

# OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

C.J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street  
Bethel, Connecticut 06801 Telephone: (203) 794-8549

February 27, 2017

TO: The Transportation Committee

FROM: Matthew Knickerbocker  
First Selectman, Town of Bethel

RE: Electronic Tolls on Connecticut Highways

Dear Rep. Guerrero, Sen. Boucher, Sen. Carlo and Members of the Committee:

Speaking on behalf of the residents of the Town of Bethel, I write to you today to express my opposition to tolls on Connecticut interstate highways. My opposition is due to several important factors.

First, much of the discussion and press reports speak of “border tolls” that would capture revenue from traffic passing through the state. Unfortunately, it would also capture daily commuters who must cross into New York state in order to work. A border tolls represents a massive and unfair new tax burden for these commuters. In Bethel it is estimated that a border tolls would burden hundreds, if not thousands of daily commuters with a new tax. This new tax is simply unfair and discriminatory.

We are also concerned about the affect a border toll would have on commerce in the greater Danbury area, as a substantial number of New York citizens travel to our area for shopping and recreation.

This leads to the idea of proceeding with tolls, but locating them farther from the state line to avoid unfairly taxing daily commuters and shoppers. Unfortunately, this only move the inequity to a different location and causes disproportionate burden on a different population. Congestion and gridlock would be a common occurrence in towns affected by tolls, as area residents who must use the interstate on a regular basis seek to avoid them.

In summary, while we recognize the urgent need to provide funding for our state’s critical infrastructure needs, tolls are not the solution. No matter how they are located, tolls will disproportionately burden certain portions of our citizenry and leave others off the hook. Funding for transportation must be spread equitably across our economic base.