



Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments

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The Honorable Stephanie Kunze
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chair Kunze and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

My name is Tim Brown, and I am honored to serve as President of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG). Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of Senate Bill 162, sponsored by Senator Bill Reineke.

TMACOG is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan and is responsible for transportation planning in Lucas and Wood counties in Ohio and for the southern three townships in Monroe County, Michigan. In our planning role, we develop the region's long range transportation plan, and the current plan on record is the 2015-2045 Transportation Plan – Update 2020. The plan is multimodal and, as such, includes projects that facilitate the movement of people and freight in and through the Toledo Region.

Toledo is at a transportation crossroads. We possess cross country routes both east and west, as well as north and south, in I-75 and the I-80/I-90 (Ohio Turnpike) respectively. Both routes are nationally significant freight routes and are drivers of the local, state, and national economy. Modernization of the toll collection system will help improve the efficiency of the roadway and benefit both passenger and commercial traffic.

The existing toll collection system was constructed in 2009 and is at the end of its useful life. The Open Road Tolling system being constructed by the Turnpike Commission will be operational in a couple years and will allow drivers to travel through the toll plazas without stopping. The cost of the new toll collection system is approximately \$230 million, and it is estimated to save the Turnpike Commission roughly \$257 million over the next 30 years.

As proposed, Senate Bill 162 is needed to implement open road tolling and all electronic tolling. It would allow the Turnpike Commission to work with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to require vehicle owners to pay their delinquent tolls before they can register their vehicle. In addition, it also specifies that the liability of unpaid tolls belongs to the registered owner or lessee of the vehicle as well as the driver. Furthermore, it also requires constitutional due process for customers to dispute tolls and fees and authorizes the Turnpike Commission to protect the personal identification of the customers.

Madam Chair, we believe that this legislation is critical to the success of this toll collection modernization project and is critical to the ongoing optimization of this corridor. Thank you for allowing TMACOG to provide comments to the committee and this concludes my testimony.

Sincerely,

Tim W. Brown
President

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