have to toll everyone but what happens when your enabling legislation was only based on truck only tolls? Our general assembly can't not be writing any truck only enabling legislation with the promises that we will never toll passenger cars because we all know that is a fairy tale and the Commonwealth of

Pennsylvania is proof that you can't take toll money dedicated to a specific road like the turnpike and be able to finance statewide P3 road and bridge projects without serious financial consensuses or failures AND broken promises and more lost public trust.

Another mistake will be and I see some language already in the draft is the dependency on civil penalties and other enforcement actions to make up the difference in the toll projections. The toll bill will commit the state police to commercial commerce code enforcement but probability doesn't properly finance the law enforcement's code enforcement mandates. Non-payments and collections will also be more losses. RI-DOT even attempted to place truck restrictions on local roads in the attempt to generate more violations but the Statewide Traffic Planning Commission denied the DOT's requests. The Town of Richmond stated that they would not have the local recourses to enforce these additional commercial carrier violations with local law enforcement on behalf of the state at the same time would not have the needed resources to improve the current local roads and bridges conditions from the increased traffic that toll diversions from Interstate 95 will cause either and aren't we experiencing diversion onto local roads in Voluntown already?

I wonder if you knew that in Rhode Island that the DOT cannot collect the tolls directory themselves and have to pay the RI Turnpike & Bridge Authority \$1.3 million/year in back office administrative fees in order to collect the tolls for them? These fees are not included or reflected in any All Electronic Toll contracts and are paid separately from the gantry system vendor and not with toll money and the director was quoted in an online trucking industry publication stated that he hopes the state will offset \$1.1 million/year of these fees with violations and collections and the same general assembly that authorized the RhodeWorks Truck Tolls Authorization Plan also passed legislation in the same session at the last second to allow municipalities to utilize school zone speed enforcement cameras. The general assembly probably believes that the cities and towns can probably makeup the lack or loss of road and bridge upkeep from the state with local automated traffic enforcement camera instead but they are promoting the cameras as school/children safety when none of the proceeds are going to safety and/or road and bridge repairs.

The same vendor for Providence's school zone speed cameras also has the contract for the AET collection on the NYS Thruway and is working on securing patents to use facial recognition software with toll collection and/or automated traffic enforcement so when I see that the draft allows for the DOT/DMV to have access to toll customers private personal information including "photograph", that is very alarming since in NY that the 400 pages or so of the AET contract that deals with violations, non-payments, and collections have been blacked out from public access due to the vendor citing priority rights.

But if the promise is to never toll cars, the only way to achieve that is to never install any toll gantries to toll trucks either and also do not ever place cameras that can retain vehicle location, speeds, and driver personal information including operators' photographs on any public way, especially if you never intend to even toll cars.

And what about the costs of the administration of these systems, especially when a mistake is made and the wrong toll is charged, the wrong vehicle is tolled, the wrong person is attached to a violation, or the violation or collections action was defective or false to begin with? The state will be wasting so much trying to write tickets and chasing non-payments that the DOT will never have enough to fix anything.

And what about the nightmares that I hear from other states about the innocent drivers or registered owners going to hearings to try to clear violations and/or collection actions that were issued in error and all the personal resources lost because of false actions by the state?

Also how do you expect to pay for your fire department responding onto 95 and/or improving alignments of 95 to reduce accidents if the truck only tolls are supposed to be dedicated to the repair of the 12 specified bridges that the 12 tolls are allocated for?

I feel that it would be much better to direct fund those 12 bridges then wasting money on the creation statewide AET collection system from scratch for those 12 bridges and get us depended on the federal government with their loans that probably will get us into more trouble down the road when the toll projections are unsustainable and fail like in the other Commonwealth and I defiantly don't want to see us supporting collection efforts for tolls in NY and MA, tolls that were supposed to have been eliminated back when I was still on my learner's permit over 30 years ago. And I definitely do not support any public resources going to private companies like the vendor for the Thruway and Providence's speed cameras, who profit from the erosion of the traveling public's right to privacy.

Joe, your best bet for Friday and any Special Session vote on tolls is to oppose Truck Only Tolling since the plan is defective and unsustainable and let the topic of tolls go into the new full session with all the required statewide public involvement and hearings before any bad public policy precedents are set to tolling any pre-existing Interstates like Route 84 or 91.

Thank you,
Brian Hutchings
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(401) 545 - 1857

On Monday, January 27, 2020, 07:51:56 AM EST, Rep. de la Cruz, Joe <joe.delacruz@cga.ct.gov> wrote:

Brian,

Re-imbursement rates remain the same no matter how the money was collected as long as its invested on an interstate highway. As for the fire department issue, my point is to force the State to fix areas known to be the cause of many accidents. East Lyme is a great example of where investment would eliminate many of the accidents thus reducing the amount of trips on the highway for the local departments. I appreciate you reaching out on this issue and encourage you to keep sending any questions you may have.

Thank you,

Joe

From: Brian Hutchings <behutchings@msn.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2020 5:25:38 PM
To: Rep. de la Cruz, Joe
Cc: Rep. Rotella, Kate; Notollsct Info; Marc Fitch
Subject: No Tolls Connecticut !

26 January 2020

Representative Joe Delacruz

Dear Joe,

I just re-watched your interview on Lee's radio show from earlier this month about tolls and my two questions for you are:

If we place tolls on 95, wouldn't we loss federal funding for 95? Correct me if I wrong but I do not see that the federal government will be matching us with 3 times the amount of tolls collected like a matching employer 401K contribution. With the Massachusetts Turnpike since it's a toll road, they don't get matching federal funding for the turnpike and I don't hear Rhode Island saying that the federal government matched their \$8 million in truck tolls collected with a \$24 million matching contribution.

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Edward A. Dimmick

One might consider the earlier experience with turnpikes (oddly, mostly in CT at the time): "... as New England historian Edward Kirkland (1948, 45) put it, "the turnpikes did not make money. As a whole this was true; as a rule it was clear from the beginning." Organizers and "investors" generally regarded the initial proceeds from sale of stock as a fund from which to build the facility, which would then earn enough in toll receipts to cover operating expenses. One might hope for dividend payments as well, but "it seems to have been generally known long before the rush of construction subsided that turnpike stock was worthless" (Wood 1919, 63).³ If this was the case with private toll roads, what hope is there a government operation could be more productive? At best tolls *might* make enough to keep themselves operating; they cannot and will not produce a windfall for any other programs.

1d Like Reply

Also, since turnpikes by design do not make profits and at best may break even on operational costs, whereas they can't produce any funding for any other programs, how do you plan to fund your fire department responding onto 95 with toll money? Say we did put tolls up for the Gold Star, we might get enough for that bridge only but you wouldn't be able to fund anything else with those same tolls.

Also, it would be a very bad idea and public policy precedent to have any state public safety responsibilities dependent on any user fees and/or tolls for their operations, especially Police, Fire, and EMS.

I would think it be best for you to reconsider your position on tolls and at least vote NO during any Special Session and let the topic of tolls go through a compete statewide public involvement and hearing process in the new session starting in two weeks before having any more votes related to tolling Connecticut's highways.

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Associated Press

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