

Dear committee members,

I am writing to voice my opinion and concerns about re-starting toll collection at our state borders. Please don't do it! I understand all about revenue flow, but this will have such a negative effect as to possibly outweigh any gains. I also understand the need for revenue to help support planned infrastructure improvements but, while I'm not in favor of additional taxes to support that, there must be some other way than tolls to obtain the necessary funding.

Putting tolls at our borders at the four main interstate access points on I-84 and I-95 will truly make people want to stay out of CT, both for shopping and for work. You can already hear people in our three neighboring states saying "I don't want to take a job in CT and have to pay tolls on my commute everyday..."

As well those of us near the borders, and I frequently go into NY via I-84, don't want or need that additional hassle. Here in western CT, we have so many people who live in NY and come to CT daily for work, and many others who shop here often, or use the services that we have here. They will go elsewhere. They truly will.

Those of us who live here near the border know of the local roads to bypass tolls without any problem. In fact, with Rte 6 and I-84 paralleling each other to cross the NY border, it's so simple that half the world will take that route, bypassing any tolls, and putting greater strain on our local streets and services.

Yes, I'm being selfish, but also trying to point out that new tolls will be a foolhardy undertaking, and will only cause ill will towards our state. We call Connecticut the gateway to New England, but we don't want that gate to be always in the way. We want to be welcoming. Even when coming North in northern NJ there's a sign that states "Best route to New England is via I-84" and not by I-95. But the best route doesn't need to be a toll route. Maybe we should re-open the truck scales regularly and not just once in a blue moon.

I could almost see perhaps limiting this to I-95, but that's such a travel nightmare already, this will only make it worse. Yet, all along the east coast there are tolls all up and down I-95. I don't know how well that would be received at the R.I. border, but traveling from NYC on up to Boston or points beyond, people are kind of captive to the route they have to take. Similarly, there's no alternative when traveling north on I-84 into MA at Sturbridge, so the issue could be forced.

But I don't think that's a good idea and I'm not advocating it. I'm just saying I believe that having tolls at the state borders is a bad idea, and not in the best interests of our state. There are alternatives and I hope that they are examined fully before deciding to resurrect tolls.

Thank you.

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Sent from my iPad