



**Testimony of Roy Merritt, Jr., P.E.**  
On behalf of the  
**The Connecticut Society of Civil Engineers (CSCE) Section of the American  
Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)**

**Before the Transportation Committee**

Regarding

- **HB No. 5125 – AN ACT ESTABLISHING TOLLS ON CONNECTICUT'S HIGHWAYS**
- **HB No. 6050 – AN ACT CONCERNING TOLLS AT CONNECTICUT'S BORDERS**
- **HB No. 6051 – AN ACT ESTABLISHING TOLLS AT CONNECTICUT'S BORDERS AND REDUCING THE GASOLINE TAX**
- **HB No. 6052 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TOLLS FOR THE EXTENSION OF ROUTE 11**
- **SB No. 699 – AN ACT DECREASING THE GASOLINE TAX AND ESTABLISHING ELECTRONIC TOLLS ON CONNECTICUT'S HIGHWAYS USING A CONGESTION PRICING SYSTEM**

**February 25, 2013**

I am Roy Merritt, Jr., and I am a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Connecticut. I am submitting this written testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Society of Civil Engineers (CSCE) Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers<sup>1</sup> (ASCE), where I serve as Chairman of their Legislative Affairs Committee. CSCE submits this testimony in **support of establishing tolls on Connecticut's highways as a means to adequately fund our State's increasing transportation needs.** However, the funds generated through tolling of our highways must be placed in a "lock box" so that these funds are 100% dedicated to maintaining and improving our State's transportation system. Funds generated through tolling of our highways cannot be allowed to transfer into the General Fund, or be "raided" by other interests.

Connecticut currently is facing extreme challenges in maintaining and improving our transportation infrastructure. According to the December 2012 Report "Transportation Funding in Connecticut: Where Are We Now and What Is Next?"<sup>2</sup>, Connecticut faces a \$2 billion shortfall in funding to keep our transportation system in a state of good repair, a shortfall which will grow to more than \$4.5 billion by 2017. Clearly, our current system of funding our transportation infrastructure program through the gasoline tax, with funds

from the Special Transportation Fund being regularly diverted into the General Fund, is not adequate to properly fund the needed maintenance and improvements of Connecticut's transportation system.

In addition, Connecticut is one of the states in the country most dependent on federal funds as a percentage of its transportation expenditures. Connecticut must look for ways to self-fund a greater portion of its transportation infrastructure program to lessen its federal dependence. The implementation of tolls on our state highways is a means for the State to become more independent, and less reliant on the federal government in funding its transportation program. The political challenges in Washington, and the recent difficulties with Congress passing a long-term transportation bill further reinforce Connecticut's need to become more self-reliant and fund a greater portion of its own transportation program.

The five bills currently before the Transportation Committee regarding establishing tolls on Connecticut highways (HB No. 5125, 6050, 6051, 6052, and SB No. 699) all contain merit in funding critical needs regarding our transportation infrastructure. **CSCE supports all five bills establishing tolls in Connecticut in principal, however we do not endorse one bill over another.** We will let others argue the political merits of the different tolling methodologies proposed under each act (i.e. tolling at borders, all highways, congestion pricing, etc.), as each methodology should benefit the State's primary need – increased revenue dedicated to Connecticut's transportation infrastructure.

The Connecticut Society of Civil Engineers looks forward to working with the Connecticut Legislature on this most important issue.

Thank you,



Roy Merritt, Jr., P.E.  
Chairman, Legislative Affairs Committee  
Connecticut Society of Civil Engineers Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers

<sup>1</sup> ASCE was founded in 1852 and is the oldest national civil engineering organization. It represents over 140,000 civil engineers (1,650 in Connecticut) in private practice, government, industry and academia who are dedicated to the advancement of the science and the profession of civil engineering. ASCE is a non-profit educational and professional society organized under Part 1.501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. CSCE is a 100% volunteer organization.

<sup>2</sup> "Transportation Funding in Connecticut: Where Are We Now and What is Next?" was issued in December 2012 and was sponsored by The Business Council of Fairfield County, Capitol Region Council of Governments, Connecticut Association for Community Transportation, Connecticut Construction Industries Association, Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Regional Plan Association, Transit for Connecticut, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, and Tri-State Transportation Campaign.