

# Tolls in Connecticut

## Frequently Asked Questions

*The following information details the proposals that have been made by Governor Malloy and legislative Democrats to implement tolls in CT. While there are many unknowns about how tolls will impact CT residents, the following is what we do know.*

### **Who will pay for tolls?**

75% of the people paying for the tolls would be CT residents according to a rough DOT study.

### **Can tolls just be placed on the borders?**

Connecticut cannot implement border tolls without losing federal money and having to pay back the federal government for decades of funding we received because we didn't have tolls (this is unique to CT because of an agreement with the federal government in 1984 when tolls were removed. If we did border tolls, we would have to pay back all federal funding received since that agreement began.)

### **Is there a set plan for how tolls will be implemented?**

No complete study has been done to map out a specific plan. Rather, the governor and lawmakers are asking for the "go-ahead" without offering a plan or details about costs or impact on residents. They're asking for support to approve the concept, and then trusting government to do what's best.

### **Where will tolls be located?**

No study yet has shown an exact plan for toll locations. However, we do know the DOT Commissioner has said that the congestion pricing model (the most likely for CT to use for tolls) would mean "tolling every interstate and limited access [highway] and some other state roads." The only way to achieve that level of revenue would be to put tolls on state roads, including routes 2, 8, 9 and the Merritt Parkway. According to the commissioner, "**We would be the only state in the nation that tolled that much.**" Toll rates would also be higher during peak drive times under this scenario.

### **How close together will electronic tolls be located?**

Some estimates have put tolls at every 1 mile to 5 miles apart on certain roadways. The concern here is that tolls essentially would **become a mileage tax**. Instead of paying to use a certain bridge or one roadway like in other states, CT would see tolls all over and residents would be charged at the toll for every mile they drive.

### **How much will tolls cost?**

Rough estimates from a DOT study show toll rates at 10 cents to 20 cents per mile (in order to break even or make a profit). These are significantly above average, exceeding other rates by anywhere between 2 to 4 times the highest rate in the country. (Example, Massachusetts charges approximately 4 cents for mile). Even if rates were 5 cents per mile, CT would have to put them on virtually every highway to make a profit and DOT could install them without gaining further legislative approval.

## **Who has to approve tolls?**

The state legislature would have to vote to move the concept forward. Another obstacle is that tolls in CT would still have to be approved by the federal government.

## **Would tolls allow us to lower other taxes?**

Democrat lawmakers and the Governor are proposing tolls at the same time they are proposing other new taxes and tax increases. There are no guarantees that these would be reduced. Look what happened to the promise of eliminating the sales tax which was promised when the income tax was passed. This year's proposals include: Governor proposing 7 cent gas tax increase, Democrat lawmakers proposed 4 cent gas tax increase, Governor proposing \$3 per tire fee.

## **Currently, Connecticut receives more federal funding because we do not have tolls; so what happens to that funding?**

For every one dollar of federal tax that we pay for gasoline, we get over \$ .70 back from the federal government mostly because we don't have tolls. Places like New York, Massachusetts and New Jersey are below \$ .37 because of tolls. We also get more money from the federal government based upon the miles of untolled roads. We could lose some of that money if we toll the roads. Therefore, to make any profit, we would have to exceed even the estimates the governor has shared to make up for the loss of federal dollars.

## **But we need to get out of state drivers to pay for our roads too, right?**

Only 25% of tolls would be paid for by out of state residents under even the hypothetical study from DOT in 2015. Out-of-state drivers also already do contribute to Connecticut's transportation budget, through: per-mile costs that truck drivers pay, and through a disbursement of federal gas tax dollars that benefits Connecticut more than states that have tolls. Because we don't have tolls we get more federal funds as a result of mileage taxes people from all states pay. We could lose this increased funding if we implemented tolls. To get out of state drivers to pay we also would need reciprocity with other states to bill drivers who travel through Connecticut. This is another challenge that would need to be addressed.

## **If not tolls, then what?**

Connecticut needs to consider ways to fund transportation without asking for more from state taxpayers who have already been drained enough. The Republican Prioritize Progress transportation funding plan eliminates excessive use of the state's credit card for political handouts at the same time it prioritizes funding for necessities like roads, bridges and school construction. It operates under a bonding cap to curb borrowing. Today, Prioritize Progress would allow us to provide an immediate and stable funding source dedicated just for transportation totaling as much as \$1.5 billion annually in state resources alone. Over 30 years, with projected federal matching dollars, it would provide \$64 billion for critical transportation infrastructure projects within current resources. Read the plan here: <http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2018PrioritizeProgress.pdf>

