Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission Budget Testimony Jerry N. Hruby 2019 Ferzan M. Ahmed. P.E.

Jerry N. Hruby

Chairman

Ferzan M. Ahmed, P.E. *Executive Director*

Ohio House Finance Committee

Wednesday, February 27, 2019



Timothy J. Paradiso
Vice - Chairman

Michael A. Peterson Secretary - Treasurer Guy Coviello

Member

Vickie Eaton Johnson Member

Jack Marchbanks, Ph.D.

Director of ODOT

Member Ex-Officio

Kimberly Murnieks
Director of OBM
Member Ex-Officio

Ohio House Finance Committee Testimony of Ferzan M. Ahmed, P.E., Executive Director Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission February 27, 2019

INTRO

Chairman Oeslager, Vice Chairman Scherer, Ranking Member Cera and members of the Committee, my name is Ferzan Ahmed, and I am honored to serve as Executive Director of the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission. The Ohio Revised Code requires us to provide an update regarding our current budget and long-term capital plan I want to thank you for inviting me to testify today.

History

For members who are not from Northern Ohio and perhaps may not be that familiar with the Turnpike, let me briefly explain who we are and what we do.

The Turnpike is a 241-mile-long modern, limited-access highway across northern Ohio, connecting communities from Pennsylvania to Indiana. It was incorporated by the Federal Highway Administration into the Interstate Highway System with sections designated as Interstate Routes 76, 80 and 90. A ten-member commission has overseen the operations of the Turnpike since 1955. The Director serves as the Chief Executive, and reports to the Commission. The Commission is currently chaired by Mayor Jerry Hruby of Brecksville. The Commission determines toll rates, collects revenues, controls disbursements and has title to all assets, except for title to real estate, which the Commission purchases in the name of the State of Ohio.

As we enter our 64th year of operation, we are fiscally sound. Our employees do an outstanding job of maintaining our infrastructure and taking care of our customers and our communities.

REVENUE

As you already may know, the Ohio Turnpike does not receive federal gas tax or money from the General Revenue Fund. The Commission's main source of revenue is from tolls.



Our current system of toll collection was implemented in 2009, and it's now approaching the end of its useful life. As we fulfill the needs of today, we are also preparing for future needs, including a plan to modernize our toll collecting systems.

The modernization of our toll collection system is the result of a strategic plan that was adopted by the Commission in December 2017. The strategic plan included a survey under which 14,000 of our customers were asked if they supported the removal of toll gates in the favor of an electronic tolling system. Eighty-nine percent of the 14,000 people surveyed supported that plan. In furtherance of that Strategic Plan, the Commission is working to acquire and install a new electronic toll collection system.

SAVINGS

With the new system, the Commission estimates a savings of approximately \$257 million in operating costs over 30 years. This is because modernization will result in increased electronic tolling, and a reduction of seven toll plazas and entry gates. Electronic tolling is also commonly referred to as *E-Z Pass*. The capital implementation cost for this plan is estimated to be between \$190-220 million.

Construction is anticipated to begin in the 4th quarter of 2019 and conclude in the 4th quarter of 2021. Operation of the new toll system is scheduled for deployment in the 4th quarter of 2021.

Our new Toll Collection System will also provide a way to process unpaid tolls using license plate lookup when we fully implement it in late 2021. This system will be needed to ensure that we can collect from customers who travel through ungated *E-ZPass* lanes without a valid *E-ZPass* transponder.

Update on the Jobs and Transportation Plan

In the 2013 – 2014 biennium, the 130th General Assembly authorized the Commission to issue Turnpike revenue bonds to fund infrastructure projects on the ODOT system in northern Ohio that have a transportation-related nexus to the Turnpike system.



Those projects were first approved by the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC), which is chaired by the Director of ODOT, and then submitted to the Turnpike Commission for independent consideration and approval.

The bonding was done in two phases. In the first phase, Junior Lien Bonds were issued on Aug. 15, 2013. They generated \$930 million to fund 10 Commission-approved Infrastructure Projects in northern Ohio. These projects are listed on **Table 1 on page 12**.

In the second phase, the Commission issued additional Junior Lien Bonds generating \$450 million in proceeds on Feb. 15, 2018.

These funds are committed to fund three additional Commission-approved infrastructure projects, including \$250 million for two projects on I-75 in Wood and Lucas counties and \$200 million for the Opportunity Corridor project in Cuyahoga County.

ODOT has projected that those Infrastructure Projects will be substantially complete by 2022.

