

February 13, 2012

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

RE: AMENDMENT TO EXPAND TOLLING ON THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

During consideration of MAP 21, the surface transportation bill (S. 1813), an amendment is likely to be offered which would authorize the use of tolls on existing lanes of the Interstate Highway System. As representatives of highway users, law enforcement agencies and businesses that rely on a safe and efficient highway system, we strongly oppose this amendment and urge you to vote against it.

Tolling existing Interstates is extremely inefficient. Even using the most advanced technology, toll collection costs are at least five times higher than the cost of collecting a state fuel tax and in many cases, more than 20 cents out of each dollar of a toll collected is used simply to administer the toll.

In addition, it is well known and well documented that many motorists will avoid paying a toll by exiting an Interstate and using secondary roads, which are less safe and not as well constructed. Because the trucking industry is so competitive, and profit margins so tight, many motor carriers will be forced to choose between using these lower order roads and going out of business. Ironically, those vehicles traveling on the tolled Interstates essentially get penalized for operating on the roads for which they are best suited.

Congress must also consider its Constitutional obligation to protect interstate commerce. Most of the states that have considered, or are currently considering, Interstate tolls have suggested that they will charge tolls at their borders or at other locations designed to place most of the financial burden on out-of-state traffic, an act that probably violates the Interstate Commerce Clause. Even if your state is unlikely to impose tolls under this amendment, please consider that your constituents may be subjected to toll payments when entering or traveling in neighboring states. Also, keep in mind that tolls distort the cost of moving freight generally, which has an adverse effect on all Americans, whether or not the toll was paid in their state. We hope you will oppose any amendment which seeks to expand tolling on existing lanes of the Interstate Highway System.

Sincerely,

AAA
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Highway Users Alliance

American Motorcyclist Association
American Moving and Storage Association
American Trucking Associations
Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance
National Shippers Strategic Transportation Council (NASSTRAC)
National Private Truck Council
National Tank Truck Carriers
NATSO: Representing America's Travel Plazas and Truckstops
Owner Operator Independent Drivers Association
Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association
Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association
Transportation Intermediaries Association
Truckload Carriers Association
Alabama Trucking Association
Alaska Trucking Association
Arizona Trucking Association
Arkansas Trucking Association
California Trucking Association
Colorado Motor Carriers Association
Connecticut Movers and Warehouseman's Association
Motor Transport Association of Connecticut
Delaware Motor Transport Association
Florida Trucking Association
Georgia Motor Trucking Association
Hawaii Transportation Association
Idaho Trucking Association
Illinois Trucking Association
Indiana Motor Truck Association
Iowa Motor Truck Association
Kansas Motor Carriers Association
Kentucky Motor Transport Association
Louisiana Motor Transport Association
Maine Motor Transport Association
Maryland Motor Truck Association
Massachusetts Motor Transportation Association
Michigan Trucking Association
Minnesota Trucking Association
Mississippi Trucking Association
Missouri Trucking Association
Motor Carriers of Montana
Nebraska Trucking Association
Nevada Motor Transport Association
New Hampshire Motor Transport Association
New Jersey Motor Truck Association
New Mexico Trucking Association

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South Dakota Trucking Association
Southwest Movers Association
Tennessee Trucking Association
Texas Motor Transport Association
Utah Trucking Association
Vermont Truck and Bus Association
Virginia Trucking Association
Washington Trucking Associations
West Virginia Trucking Association
Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association
Wyoming Trucking Association