

James Ely, President  
Patrick D. Jones, Executive Director

## For Immediate Release

December 4, 2007

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

### Tolling and Pricing Are Poised to Stimulate Fundamental Changes in Mobility

*Transportation Experts Identify Current Trends and  
Predict Accelerated Change in Infrastructure Funding Methods*

Washington – Congestion, \$90 a barrel gasoline, collapsing bridges, global climate change, shrinking budgets, declining fuel tax revenues, and the specter of an unproductive highway reauthorization threaten the nation's economic and social well being. **However**, the future doesn't have to be bleak.

More than 200 transportation practitioners, policy makers, and financial experts from the public and private sector gathered in Washington, D.C., to talk about the transportation funding crisis and formulate sustainable solutions.

During the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association's 4<sup>th</sup> North American Transportation Finance Summit, December 3-4, 2007, several key themes emerged:

- **Mobility has costs:** environmental, social and economic. Mobility is not a given; it is not a free good; just like bread, water, electricity and other goods and services, mobility costs money.
- **The public approaches transportation as a system or network** rather than as individual competing modes or a collection of individual projects.
- **The public has shown a growing willingness to accept tolling and pricing in return for mobility.** The public recognizes pricing as one of the few tools available to promote mobility in a sustainable way.
- **Huge cultural shifts** in the thinking of government officials and public attitudes toward the value of mobility **will be essential to implement pricing on a broad scale.**
- **Public and private sector roles with respect to the funding and operation of infrastructure are converging.**

Luncheon speaker Dr. Joseph M. Giglio emphasized the central role of price in our transportation system. He characterized price as strategic, variable and an indicator of value. Giglio emphasized that price is both a noun AND a verb. To price is to wield a powerful and agile tool in the transportation marketplace.

The conference participants recognized that price should play a defining role in future transportation decision making. Price allows consumers to make rational choices based on the quality, cost, and availability of services in the transportation marketplace.

Robert Atkinson, Chairman of the National Infrastructure Financing Commission, noted this when he said, “A lot of our infrastructure today is provided by the private sector – telephone, water, electricity, television, mobile phone technology, and the Internet – and people are okay with that. It’s a regulated system in which the private sector can do it better than the public sector.”

Several presenters noted that while government and the public must undergo a cultural shift to fully embrace pricing in transportation, this cultural shift is already well underway. David Horner, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, said, “The general public prefers tolls to taxes. We’re much nearer to widespread public acceptance of tolls than people in Washington, DC believe. Two years ago, a TRB report on alternatives to the fuel tax said that our highways will be supported by road metering within 10 years.”

Horner’s comments add weight to the belief that the next highway reauthorization must focus less on the cost of the system and more on establishing the value of the system based on price. Why? Because an effectively priced transportation system will deliver the most value to transportation consumers who rely on price to establish value in all other parts of their lives.

*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.*