RATINGS

Mr. Chairman some members might be thinking about the credit ratings. Prior to the Commission's issuance of the bonds in February 2018, S&P affirmed its AA- senior and A+ junior lien ratings, Fitch affirmed its AA senior and A+ junior lien ratings, and Moody's upgraded the Commission's credit rating to Aa2 for the senior lien revenue bonds and to Aa3 for junior lien revenue bonds.

I am pleased to report that these are historically the highest credit ratings for the Turnpike and make us among the highest rated major toll agencies in our country.

2019 Operating Budget

I would now like to present our 2019 Operating Budget, which is detailed in Table 2. (**See Table 2 on page 13.**)



Here are a few of the revenue highlights from the Operating Budget (for 2019):

The total 2019 Operating Budget approved by the Commission is \$360.1 million, which is a 4.8 percent increase from the previous year.

The increase is mainly due to increased revenues generated from toll collections, concession fees and investments.

Revenue

As I mentioned, tolls are the main source of revenue for the Commission. In fact, 89 percent of the Turnpike's revenue is derived from tolls. And 66 percent of toll revenue is currently collected through electronic toll collection, or the *E-ZPass*. (For commercial vehicles alone, the *E-ZPass* toll revenue is 85 percent).

Our toll rates are very competitive with the rates charged by other toll authorities in our peer group. There is a list (on page 13) that shows this comparison. Current toll rates reflect the Commission's ongoing commitment to remain fiscally sound, while providing a high level of service to the traveling public.

I would like to point out that fuel sold at Turnpike service plazas generates approximately \$34 million in state motor fuel taxes annually. Of that, the Turnpike receives \$.05 per gallon or about \$3.5 million each year.

I'd also like to note that, in addition to the revenue generated for our operations, vehicles traveling on the Turnpike annually generate about \$120 million in state and federal fuel taxes, which is money that comes back to state and local governments for their transportation projects.

Additionally, the Ohio Turnpike is responsible for generating an estimated \$500 million in northern Ohio economic activity each year. (This includes fuel sales, food and concessions, payroll and capital improvements.)



In addition to our (918) employees, there are approximately 1,400 more workers employed in jobs that are affiliated with our service plazas. Our Service Plazas are also responsible for generating a significant amount of sales tax revenue for the counties in which they're located.

Expenditures

The Commission's Master Trust Agreement with its bond holders governs the flow of funds related to our expenditures. It creates a hierarchy for expenditures, which is:

- 1. Operating expenses
- 2. Debt service
- 3. Capital investments

OPERATING EXPENSES:

Details of our operating expenses are given in the submitted testimony on page 7—Chart 1. I would like to point out a couple of highlights. The bulk of the operating expenses are for toll operations and road maintenance. The other significant item is for traffic control, safety and patrol.

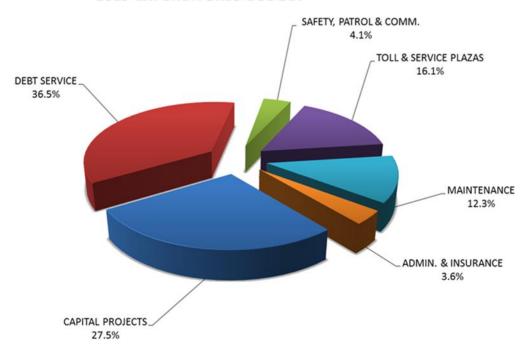
Mr. Chairman and members, we are managers of a publicly owned and operated business, and like every business, we aim for low administrative costs.

I am pleased to report that our administrative AND insurance costs are only 3.6 percent of our operating costs.



Chart 1-2019 Expenditures/Investments:





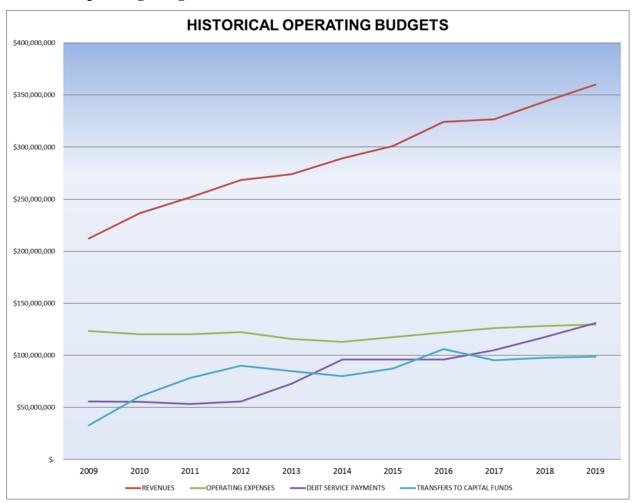
- As you can see in the graphic (pie chart) above, only 3.6 percent of expenditures will be spent on administration and insurance; 12.3 percent is allocated for roadway and facility maintenance; 16.1 percent for the operation of the toll and service plazas; and 4.8 percent for traffic control, safety, highway patrol and communications.
- The Commission currently has about \$2.0 billion in senior and junior lien bonds outstanding. The debt service on those bonds will require 36.5 percent of the Commission's 2019 expenditures budget, leaving 27.5 percent available for capital projects.

