Public Comments to Illinois Tollway Authority Board

July 24, 2026

Illinois Tollway Authority Board
2700 Ogden Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Dear Chairman and Members of the Board,

I am writing to formally express deep concerns regarding the approved "Bridging the Future" capital program and the associated toll increases. While infrastructure investment is vital, the current economic climate for Illinois residents and small businesses necessitates a more moderate and reconsidered approach.

The Illinois Tollway Authority currently maintains a robust financial position, with over $4 billion in reserves and annual toll receipts exceeding $1.6 billion. Given that existing debt of $7.1 billion is being adequately serviced, the proposed toll increases appear unnecessary. Furthermore, these hikes risk creating a "breaking point" for consumers, where declining usage could ultimately undermine the very revenue streams intended to support future debt burdens.

Illinoisans are already navigating a complex landscape of heavy taxation and anemic economic growth compared to our Midwestern neighbors. Increasing the cost of transit will only further the financial strain on working families and businesses, potentially driving residents away rather than attracting new growth. These costs will inevitably be passed on to all consumers through higher prices for goods and services, regardless of their personal tollway usage.

I respectfully urge the Board to demonstrate leadership by prioritizing the financial well-being of Illinois citizens. Please consider a modified or phased approach that protects the Tollway's long-term health without accelerating the "doom loop" of increasing costs on a declining citizen base. Now is the time to put Illinois families first and opt for fiscal moderation.

Thank you for your time and for your dedication to the residents of Illinois.

Sincerely,

Jesse Rodriguez
Republican Candidate
Illinois House District 83

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