

James Ely, President  
Patrick D. Jones, Executive Director

## **For Immediate Release**

June 11, 2007

Contact: Neil Gray  
(202) 270-8655 or [NeilGray@IBTTA.org](mailto:NeilGray@IBTTA.org)

### **Flexible Tolling System Promotes Infrastructure Improvements and Congestion Avoidance**

*German Transport Minister Seeks New Ideas and Examples of Success From Worldwide Transportation Practitioners*

Berlin, GERMANY – The German Minister of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs today promoted expanded use of flexible tolling to support highway infrastructure improvements and combat congestion. Wolfgang Tiefensee made his remarks before the spring technology workshop of the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association, an international gathering of toll industry executives from 17 countries on six continents.

Noting that Germany has tripled its traffic volume since the 1970s, the minister said, “We need money to make sure our infrastructure works. But revenues are not increasing fast enough to support our infrastructure needs. We need investment and we need it fast.”

The need for new highway revenues and infrastructure investment was one of the main reasons for establishing the German truck tolling system. “To what extent can those who impose costs on our system be involved in paying for upgrades to our infrastructure?” the minister asked. “We are taking a serious look at congestion avoidance and what role tolls can play.”

“We know what tolls are; we’ve had them since the Middle Ages. We are now opening the door to the tolling systems of the next century. We are opening the door to flexibility, either to impose tolls on our roads, to make them toll-free again, or to expand the reach of tolling.”

So far, the truck tolling system in Germany has been a success. “We collect more than 3.1 billion Euros per year in tolls from trucks weighing more than 12 tons and all of that money goes immediately into our infrastructure. This includes mostly roads, but also rail and water transportation.”

The minister emphasized the vital role of public opinion to the success of any system to improve infrastructure. “Mobility needs public acceptance. The public are not happy when they are driving alongside trucks that are empty or that are polluting. To meet the

needs of mobility, we need to bring the people along. We also need standards and harmonization across Europe. We must try to move away from the parochialism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and we must strive to achieve interoperability across national boundaries.”

“The challenges we face are enormous. One possibility to address these challenges is more, better and flexible tolling systems. We cannot simply build more roads. We need to use our existing system more efficiently. We need new resources to build infrastructure and to eliminate bottlenecks. I hope that what you do will give the politicians something to think about. We need your ideas and your examples of success.”

The minister also said that GNSS tolling will be compatible with the Galileo system and emphasized the importance of rapid implementation of Galileo for Europe. Galileo is the new system of satellites that is comparable to the GPS system in the United States.

*The **International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA)** is the worldwide association for the owners and operators of toll facilities and the businesses that support them. IBTTA has members in 30 U.S. states and in 21 countries on five continents around the world. Founded in 1932, IBTTA is driving positive change in surface transportation.*