



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

## Senator David Carlucci Says Proposed Toll Freeze on Mario M. Cuomo Bridge Should Extend to Rockland & Westchester Residents Who Are Not E-ZPass Holders

SENATOR DAVID CARLUCCI | October 13, 2020

| ISSUE: **TOLLS; CASHLESS TOLLING**

(**New City, NY**) - Today, Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Westchester) addressed the New York State Thruway Authority at their first of three public hearings to address toll increases on the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge.

Senator Carlucci has strongly been against toll hikes and has called for years for a toll discount for Rockland and Westchester residents. The Thruway Authority has proposed a toll freeze of \$4.75 for Rockland and Westchester E-ZPass holders through 2022; however, the Senator asked the Thruway to consider extending the freeze to residents who are not E-ZPass holders. In 2021, residents who do not have an E-ZPass could face a toll of \$6.83, plus a \$2 administrative surcharge per billing statement, and in 2022 a toll of \$7.48.

"Right now, it's a quarter difference for drivers without an E-ZPass, and beginning in 2021 they are looking at a significant increase," **said Senator David Carlucci**. "Drivers without an E-ZPass will also be hit with a \$2 surcharge, which the Thruway should wave. Many seniors and residents on a fixed income are not E-ZPass holders, and we need to make sure they are not driven into debt by tolls."

Carlucci worries during the pandemic that fewer people will go to E-ZPass retail locations to get an E-ZPass, seniors may have trouble with the online process, and individuals on fixed incomes may prefer Toll By Mail. Carlucci noted many residents who have called his office have run into issues with Tolls By Mail because they do not have an E-ZPass, and with these increases, the problems will only be exacerbated. Carlucci helped a frontline nurse who did not have an E-ZPass and owed \$160 in tolls on the new bridge, but due to fees the Thruway Authority wanted \$3,260.

"We have seen so many people come into my office literally in tears because of cashless tolling fees. Toll Revenue has been quite profitable for the Thruway Authority, and these profits should not be made on the backs of residents who do not have an E-ZPass," **said Carlucci.**

In 2017, the Thruway Authority made about \$731.5 million in toll revenue, about \$736 million in 2018, and about \$739 million in 2019. While unpaid tolls reached an all-time low in 2019, at about \$475,000 worth.

At the hearing, Carlucci also encouraged the Thruway Authority to have their Toll Advisory Panel meet more regularly to hear from community members and make their contract with Conduent, their cashless tolling operator, more transparent to the public.