Chart 2 (on page 8) shows the Commission's Operating Budgets for the last 11 years. Budgeted revenues have steadily increased from \$212 million in 2009 to \$360 million in 2019. However, budgeted operating expenditures have held constant over this period increasing only slightly from \$123.3 million in 2009 to only \$129.7 million in 2019.



This is a testament to our commitment to running an efficient business. We are doing this through use of technology and a stewardship over our organizational structure.

Chart 2—Operating Budgets



While our operating costs have held steady from 2009 to 2019, the revenue from our operations has more than doubled over this period from \$89 million in 2009 to \$230 million in 2019. This has allowed the commission to increase debt service payments as well as capital investments.

DEBT SERVICE

The Commission currently has about \$2.0 billion in senior and junior lien bonds outstanding. This includes the two junior lien bond issues for the Jobs and Transportation Plan for ODOT projects. The debt service on those bonds will require approximately \$131.2 million, or 36.5 percent of the Commission's 2019 expenditures budget.



Capital Expenditures

Last December, the Commission approved a \$198 million capital budget for 2019. Identified capital projects include full-depth excavation and pavement replacement, resurfacing, bridge rehabilitation and an expanded Toll Plaza in Summit County.

Details of the Capital plan are included in **Table 5 on page 15**.

Mr. Chairman, we often claim that our facilities include some of Ohio's safest- and best-maintained roads and bridges. That is the result of deliberate, well-planned and well-executed capital investments in our system. Looking beyond this year's investments, **Table 4 on page 14** shows that we plan to invest more than \$1 billion on capital improvements over the next 10 years.

In addition to improving our physical facilities, we are also improving the way we conduct business. Including how we conduct business with the companies that partake in our construction contracts and other bid opportunities.

INCLUSION

Diversity and Inclusion are very important to the Commission. During the last biennium we reported that we had established the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Our goal was to increase contracting opportunities for small, minority and woman owned businesses.

In 2016 the Commission conducted a Disparity Study, which showed that minority- and womanowned businesses received 6.7 percent of the total contracted dollars.

The Commission released its first report on its equity and inclusion efforts last year. The results showed positive progress on accomplishing the Commission's objectives of improving opportunities for small, minority and woman owned businesses.

Mr. Chairman, the 2017 report shows <u>a near doubling</u> in minority- and woman- owned business participation to 13.24 percent of the Commission's contracting dollars.



The Commission hopes to continue this trend when the Office of Equity and Inclusion releases its next report. We are able to accomplish these results by a four-pronged approach:

- strategically packaging projects for bidding;
- assigning contract-specific goals for participation;
- evaluating prime contractors' good faith efforts toward achieving inclusion;
- and monitoring the results of those efforts.

Mr. Chairman, we are talking about infrastructure, and I would be remiss if I didn't add a play on words. So let me talk about an intersection:

And that is the Intersection of Efficiency and Technology

The most prominent technology in use today at the Turnpike is *E-Z Pass*.

E-ZPass began providing discounted tolls and faster entrance and exit on the Ohio Turnpike in 2009. To promote *E-ZPass*, we have partnerships with Ohio retailers— and *E-ZPass* is available at more than 360 retail locations in 23 Ohio counties.

There are now 377,000 active Ohio *E-ZPass* accounts. This reflects 62 percent of our customers. And taking advantage of discounted tolls, our customers have saved more than \$400 million since 2009.

To advance the use of technology, we're also a partner in the *DriveOhio Alliance*. In fact, the Ohio Turnpike is participating with DriveOhio to advance smart mobility innovations that will change the way people and products are transported in Ohio, in our country and around the world.

We have reviewed relevant sections of the Ohio Revised Code, our rules and policies, and our physical infrastructure in preparation for connected, highly automated and fully autonomous (or self-driving) vehicles.

