

TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN



Testimony of Ryan Lynch, policy director
Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Joint Committee on Transportation

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The Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit transportation organization dedicated to creating a more balanced, environmentally friendly and equitable transportation system in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to Raised Bill 289, ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TOLLS FOR THE EXTENSION OF ROUTE 11.***

While Tri-State is supportive of barrier free tolling and congestion pricing to generate revenue for maintaining our existing roads and bridges, supporting mass transit and as a way to reduce congestion on Connecticut's roads, we cannot support tolling in order to build a new roadway that does little to enhance Connecticut's transportation system to compete in the 21st century economy. Extending Route 11 will do nothing to alleviate congestion in the long term and, in fact, will likely cause increased congestion in the future.

That's because expanding Route 11 will only foster the 'sprawl cycle' where development occurs further away from traditional downtowns and Main Streets, putting more cars on the road, which leads to further congestion, which in turn, leads to more calls to expand or widen roadways. It is unsustainable from both an environmental and a budgetary perspective. Connecticut's transportation system is underfunded as it is, and more focus should be put on maintaining its existing road and bridge infrastructure, expanding transit infrastructure that provides multiple transportation options for Connecticut and supports transit oriented development that is the future of the state's growth.

However, while we oppose tolling for expanding Route 11, we applaud the Transportation Committee's continued willingness to consider tolling as means of generating revenue for the State's transportation coffers.

We believe it is imperative for the General Assembly to move forward with identifying new and innovative funding mechanisms that support a 21st century, multi-modal, transportation system, and reducing congestion. Congestion pricing in the I-95 corridor, dynamic tolling of all the State's limited access highways and conversion of HOV lanes on I-91 and I-84 into High Occupancy Tolling lanes, are just three possibilities that should be at the forefront of consideration.