



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

State Comptroller Confirms Senator Young's Concerns

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Senator Catharine Young (R,I,C-Olean) today lauded State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli's recommendations to postpone future toll hikes by reiterating her opposition to the proposal to hike tolls by up to 20 percent over the next four years.

"The Thruway Authority should immediately put the brakes on their unwarranted and destructive proposed hikes," said Senator Young. "The Comptroller's report that the Senate requested confirmed what we suspected -- the Thruway Authority should find cost savings instead of sticking it to the traveling public."

The Comptroller's report recommended that the Thruway Authority should "postpone future hikes until it has conducted a thorough analysis of its expenses and operations and prioritized capital projects."

"A huge jump in tolls will hurt tourism, consumers and the upstate economy. Our area depends on attracting visitors to our region. Many commuters need to drive the Thruway to get to their jobs. Retailers will pass along higher transportation costs to consumers. Businesses will suffer," Senator Young said.

In addition, Senator Young said the Thruway Authority should no longer should pay for operating the state's canal system. About \$80 million in tolls -- the same amount the Thruway Authority says they are short -- is annually diverted from Thruway revenue to fund the 524-mile canal system.

"When the state transferred the canal system over in 1992 it was a fiscal gimmick. As the State Comptroller has said it is time to end the shell game," Senator Young said.

The agency raised tolls by 25 percent for passenger vehicles in 2005, with a 10 percent discount for E-ZPass customers and 35 percent for commercial drivers who received a 5 percent E-ZPass discount.