



December 7, 2020

**RE: RESCIND the P3 Board's Approval to Toll Bridges in Pennsylvania**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association (PMTA), The American Trucking Association (ATA), along with every single business in PA that operates trucks, I am writing in **opposition to PennDOT's planned tolling of interstate bridges through Public Private Partnerships or P3's.**

We implore you to **support Senator Brooks' Concurrent Resolution (co-sponsorship memo circulating) to RESCIND the P3 Board's Approval to Toll Bridges**, as we are in complete agreement with her statement that "Actions such as this should be through a thoroughly, publicly vetted process and discussion, and not at the sole discretion of the P3 Board."

A toll is indeed a tax. You have been elected to represent the taxpayers of your district and should not permit 7 members of the P3 Board to tax your constituents **without any notice, discussion, or stakeholder involvement.**

When Act 89 of 2013 was being debated in the Legislature, the trucking industry stepped up in support of this legislation with full understanding that the cost to operate our businesses would increase. Our industry understood then the dire need to repair our roadways and bridges in the Commonwealth, as we rely on quality infrastructure to fulfill our role in Interstate Commerce in the United States.

To explain the true impact of Act 89 on our industry further, in 2012 the taxes on diesel fuel alone for a single tractor trailer operating 100,000 miles per year at 5.5mpg in the Commonwealth were \$11,327.28. In 2020 these taxes rose to \$18,090.91 equaling a \$6,763.63 increase annually per tractor trailer. In addition, the cost to license a tractor trailer in 2012 was \$1,812.50 and by comparison in 2020 the cost is \$2,501.00, which increased the cost \$648.50 per tractor trailer annually. These taxes and fees combined increased our annual costs by \$7,452.13 per tractor trailer.

In the final days prior to the passage of Act 89, PennDOT threatened to reduce the weight capacity of bridges throughout the Commonwealth which forced our company owners to contact their local legislators. When I was the executive of a trucking company here in PA, this happened to me as a bridge just north of my business on route 501 had its weight reduced which left us no way to drive our trucks north to access a highway. PennDOT cannot use this same threat to achieve even more funding.

Through the passage of Act 89, PennDOT achieved what they estimated to be a \$1.3 billion increase annually in 2018 and this funding is even higher in 2020. Now, only 7 years after the passage of Act 89, PennDOT is saying they need even more money, and they now want to toll bridges. Although the need for additional transportation funding has been amplified by the pandemic and stay at home orders, PMTA was blindsided by the action of the P3 Board. For those who may think that the trucking industry

does not pay our fair share, it is important to note that **the trucking industry already pays over 40% of the highway taxes while only operating 9% of the miles in Pennsylvania.**

**Pennsylvania has the second highest fuel taxes in the entire U.S. and in addition, has one of the highest costs to register a tractor trailer in this nation.** How can every other state DOT in the nation meet their highway needs but PennDOT is continually asking for more money including a last-minute budget request to borrow \$600 million to resolve cash flow problems? PennDOT seems to prefer governing by crisis and passing the buck instead of making funding recommendations for the Legislature to consider and debate with stakeholder and public involvement. Moreover, Act 44 has been a failure as it has put the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (Turnpike) further into debt to the point where they cannot meet their scheduled payments to PennDOT earmarked to fund mass transit – payments that come from annual toll-rate increases that have largely come from commercial traffic as passenger traffic has declined substantially during the pandemic.

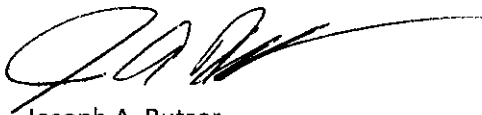
The trucking industry cannot pass along the cost of a toll or “congestion/rush hour pricing,” an idea that PennDOT has also floated in the media, to their customers since it will be an after the fact cost. Therefore, the people getting hit the hardest by tolling of bridges or on any roadway in Pennsylvania are the Pennsylvania based trucking companies and any other PA businesses that run trucks out of and back into our State every day. These same companies are providing Pennsylvania jobs and payroll taxes along with benefitting each local community throughout the Commonwealth.

PennDOT continually says publicly that they will be reaching out to the stakeholders and specifically mentions the trucking industry regarding this P3 tolling scheme and yet, PMTA has yet to be contacted. Regardless, as a stakeholder in the development of Act 89, PMTA would have appreciated stakeholder involvement **prior to the action taken by the P3 Board to toll bridges in Pennsylvania.**

Please remember that the trucking industry will be delivering the COVID-19 vaccine in the weeks and months to come and we have been essential to providing Pennsylvanians with the supplies they need to survive throughout this pandemic.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and we respectfully request your support for Senator Brooks’ Concurrent Resolution to RESCIND the P3 Board’s Approval to Toll Bridges.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Butzer  
Interim President  
Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association