

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 152

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED APRIL 13, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Urges Governor to reject toll increases proposed by NJTA.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



- 1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** urging the Governor of New Jersey to
2 reject the toll increase proposed by the New Jersey Turnpike
3 Authority.
4
- 5 **WHEREAS**, The Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike
6 serve as vital connections throughout the State of New Jersey; and
7 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey Turnpike Authority has the power to
8 establish tolls for the Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey
9 Turnpike to be used for the maintenance and construction of those
10 roadways; and
11 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey Turnpike Authority has proposed a toll
12 increase affecting both the Garden State Parkway and the New
13 Jersey Turnpike; and
14 **WHEREAS**, Numerous New Jersey residents and tourists heavily rely
15 on both the Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike to
16 travel within and throughout the State; and
17 **WHEREAS**, An increase in tolls will negatively affect the State's
18 businesses and tourism industry who rely heavily on these
19 roadways to move customers to their places of business; and
20 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey residents will feel the financial burden of any
21 toll increase not just on the roads, but also as consumer prices go up
22 in order to meet the demands on a shipping industry that is also
23 paying more to bring goods and services to the State; and
24 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey residents already contribute millions of dollars
25 to the Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike through
26 the toll system and existing toll fares; and
27 **WHEREAS**, An increase in tolls will lead to congestion of already
28 overburdened local roads as drivers attempt to avoid the Garden
29 State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike; and
30 **WHEREAS**, On March 4, 2020 the Ocean County Board of Chosen
31 Freeholders passed a resolution urging the Governor and the New
32 Jersey Turnpike Authority to reconsider any plan that increases tolls
33 on the Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike; and
34 **WHEREAS**, A rejection of the proposed toll increase would best serve
35 both residents of the State and out-of-state drivers by keeping local
36 roads clear of excessive traffic, maintaining lower prices of
37 goods, services and shipment costs and keeping the State's
38 evacuation routes easily traversable; now, therefore,
39
- 40 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
41 *Jersey:*
42
- 43 1. This House urges the Governor of New Jersey to reject the
44 toll increases proposed by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
2 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
3 Office of the Governor of New Jersey.

4
5
6 STATEMENT
7

8 This resolution urges the Governor of New Jersey to reject the
9 toll increase proposed by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.

10 Commuters rely on both the Garden State Parkway and the New
11 Jersey Turnpike to travel throughout the State. These commuters
12 include both residents of New Jersey and out-of-state tourists. The
13 proposed toll increase would harm daily commutes and tourist
14 travel and would, both directly and indirectly, cause harm to the
15 State's businesses and tourism industry by dissuading travel within
16 and throughout the State. Directly, a toll increase would cause an
17 ever-increasing number of drivers to choose local roads over the
18 Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike, leading to
19 further traffic congestion. Indirectly, a toll increase would serve to
20 raise prices of services and goods within the State to meet the
21 demands on a shipping industry that is must now pay more to bring
22 goods and services into the State. Finally, residents of the State
23 have already, and continue to, contribute greatly to both the New
24 Jersey Turnpike and Garden State Parkway through the existing
25 tolls that they pay to travel on these roads.

26 As resolved by the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders,
27 the Governor should reject the proposed toll increases. The
28 Governor's response to COVID-19 pandemic, specifically the
29 Health Emergency and a Stay at Home Executive Order, has created
30 a situation where the holding of public hearings has been greatly
31 limited, thus impeding the ability of New Jersey residents to
32 adequately review and respond to the proposed toll increases and
33 thereby failing to encouraging public input and participation. The
34 Governor's rejection would serve the people of the State by keeping
35 local roads clear of congestion, keeping prices of goods and
36 services low, maintaining shipment costs low and keeping the
37 State's evacuation routes easily traversable by residents and out-of-
38 state drivers.