

Tolling Talking Points – The Importance and Benefits of Tolling

Below are individual talking points you may use when speaking or writing to your Board, elected officials, the media or the general public.

Tolling is a smart way to fund and finance the highways, bridges and tunnels that move our economy and get drivers where they want to go.

At 18.4 cents per gallon, the federal gas tax was last raised in 1993. Since then, it has lost nearly 40 percent of its purchasing power. The gas tax would need to be raised to nearly 30 cents per gallon to give it the purchasing power it had in 1993.

Since 2008, Congress has had to transfer over \$143 million to the Highway Trust Fund just to keep it solvent.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the surplus from these transfers will run out in FY2020, after which point the fund will face \$20 million annual shortfalls. Meanwhile, costs are rising as the highway system ages.

The Interstates will cost nearly \$2.5 trillion to rebuild over the next 50 years; with declining federal dollars, the states will have to pay more than \$1.8 trillion, nearly three-fourths of the total investment.

In its [2017 Report Card for America's Infrastructure](#), the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave bridges an overall grade of C+ and roads a D.

Tolling is a proven, viable funding option. Quick facts about tolling in the U.S in 2015:

- There are 5,881 miles of toll roads in the U.S.;
- 331 toll facilities in 35 states;
- There are more than 50 Million transponders in the U.S.; and
- More than 5 Billion trips and transactions on toll roads and crossings in the U.S.

Most of the 62 U.S. toll agency members of IBTTA receive no federal or state funds to support their day-to-day operations – yet, on an annual basis, they generate more than \$14 Billion in toll revenue. That is equal to nearly one-third of the federal gas tax revenues collected each year. Without those toll revenues, states would have to go without the vital road, bridge and tunnel infrastructures that those tolls support, including some of the most heavily traveled highways, bridges and tunnels in the country.

As elected officials across the country explore options to promote long-term transportation investment, we call on Congress to grant states the maximum flexibility to meet their individual transportation funding challenges. We seek flexibility, not a mandate. Our highway system is incredibly diverse, and it would be unnecessary and wrong for Congress to mandate tolling or any other funding solution for every road in every state and community.

The use of tolls is a central component to this nation's transportation funding system. Tolls establish a direct connection between the use of the road and payment for that use. For too long, motorists have falsely believed our roads are free. Our highways are not free nor have they ever been. However, it's easy to see why that misperception persists. There is no direct link between paying the fuel tax and using the roads it funds. Tolling re-establishes that connection.

There are no free roads. There are only toll roads and tax supported roads. A toll is a user fee, not a tax. You only pay for a toll road when you use it. Every road needs maintenance and reconstruction, and that costs money. No road is ever fully paid for. A road, just like your home, requires ongoing upkeep and maintenance. Tolls provide a sustainable source of revenue for ongoing road maintenance and improvement.

Tolling is an innovative and cost-effective approach to addressing our nation's transportation infrastructure challenges while providing a safe and reliable option for the traveling public to reach their destinations.

In the old days, you paid a toll by stopping at a toll booth and handing your money to a person or dropping your coins in a basket. Tolling once meant stop; but today high tech tolling means go, go, go.