



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo: Thruway Authority must ensure cashless tolling system working as intended

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO July 5, 2022

| ISSUE: **NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY AUTHORITY; CASHLESS TOLLS**

Following complaints from constituents about erroneous E-ZPass bills resulting from the cashless tolling system on the New York State Thruway, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, communicated with the New York State Thruway Authority and state Comptroller's Office and asked them to examine and address this issue.

Recently, a constituent indicated that she was charged more than \$6 to travel from Exit 34 (Canastota-Oneida-Chittenango) to Exit 34A (Syracuse-Chittenango-Oswego) because her transponder was not read properly. According to the Thruway Authority's toll and distance calculator, she should have only been charged 67 cents to travel the approximately 15 miles between the two exits.

In a letter to Thruway Authority Executive Director Matthew Driscoll, Sen. Griffo wrote that, while he understands mistakes can happen, it should be the responsibility of the authority and not the resident to ensure that bills are correct.

"If this constituent had not taken up the practice of routinely reviewing her E-ZPass statement every month for errors, she never would have discovered that she was overcharged," **Sen. Griffo wrote to Driscoll.** "There is no doubt that countless other New

Yorkers and visitors to our state have been erroneously overcharged but remain unaware because they assume that the cashless tolling system works as intended.”

Sen. Griffo also has communicated with state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli regarding this issue and has urged his office to consider an audit of the state’s cashless tolling initiative to ensure that it is operating properly and that safeguards are in place to protect the traveling public.

New York’s \$355 million cashless tolling project was intended to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion and allow for nonstop travel on the state’s toll roads, bridges and tunnels.

Existing toll plazas and barriers were removed, and overhead structures called gantries were erected at interchanges and other locations along the state’s Thruway system. The gantries support specialized equipment such as cameras and sensors that can read E-ZPass tags and capture license plate images. With this technology in place, motorists are no longer required to stop to pay tolls because the sensors and cameras suspended over the highway will read each license plate and mail a toll bill to that vehicle’s registered owner.

Sen. Griffo, the ranking member of the Senate’s Transportation Committee, has previously expressed concerns about the state’s cashless tolling system.

“I understand the importance of having transportation infrastructure in place that can efficiently and effectively move people throughout the state,” **Sen. Griffo said.** “However, it is imperative that we make sure that this infrastructure, including cashless tolling, operates as intended and does not create additional financial burdens for those utilizing the Thruway.”

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