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**Opposition to any Tolls in Connecticut, as proposed in any one of or all of the Proposed Bills in 2020.**

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CONNECTICUT'S TRANSPORTATION  
INFRASTRUCTURE.**

January 31, 2020

ATTN: Connecticut House and State Senate Members:

We are Totally opposed to all of the proposed Toll Bills in the State of Connecticut listed above and we have the many reasons listed below explaining why. Please be kind enough to read and understand each and everything there:

In 1985 after numerous accidents and the extremely poor design, all tolls were removed from Connecticut's Interstates and State Highways such as Connecticut Route 15. For the record, we know the proposed tolls will not have toll booths. When the tolls were removed the State of Connecticut was promised Federal assistance to maintain all Highways and Interstates however when you compare the work needed to the work that was actually done, not enough was addressed, so the Federal Government is as much to blame along with anyone on any committee who should have Advocated for the funding starting with all previous Connecticut Governors, the previous and present U.S. Senators and U.S. House of Representative members.

Governor Ned Lamont keeps giving us unfair comparisons using New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. I will give you the true facts about New York State

I-95 from Port Chester New York to the George Washington Bridge has one toll that you pay in one direction. That area has been complexly rebuilt twice from scratch from 1980 to date. So, what is New York State doing right that Connecticut isn't doing?

I-87 in New York State runs from the Bronx all the way to Canada, which is approximately three hundred thirty-three miles and you only pay one toll and that is in Albany New York. So, what is New York State doing right that Connecticut isn't doing?

I-90 in New York State starting from Canaan going to Albany, heading and West to Canada, it starts as I-90, then turns into I-290 and then into I-190 until you enter Canada. That is approximately three hundred miles and again, the only toll you pay is in Albany New York. So, what is New York State doing right that Connecticut isn't doing?

The Whitestone Bridge in New York was rebuilt a few years after 9/11, it was done in less than 3 years, why do we continue to ignore the Mix Master which was antiquated before it was built in 1965 over fifty-four years ago.

Now before you respond, we know that there is \$152 million for the rehabilitation project of The Mixmaster Bridge. Why didn't anyone look into the logic of rebuilding it completely with the same quality and change in the layout as was done on the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge AKA the Q Bridge?

Viewing history, we know that President Eisenhower was not really interested in commerce, he just wanted to make the Interstate highways escape routes because of the Cold War after we withdrew from Korea. So, by adding Tolls both on the Interstates as well as the Connecticut State Routes 2, 8, 9, 15 and many more could be added so that will truly damage commerce and the financial pockets of Connecticut residents.

For the record, we know that hindsight is 20/20, just ask any Monday morning quarterback, so please let me say, if we truly worked hard when all Interstates were designed and didn't look at them as an escape route if we were ever bombed, each and every one of them should have been eight lanes with 60 feet of bare land on each side so if and when needed the space for any additional lanes would be available.

Back to our Opposition to any Tolls in Connecticut. Why is it that when Governor Ned Lamont speaks about what he calls a low cost to all who commute to have tolls, it sounded good, however, here are the facts: A single, one-way trip on I-95 from New York to New Haven during peak hours would cost \$2.11 or \$4.22 for a round trip. That could equal \$21.10 per week for a regular commuter with a CT E-Z Pass commuter discount. **Source for numbers: Yankee Institute for Public Policy.** However, when you apply that fact that the majority of people work 50 weeks a year: \$1,055.00, so the "low cost" turns into an economic disaster

There is no logic by wasting money for another vehicle count, additional surveys or anything that has been addressed in the last five years. Just like when you review the cost of living and other things add an adjusted percentage to the previous numbers. Also, if the Tolls get approved, will you eliminate the gas and vehicle taxes?

The tolls will put a financial burden on the overtaxed residents of Connecticut and will cause people to use local streets thus clogging them and possibly blocking emergency vehicles. Speaking of emergency vehicles, the Police, Fire and EMT's will be paying tolls on the proposed State roads, so each City and Town will have to pick up that cost. Now that is Ludacris, to say the least.

It has been proven in other States that many people refuse to pay the bills they receive for tolls and the cost of getting the money from them is another waste of money. Granted, people like myself who travel through New York State already have an E-ZPass for over a decade.

So many reliable sources have stated Connecticut will have 82 Tolling Gantries. So, Governor Lamont, please give us the itemized cost to build each Gantry, including the cost of digging each of the footings. How much Steel Rebar and the Concrete-Reinforcing Mesh is, the cost per yard of the concrete to be used. Then the cost of the electrical hookup, the cost of each Electronic Toll Collection machine, how many of them will be on each of the Gantries. The monitoring systems, how many and where they will be and the number of computers used and the amount of staff need for them. Please, that is not asking much. Then let us know how long we will be in the red and how much will we have to bring in to break even, then when you can confirm we will have a surplus. If you can't give us those numbers then something is extremely wrong and I along with many others will know you are doing something illegal by hiding anything or everything. Proposals for tolls goes back before 2017, so all of what I mentioned should have been researched by now.

We spoke with a person at the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority and she explained there are only two Toll's in the entire State, one is at Newport/Pell Bridge, all vehicles must pay and the other is on I-95, that is for trucks only.

So, we hope you see these Toll Gantries are not needed in Connecticut, they will remove more money from the pockets of Connecticut residents and they are totally unnecessary, we have the right to demand and receive Federal money for all of the work needed to be done.

In closing we must use Federal funding, I stand firmly against putting tolls where all of the Bills proposed, or any tolls at all, they will drain more money from the already overtaxed residents of Connecticut.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert A. Fiore