

Greetings,

I apologize in advance if this message has reached you more than once – I was having technical problems with my ISP.

I am writing today to express my disapproval for HB 6818 and the introduction of Tolls in Connecticut. There are several reasons why I feel Tolls are detrimental to the state, it's residents, and it's economy.

1. In theory, Tolls are a "fair" tax as they are generally only paid by the people that use roadways and the collected revenue is used for maintaining the roads. However, by their very nature, Tolls are disruptive to traffic and cause unnecessary restrictions on already congested highways. In other words, motorists are forced not only to pay money but sacrifice time and incur aggravation due to traffic congestion/delays as well as the increased risk of being involved in an accident. Although the proposed electronic toll system is better than traditional manned operations in this regard, traffic will still need to slow and will therefore be impeded in order for each vehicle to be registered by the system.

2. Placing tolls at state borders adversely affects residents who live in border towns who routinely travel out of the state. For example, I am acquainted with several people who live in Connecticut but are employed in Massachusetts. Imposing a toll into their daily commute will negatively impact their take-home income and give them even more impetus than they already have to move out of our state. Tolls are also detrimental to those of us who have family in neighboring states and impose unnecessary additional costs on routine visits.

3. Asking motorists to pay a toll for entering and/or leaving the state will foster an isolationist reputation for Connecticut and will adversely affect things like tourism and attracting new residents.

4. I also believe businesses in border towns will be negatively impacted by the implementation of tolls. For example, people who live Massachusetts south and south east of Springfield often travel to Enfield via I-91 to do their shopping as the stores in Enfield are closer to them than similar stores in the Springfield area. The implementation of a toll will negatively impact this convenience which will in turn cause these people to take their business elsewhere.

5. I believe recent claims that Connecticut has some of the worst quality roads in the country are inaccurate. Based on personal observation I feel Connecticut roads are, in fact, in better shape than the roads in most of the surrounding states. As someone who commutes on Connecticut roads 100+ miles a

day I don't think that significant upgrades, and therefore significant increases to the transportation budget, are necessary.

6. In lieu of additional funding in the form of tolls (anywhere in our state, not just at the borders) and/or tax increases I feel the residents of Connecticut would be better served by more efficient usage of the revenue that is already collected and slated for use in maintaining our roads. As a lifelong resident of the state, I've seen plenty of roadway improvements implemented that were unnecessary while other, more worthwhile and beneficial improvements have been put aside. For example, projects like the New Brittan bus way and support for commuter rail in Eastern Connecticut are good ideas in theory but have little impact on a majority of the State's residents and will end up costing taxpayers more than they are worth in services. I feel residents would be better served by allocating funds to practical projects that are less expensive and will have immediate benefits such as improving interchanges in Hartford and Waterbury where traffic is routinely congested and delayed.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my comments.

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