Along our right of way, we continue to leverage and upgrade our 241 miles of fiber optic cable, which provides a unique asset that other corridors in the state do not have.



In addition to serving as a testing and proving ground for self-driving technology, we have deployed Dedicated Short-Range Communications, or DSRC technology in our own operations. DSRC is the technology that allows vehicles to communicate with each other and with infrastructure. This requires the installation of equipment called Road Side Units (RSUs) along the right of way, and on-board units (OBUs) in vehicles. So the RSUs and OBUs use DSRC technology to talk to each other.

We have installed this technology on the mainline in our Boston and Amherst Maintenance Sections, which stretch from Portage County to Lorain County. We have also installed the OBUs in 38 Turnpike maintenance vehicles. These onboard units will gather and supply real time data to our maintenance managers. Basically, these 38 Turnpike vehicles can communicate with the infrastructure in real time.

Now how does this help with safety?

Smart technology is first and foremost about safety. In fact, it is about saving lives. Our goal is to monitor systems and analyze data so that we can act *before* something tragic happens.

Use of smart technology will not only help us in keeping our customers and employees safer but will also teach us valuable lessons on the use and transmission of data.

In addition to increased safety, we expect immediate efficiency gains from this technology. Our annual Snow and Ice costs are between \$8.5 to \$12.5 million for both labor and materials. If we can be more precise with our time and our materials, there's a significant opportunity for savings.

In 2018, we also began installing electric vehicle charging stations—at no cost to the Commission.

These charging stations are located at the Wyandot and Blue Heron Service Plazas in Genoa and at the Indian Meadow and Tiffin River Service Plazas in West Unity.



Turnpike customers with electric vehicles will be able to charge their vehicles beginning this spring.

As we proceed, we appreciate the continued support of the Ohio General Assembly and we look forward to your input as we prepare for changes in the transportation industry in the years ahead. Chairman Oeslager, Vice Chairman Scherer, Ranking Member Cera, thank you again for this opportunity to address the Committee. I'll be glad to answer any questions.

Table 1— Phase 1 Bond funded projects (payments to ODOT as of December 31, 2018)

		Α	pproved	-	Amount xpended		astructure Inds Paid
County	Project	I	Amount	b	y ODOT	t	o ODOT
Cuyahoga	I-90 Innerbelt Bridge	\$	275,020	\$	273,487	\$	273,471
Cuyahoga	Opportunity Corridor		14,000		13,527		13,527
Erie	US 250 Widening		14,000		14,000		14,000
Hancock/Wood	I-75 Widening		283,280		280,104		279,980
Lorain	SR 57		16,500		16,500		16,500
Lucas	I-75 and I-475 Interchange		122,200		121,342		117,321
Lucas	I-475 and Rt 20 Interchange		27,500		25,478		25,432
Lucas	I-75 Widening		63,000		63,000		63,000
Mahoning/Trumbull	I-80 Widening		65,500		65,500		65,500
Summit	I-271 Widening		49,000		47,754		47,754
		\$	930,000	\$	920,692	\$	916,485



Table 2—2019 Operating Budget

OHIO TURNPIKE AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMISSION 2019 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

			INCREASE / (DE	CREASE)
	2019	2018	\$	%
REVENUES:	· <u> </u>			
TOLL	\$ 320,521,000	\$ 309,490,000	\$ 11,031,000	3.6%
CONCESSION	16,626,100	16,208,000	418,100	2.6%
INVESTMENT	13,863,900	9,338,000	4,525,900	48.5%
FUEL TAX	3,000,000	2,900,000	100,000	3.4%
OTHER	6,057,300	5,632,800	424,500	7.5%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 360,068,300	\$ 343,568,800	\$ 16,499,500	4.8%
EXPENDITURES:				
OPERATION, MAINTENANCE & ADMINISTRATION:				
ADMINISTRATION & INSURANCE	\$ 13,054,700	\$ 12,553,900	\$ 500,800	4.0%
MAINTENANCE OF ROADWAY & STRUCTURES	44,159,900	42,900,200	1,259,700	2.9%
SERVICES & TOLL OPERATIONS	57,858,300	58,373,600	(515,300)	(.9%)
TRAFFIC CONTROL, SAFETY & PATROL	14,593,200	14,320,500	272,700	1.9%
TOTAL OPERATION, MAINTENANCE & ADMINISTRATION	129,666,100	128,148,200	1,517,900	1.2%
DEBT SERVICE PAYMENTS	131,227,600	117,636,000	13,591,600	11.6%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	260,893,700	245,784,200	15,109,500	6.1%
TRANSFERS TO / (FROM):				
EXPENSE RESERVE	126,500	150,800	(24,300)	(16.1%)
NON-TRUST FUND	893,000	587,500	305,500	52.0%
FUEL TAX FUND	3,032,000	2,920,000	112,000	3.8%
SERVICE PLAZAS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS RESERVE	698,000	665,400	32,600	4.9%
RENEWAL & REPLACEMENT FUND	10,000,000	10,000,000	-	-
SYSTEM PROJECTS FUND	84,225,100	83,460,900	764,200	.9%
CONSTRUCTION FUND	200,000		200,000	
TOTAL TRANSFERS	99,174,600	97,784,600	1,390,000	1.4%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES & TRANSFERS	\$ 360,068,300	\$ 343,568,800	\$ 16,499,500	4.8%

