

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK

CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP



SENATOR
CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO, JR.
8TH SENATE DISTRICT

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CIVIL SERVICE & PENSIONS
CODES
COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& SMALL BUSINESS
CONSUMER PROTECTION
ENERGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS
FINANCE
HEALTH
JUDICIARY

August 16, 2011

Board of Commissioners
Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
225 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10003

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to strongly urge you to reject the proposed toll increase plan for the Port Authority's bridges and tunnels.

As you are aware, this proposal would charge drivers with an E-Z Pass fifty percent more in round-trip tolls to use the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels, the George Washington Bridge, and the bridges connecting Staten Island and New Jersey. Roundtrip truck tolls per axle would increase by nearly 100 percent. The cash toll for drivers without E-Z Pass would increase to \$15. In each case, these tolls would increase again in 2014.

At a time of record unemployment and a declining economy, these massive and unfair toll increases would be a step in the wrong direction for our state. New Yorkers have the second-highest state and local tax burden in the nation. If this proposal is adopted, residents with an E-Z Pass who use the bridges and tunnels to commute will have to pay approximately \$1,000 a year more just to get to work every day. That's real money that families can't afford to lose.

New York's business tax climate is the worst in the nation. Many businesses are barely surviving in an abysmal economy; the last thing we should be doing is making it more expensive to do business in New York. However, charging businesses nearly 100 percent more in round trip truck tolls will do exactly that. Ultimately, these costs will get passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices.

A recent report noted that New York State once again led the country in the percentage of people leaving for other states. Making it more expensive to live, work, and do business here will only encourage this mass exodus to continue.



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Nearly 900 residents and business owners have already signed an online petition I sponsored urging the Board to reject these proposed increases because they simply can't afford to pay more.

The New York State Legislature and Governor Cuomo worked together earlier this year to pass a state budget which erased a \$10 billion budget deficit without raising taxes or fees. We also enacted a property tax cap to help further reduce costs on residents. Families and businesses have been tightening their belts and doing more with less for years to survive the economic downturn. The Port Authority should follow these examples and continue to find internal savings and reduce costs, rather than asking substantially more from those who can afford it the least.

Once again, I strongly urge you to reject this proposal because of the devastating effect it would have on families and businesses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. J. Fuschillo, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO, JR.
New York State Senator
Chairman, Senate Transportation Committee