

Santiago Corral, President
Patrick D. Jones, Executive Director

**Remarks of Patrick D. Jones
IBTTA Executive Director
During Press Teleconference to Release the Environmental Defense Report
June 6, 2006**

We are pleased to join with Environmental Defense, APTA and the NCPPP in support of our common goals of addressing the nation's critical surface transportation needs and personal mobility issues through the broader consideration of toll financing.

Environmental Defense's report "*No More Just Throwing Money Out the Window: Using Road Tolls to Cut Congestion, Protect the Environment, and Boost Access for All*" provides additional evidence of the huge pressure our country is experiencing from growing congestion and unmet transportation needs.

As a nation, we are paying an enormous price for congestion in lost productivity, wasted fuel and frustration.

The nation's economy depends on a strong transportation system but it's in crisis because of a lack of funding, deteriorating infrastructure, and growing congestion. At the federal, state and local levels of government, our legislators are struggling to find ways to overcome severe shortages of resources to fund improvements. Finding alternative road-funding sources is imperative.

With fuel prices heading ever higher, traditional responses like increasing fuel taxes are deemed unacceptable. On the contrary, many state legislatures have considered reducing or suspending their fuel taxes as a way to help their constituents, despite the damage such actions would have on already strained transportation programs.

As the Environmental Defense report notes, tolling has a long history in the United States. It is a reliable, fair and time-tested mechanism to fund, develop and operate roads – it's also much easier to implement now with new technologies.

- Toll financing stays in the transportation system and builds facilities with the greatest potential public benefit fast and efficiently.
- Tolls are fair user fees that give drivers choices: If you use a toll road, you pay for it. Whereas with the gas tax, motorists pay for the funding of projects they may never use

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While tolling is not the answer in every case, it's a powerful, agile tool for mobility that works well now and will be a big part of our nation's future transportation solutions.

- Motorists and public officials increasingly recognize tolling as an integral part of the solution to the U.S. transportation crisis.
- Thanks to technological advances, tolling can actually alleviate congestion and better manage traffic flow.
- Toll revenues are the means to provide high-quality transportation infrastructure, subsidize other modes of public transit and stimulate economic growth.
- No other financing mechanism can offer all of these benefits.

We salute Environmental Defense on their excellent report and encourage public officials to take its recommendations seriously.