



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

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March 18, 2020

Honorable Dianne Gutierrez-Scaccetti
Commissioner
NJ Dept. of Transportation
PO Box 60
Trenton, NJ 08625

John M. Keller, Executive Director
NJ Turnpike Authority
PO Box 5042
Woodbridge, NJ 07095

RE: *Opposition to Proposed Toll Hikes*

***Transmitted via e-mail

Dear Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti & Executive Director Keller:

This is to convey our Delegation's vehement and unalterable opposition to the proposed toll hikes being considered by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority for the Garden State Parkway and New Jersey Turnpike. In representing the interests of our constituents, we request this correspondence be entered into the official record of public testimony.

New Jersey, along with the rest of the nation, is bracing for the potential of severe economic hardships for its residents and businesses due to the coronavirus. For many, this is already the standing reality.

Future increases for the cost of commuting and doing business through the imposition of toll hikes will have a chilling effect and likely exacerbate an already precarious economic situation. Consumers will have less disposable income to infuse into the economy, let alone to pay their bills. Businesses will have less financial resources necessary to stabilize their operations.

Just as with the toll hikes imposed during the Corzine Administration, our constituency stands to be disparately impacted as the Parkway serves as the only viable means of North-South travel. Route 9 is antiquated in too many areas due to needed infrastructure improvements that have gone unaddressed by the state. Conveniently for the state, this has had the effect of pushing commuters onto the Parkway where they pay tolls on a consistent basis for even routine trips.

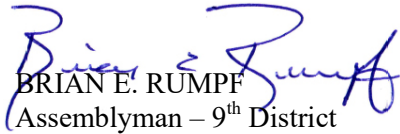
In short, too many commuters and taxpayers simply cannot afford to pay increased tolls, irrespective of any justification the Authority offers for requesting additional toll revenue. Too much is at stake to impose yet another increase in the cost of living and doing business in New Jersey when, in fact, the state should be intensely focused on alleviating financial hardships.

In view of the substantial challenges our state and nation face, quite possibly for a considerable period of time, the Authority should immediately shelve its plans to increase tolls on the Garden State Parkway and New Jersey Turnpike.

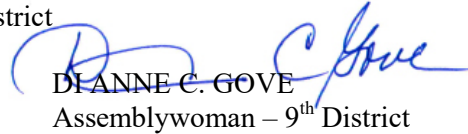
Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER J. CONNORS
Senator – 9th District



BRIAN E. RUMPF
Assemblyman – 9th District



DIANNE C. GOVE
Assemblywoman – 9th District