



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo Statement on Port Authority's Approval of Toll Increases

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. August 19, 2011

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“The Port Authority’s decision to raise tolls is a step in the wrong direction for New York State.

Under the plan approved by the Port Authority’s Board of Commissioners, drivers will face toll increases each year through 2015. Living, working, and doing business will become even more unaffordable in New York, a state which has the nation’s worst business tax climate, second highest state-local tax burden, and led the country in the percentage of people leaving for other states.

The Port Authority should have looked harder to find internal savings before asking overburdened families and businesses to pay more. Audits issued by State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, as well as other media reports, showed numerous areas where the Port Authority failed to contain costs and appropriately manage its finances.

One of the disturbing parts of this process is a glaring lack of transparency. The Board issued its initial proposal only two weeks ago, and held just one day of public comment hearings only three days before the scheduled vote. Adding insult to injury, media reports stated that not a single Port Authority Commissioner attended any of these public hearings.

The final straw is an amended proposal that was made public last night and approved by the Board this morning. The public barely had time to even know there was an amended proposal, let alone review and comment on it, before it was adopted by the Board.

Governors Cuomo and Christie should reject these toll increases, immediately order an independent forensic audit of the Port Authority’s finances, and re-evaluate the Port Authority’s current leadership.”

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