

## Testimony at Proposed Toll Increase Public Meeting (12.04.17)

I would like to first thank the GACIT Commission for holding this public meeting.

My name is Christopher R. Bean. I reside in Concord, NH. I am a registered professional engineer with over 40 years of transportation engineering experience. Currently I serve as Division Leader of CLD, a division of Fuss & O'Neill out of the Manchester, NH.

I strongly support the proposed toll increase for the following reasons:

1. I drive along the Concord, Manchester, Merrimack, and Nashua turnpike corridor on a regular basis. Congestion and safety-related deficiencies result in numerous accidents and delays. This directly impacts all users, including commuters, truckers supporting local businesses, and our important tourism industry. There is a need for improvements.
2. Without the proposed increase, many important projects will be delayed. The Nashua to Bedford improvements would not begin until 2023, the Manchester Amoskeag Interchange Exit 6 project would not begin until 2027, and the Bow-Concord project would not begin until 2028. The existing deficiencies will get worse if these delays are incurred due to lack of funding.
3. With the toll increase, **construction on these critical projects could begin 3 to 6 years sooner**. This will result in immediate improvements to public safety, and will enhance the attractiveness of our state for economic development and increased job opportunities.
4. The last system-wide toll increase was in October 2007. Since that time, the cost of projects has increased, the scope of needed improvements has increased due to growth in traffic volumes, and there is a more urgent need to replace aging bridges.
5. A toll increase obviously impacts routine users. However, approximately 55% of the NH toll revenue is received from out of state vehicles. This means that more than half of the revenue generated, revenue that will directly benefit our community, is actually coming from outside our community.
6. The NHDOT Turnpike Bureau will direct all these funds to the turnpike system. There is no concern that the money will be channeled into other areas.

**For the above reasons, I strongly support the proposed system-wide toll increase. Thank you for allowing me to speak.**





December 4, 2017

New Hampshire Executive Council  
107 North Main Street  
State House, Room 207  
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Proposal to Accelerate and Expand the Turnpike Capital Program

Dear Honorable Councilors:

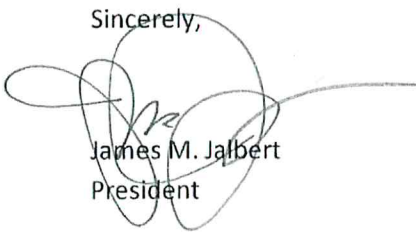
I am writing in support of the proposed expansion of the Turnpike Capital Program and its corresponding toll increase for the State of New Hampshire. My reasoning behind this support is predicated on the fair and equitable distribution of shared responsibility between visitors and residents alike to insure expanded and well-maintained highway accessibility for the Granite State.

Our Company, C&J Bus Lines, utilizes this same infrastructure with great frequency travelling over one-million-four-hundred-thousand miles each year on our State roads with our fleet of over thirty motor coaches. Both our company and customer base of over 700,000 passengers are dependent on safe and accessible highways to insure on time travel. Anything less would only serve to dissuade our customers from choosing the bus alternative.

With the transition of vehicle use and changes in CAFÉ standards, fuel revenues continue to decline on a statewide basis. This coupled with dwindling resources from the Federal Government means that we continue to have to do more with less. One cannot question that New Hampshire has enjoyed recent financial successes yet we must be mindful that the cost of our infrastructure will require expanded funding for improvements if we are to remain competitive and thrive. Improvements to include open road tolling, improved exit/entrance ramps, lane additions only serve to provide a better travel experience to the public.

In closing, I support this effort in spite of the significant impact to our operating expenses. I do as I have in the past because we as a State have failed to adequately address highway and infrastructure spending. I am hopeful we get it right this time.

Sincerely,



James M. Jalbert  
President



## **The Associated General Contractors of New Hampshire, Inc.**

**48 Grandview Road ▼ Bow, New Hampshire 03304  
603/225-2701 ▼ Fax 603/226-3859**

### **In support of NH Turnpike Acceleration and Expansion Capital Program Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation, December 4, 2017**

The Associated General Contractors of NH (AGC of NH) strongly supports Executive Councilor Russell Prescott's proposal to accelerate turnpike projects across the state as outlined in the capital program factsheet prepared by the NH Department of Transportation. It was clear during the hearing process for the Ten-Year Transportation Plan that timetables of many crucial projects would not keep up with the needs of motorists. This was reiterated by regional planning commissions across the state.

Ten years ago, the state took similar action when it addressed severe congestion issues on I-95 and Route 16. Now, congestion problems plague the Concord I-93 & I-89 interchange as well as other areas throughout the city. Expediting the completion of this project and other projects identified by the NH DOT will improve the state's economy and the quality of life for residents and visitors. Maintaining our infrastructure plays a vital role in the future of our state.