Table 3—Comparison of Tolls

Toll Rates Per Mile

1/1/2019

	Passenger	Passenger	5 axle	5 axle
	E-Z Pass	<u>Cash</u>	E-Zpass	<u>Cash</u>
Indiana	0.071	0.071	0.382	0.382
New York	0.048	0.051	0.239	0.271
Ohio	0.055	0.080	0.170	0.215
Illinois	0.065	0.131	0.554	0.554
West Virginia	0.136	0.136	0.400	0.460
Pennsylvania	0.117	0.171	0.606	0.860
New Jersey	0.118	0.118	0.388	0.425



Table 4 – 10 Year Projection

TOTAL	2019									10 YEAR PROJECTION	R PR	OPE	NOIT								
CAPITAL PROGRAM	BUDGET		2020		2021		2022	2023		2024		2	2025		2026		2027	2	2028	20	2029
TOTAL	\$ 184,354,920	₩.	193,582,716	v	170,313,566	₩.	147,285,522	\$ 107,17	107,172,026	\$ 123,863,279	\vdash	\$ 150	156,855,769	\$	156,258,283	\$	165,115,423	\$ 131	131,586,544 \$		163,120,683
Pavement Replacement	\$ 73,456,611	↔	73,609,065	↔	54,659,365	↔	64,887,528	\$ 37,12	37,126,568	\$ 38,128,985	_	\$ 78	78,316,936	↔	80,431,493	↔	82,603,143	\$ 42	42,416,714 \$		43,561,965
Resurfacing	\$ 16,000,000	↔	17,137,343	↔	20,533,393	↔	26,510,370	\$ 27,22	27,226,150	\$ 27,961,256		\$ 22	22,842,440	↔	23,459,185	⇔	24,092,583	\$ 31	31,105,590 \$		31,945,441
Bridge Deck Replacements	\$ 49,686,392	↔	10,843,732	↔	15,306,626	↔	17,513,544	\$ 10,20	10,209,806	\$ 11,883,534	_	\$ 1,	14,162,313	↔	13,338,223	↔	13,560,683	\$ 15	15,623,490 \$		13,141,193
Bridge Deck Overlays	\$ 5,279,244	↔	2,570,601	↔	2,200,006	↔	2,711,288	\$ 2,93	,939,187	\$ 2,383,062		\$	2,447,404	↔	3,183,747	↔	3,097,618	\$	2,651,045 \$		3,267,147
Bridge Painting	\$ 4,339,000	↔	6,740,688	↔	6,922,687	↔	7,109,599	\$ 7,30	7,301,558	\$ 7,498,700		€	7,701,165	↔	7,909,097	↔	8,122,642	\$	8,341,954 \$		8,567,187
Misc. Bridge Repairs	\$ 2,420,551	↔	2,284,979	↔	4,810,681	↔	4,940,569	\$ 5,07	5,073,964	\$ 5,210,961		€	5,351,657	↔	5,496,152	↔	5,644,548	\$	2,827,781 \$		2,904,131
Service Plazas	\$ 1,970,000	↔	1,713,734	↔	2,581,341	↔	2,169,030	\$ 1,23	,237,552	\$ 2,287,739		• •	4,046,375	↔	2,010,787	↔	3,854,813	\$	2,262,225 \$		1,161,652
Toll Plazas	\$ 2,950,000	\$	31,789,093	\$	26,969,443	\$	4,705,910	9 \$	61,878	\$ 13,662,886		\$	65,264	\$	67,026	\$	68,836	\$	\$ \$69'02		363,016
Maintenance Building's	\$ 740,000	↔		₩		\$		\$	-	\$	-	\$	2,610,565	↔	2,681,050	↔	6,883,595	\$	2,827,781 \$		2,904,131
Telecommunications	- \$	↔	7,997,427	↔		↔		\$	-	\$	1	\$	-	↔	402,157	↔	-	\$	4,241,671 \$		
Culverts & Drainage	\$ 401,000	↔	285,622	↔	293,334	↔	301,254	\$ 30	309,388	\$ 317,742		\$	326,321	↔	335,131	↔	344,180	\$	353,473 \$		363,016
Interchange Repaving	\$ 3,050,000	↔	3,650,254	₩	4,121,932	₩	3,904,254	\$ 3,06	3,062,942	\$ 1,437,463		↔	4,170,377	€	1,829,816	₩	1,664,453	\$	2,922,512 \$		3,284,572
Miscellaneous	\$ 2,800,000	€9	1,713,734	₩	1,290,670	€	1,566,522	\$ 1,36	,361,307	\$ 1,525,159		\$	2,936,885	€	2,681,050	€	2,409,258	\$	2,827,781 \$		1,887,685
Toll Collection System	\$ 6,700,000	\$	22,849,790	\$	19,946,724	↔	-	\$	-	\$	1	\$	1	↔	-	↔	-	\$	\$ -		36,301,638
Renewal Replacment	\$ 14,162,122	\$	9,996,783	\$	10,266,696	↔	10,543,897	\$ 10,82	10,828,582	\$ 11,120,954		\$ 1.	11,421,220	↔	11,729,593	↔	12,046,292	\$ 12	12,371,542 \$	·	12,705,573
Sign Upgrades	\$ 400,000	\$	399,871	\$	410,668	\$	421,756	\$ 43	433,143	\$ 444,838		\$	456,849	\$	703,776	↔	722,778	\$	742,292 \$		762,334



