

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
Office of the Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) have resubmitted for the third time a request to toll Interstate 80 (I-80) in Pennsylvania. I ask that you reject this proposal.

Pennsylvania's Act 44, which dictates that I-80 is converted to a tolled facility, levies a new tax on users in addition to the over adequate amount of taxes currently being paid. Act 44 is scheme to backchannel Turnpike revenues for the subsidization of mass transit, while using I-80 revenues for other highway projects throughout the state. This places an undue and inordinate burden on the users of I-80 and is inconsistent with federal law.

Interstate 80 is a part of National Highway System and has been constructed and maintained with federal funds as a means of connecting the nation and promoting the free flow of people and commerce. Users of I-80, trucks and automobiles, already pay over \$130 million per year in state and federal liquid fuel taxes and fees. *When Act 44 was passed, PennDOT* stated that it cost \$80 million to maintain and operate I-80.

A study prepared by Dr. Tracy Miller of Grove City College entitled "The Economic Impact of Tolling I-80", illustrates the negative effects tolls would have upon businesses, commuters, and people who live and work along the I-80 corridor. Allowing Pennsylvania to convert I-80 to a toll facility will have negative impacts for those along the I-80 corridor and Pennsylvania as a whole.

The study also examines the congestion, noise and air pollution, and safety issues that will arise as a result of diversion from a tolled I-80 to many of the nearby communities. Estimates of diversion result in an average of at least two to four additional deaths and between 100 and 200 additional injuries from traffic accidents per year. Our communities cannot take this risk.

The federal law only allows tolling if "the state is unable to reconstruct or rehabilitate the proposed toll facility using existing apportionments". Since users of Interstate 80 already pay the costs of maintaining the highway through state and federal taxes, there is no good reason why they should pay an additional tax. The future of Pennsylvania's transportation system should not rest solely on the shoulders of I-80 users.

As a registered voter and taxpayer, I urge the US Department of Transportation to reject the State of Pennsylvania's request to toll I-80.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Address: _____
