



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

**REPRESENTATIVE TAMI ZAWISTOWSKI**  
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**MEMBER**  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

### **Testimony in Opposition to HB-6818: An Act Concerning the Establishment of Electronic Tolls at the State's Borders**

#### **Transportation Committee February 25, 2015**

Dear Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, Senator Boucher, Representative O'Dea and members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Tami Zawistowski, and I represent the 61<sup>st</sup> District which includes the towns of Suffield and East Granby, and a portion of the town of Windsor.

I am here today to testify in opposition to Raised Bill HB-6818: An Act Concerning the Establishment of Electronic Tolls at the State's Borders. The intent of this legislation is to initiate any actions necessary for the establishment and commencement of operations of electronic tolling at the borders of the state.

I have many concerns about this proposal, but I will limit my testimony to the issues most directly impacting the towns of the 61<sup>st</sup> District.

Many of our district's residents have employment in Massachusetts and use Interstate 91 to commute to and from work. I understand that there may be some consideration of tax credits for residents affected by the potential tolls, but I believe that this approach may have some legal obstacles. Even if a tax credit or other form of reimbursement is possible, it does not eliminate the negative financial impact due to upfront costs.

I also represent residents who own businesses in Massachusetts, including businesses that involve a lot of transportation back and forth over the border, including deliveries and other services. Imposition of tolls at the border on Interstate 91 will be both an expense and a major inconvenience for those businesses.

But my greatest concern is increased traffic – especially truck traffic – on our district's two-lane state roads and local residential roads. Suffield, East Granby and Windsor all have north-south roads which

can be used to avoid tolls on Interstate 91 at the Massachusetts border. The greatest impact may be at the Suffield-Enfield bridge crossing the Connecticut River, which is already congested during peak traffic hours, and which may encourage drivers to exit the highway further south and use local roads – many through residential areas. With the proliferation of GPS technology, it is easy for drivers to find and access those alternate routes. Increased traffic on these roads – mainly not designed to accommodate heavy truck traffic - will create congestion in residential areas as well as safety issues for local drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. Additional wear and tear to roads caused by truck traffic will also be a further burden on municipalities who must maintain those roads.

I am requesting the Transportation Committee to consider these concerns and not pursue the imposition of tolls at our state's borders.

Thank you for your time and attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tami Zawistowski', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Representative Tami Zawistowski  
61<sup>st</sup> District – Suffield, East Granby, Windsor