Table 5—2019 Major Capital Projects

	Loc	cation	
Project Type	Mileposts	Counties	Investment
		Lorain,	
Pavement Replacement	149.24 - 154.10	Cuyahoga	\$16,600,000
	T		
D (D 1	160.74 176.24	Cuyahoga,	#20 500 000
Pavement Replacement	169.74 - 176.34	Summit	\$20,500,000
Pavement Resurfacing	7.19 - 14.80	Williams	\$12,000,000
T aveillent Resultaeing	7.17 11.00	VV IIIIuiiis	Ψ12,000,000
		Portage,	
Pavement Resurfacing	205.0 - 215.0	Trumbull	\$9,000,000
Bridge Redecking/TCS	47.4, 47.5	Fulton, Lucas	\$28,000,000
Bridge Redecking/TCS	237.8, 238.1	Mahoning	\$14,000,000
	T		
Bridge Redecking	59.0, 84.4	Lucas, Sandusky	\$6,200,000
	T		_
Bridge			40.000.000
Removal/Redecking	34.2, 34.5, 35.2	Fulton	\$9,000,000
Customer Service			
Customer Service Center	All	All	\$5,700,000
Center	All	All	ψ3,700,000
Toll Plaza 180 Add			
Lanes	180	Summit	\$2,850,000



Table 6—Ohio Turnpike Traffic Volume, Toll Revenue and *E-ZPass* usage <u>Ohio Turnpike—2018 vs. 2017</u>

Number of Vehicles	2018	2017	Percent change
Passenger Cars	42,322,083	43,597,975	-2.93%
Commercial Vehicles	11,986,744	11,615,000	3.20%
Total	54,308,827	55,212,975	-1.64%
Number of Vehicle Miles	2018	2017	Percent change
Passenger Cars	1,969,692,111	2,017,044,010	-2.35%
Commercial Vehicles	1,064,790,677	1,020,875,200	4.30%
Total	3,034,482,788	3,037,919,210	-0.11%
Toll Revenue	2018	2017	Percent Change
Passenger Cars	\$126,364,683	\$127,536,931	-0.92%
Commercial Vehicles	\$179,675,029	\$168,262,319	6.78%
Total	\$306,039,712	\$295,799,250	3.46%
E-ZPass vs. Non-E- ZPass	2018	2017	Percent Change
% of Passenger Cars using E-ZPass	55.5%	52.8%	2.7%
% of Commercial Vehicles using E-ZPass	85.9%	84.7%	1.2%
% of all Vehicles that used E-ZPass	62.2%	59.5%	2.7%