Current projects that would be accelerated by this proposal include:

- Bow-Concord I-93 Widening (I-89 to I-393) (\$261M) – 2022-2027, completed 6 years sooner
- Construction of F.E. Everett Turnpike Widening, Nashua-Bedford (\$122M) – 2020-2023, completed 3 years sooner
- Manchester Exit 6 Improvements and F.E. Everett Turnpike Widening (\$90M) – 2023-2025, completed 4 years sooner; and Manchester Exit 7 Reconstruction (\$49M) – 2021-2023, completed 3 years sooner
- Construction Dover End & GSB Rehabilitation (\$79M) – 2019-2022

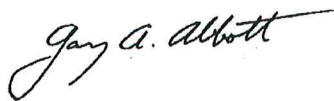
Other benefits of the proposal include:

- Extension of the Turnpike System to the northern end of the Merrimack River Bridges in Concord to encompass the northern end of the Bow-Concord project would complete the entire Bow-Concord project by 2027 and free up nearly \$180M in future federal funds to be used elsewhere across the state, including red list bridges.
- All of the increased revenue from this plan would be directed towards capital work on the Turnpike System. Toll increase would be paid by users of the system, meaning users directly benefit from the capital investments made in the system.
- \$19.6M per year or 54% of the toll increase would be paid by the out-of-state users.
- Travel time, reliability of travel, and safety would significantly improve on those segments of the Turnpike System.
- The construction industry would see an increase in Turnpike Capital spending, resulting in increased job creation.

- Funding for feasibility studies to identify potential problems and conceptual solutions to the next wave of Turnpike needs such as potential improvements to the F.E. Everett Turnpike in Manchester from NH 101 to Exit 5 that is currently at capacity during peak hours of the weekday, the I-95 High Level Bridge that is at capacity during summer weekends, and to the Spaulding Turnpike in Dover between Exits 6 and 9.
- Funding for a transportation demand management program at \$3M per year for projects that reduce future travel demand on the Turnpike System (i.e. alternative modes of travel such as transit, bike, rail).

**The AGC of NH requests that the Executive Council vote in favor of a toll increase to generate much-needed funds to expedite projects and maintain roads and bridges in New Hampshire.**

Respectfully submitted,



Gary Abbott  
Executive Vice President



# CITY OF CONCORD

*New Hampshire's Main Street™*  
City Manager's Office

Thomas J. Aspell, Jr.  
City Manager

November 20, 2017

The Honorable Andru Volinsky  
New Hampshire Executive Council  
107 North Main Street  
State House, Room 207  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Councilor Volinsky:

Thank you for your recent interim report on the preparation of the State's 10-year transportation plan. The City of Concord is very supportive of a funding mechanism that will expedite the I-93 widening project through our community. This is a very important project to the economic health of the state and its capital city. The current configuration of I-93 is unable to accommodate the growing business and visitor use of I-93 through our region. As you know, gridlock is now a regular occurrence on the Concord stretch of I-93, effectively nullifying the benefit of a modern highway system and discouraging additional tourism and commercial growth.

The City of Concord has taken many proactive steps to revitalize our local economy such as its award-winning Main Street revitalization project, the acquisition of strategic properties to build a Storrs Street extension, and the recent streamlining of development regulations and fees. We have worked productively with NH Department of Transportation personnel and we expect that positive relationship to continue as we move forward. The City has committed significant dollars to make additional improvements to our downtown that are contingent on the ultimate configuration of a widened I-93; specifically, the extension of Storrs Street. This extension will connect our historic downtown with the Horseshoe Pond Commerce Park, effectively linking employees and Grappone Conference Center convention attendees to downtown local businesses and services. The City Council had originally programmed this project for construction in FY 2018, but delayed it pending the determination of the ultimate orientation of I-93, which could impact this location.

If there is anything that the City of Concord can do to further support your efforts to bring this critical project to fruition sooner rather than later, please let me know. Thank you for your attention to the City's concerns.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Aspell, Jr.  
City Manager

cc: Concord City Council  
Deputy City Manager Carlos P. Baía  
City Engineer Ed Roberge



# TOWN OF MERRIMACK, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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December 1, 2017

William E. Watson, P.E.  
Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance  
New Hampshire Department of Transportation  
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive  
P.O. Box 483  
Concord, NH 03302-0483

Mr. Watson,

The Town of Merrimack is pleased to support the recently issued *Proposal for Acceleration and Expansion of Turnpike Capital Program* as it relates to the F.E. Everett Turnpike. The proposal would benefit Merrimack in the following ways:

- Eliminate toll plazas at Exits 10 and 11 – This has been an important issue for the Town and is a key factor in our support. Understanding the original agreement that was made for the construction of the tolls, the Town of Merrimack has seen significant improvements to the FEET, including the addition of Exit 2 in Nashua, with no additional toll locations added. We also insist that the proposal remain removing both exit tolls as removal of only the Exit 11 toll would place additional traffic on the Greeley Street interchange which cannot handle the additional traffic.
- Accelerated construction of the Turnpike Widening from Nashua to Bedford – The traffic congestion on the FEET through Merrimack continues to increase and is experienced by users of the corridor on a daily basis. Even small accidents result in major backups that cause spillover traffic to impact Daniel Webster Highway, impacting the ability of residents and emergency responders to move throughout Town. Shortening the completion time by three years will be a positive step forward.
- Both points noted above will have a positive impact on economic development for the Town and the region. The ramp tolls have long been a barrier to entry for companies wanting to locate their businesses in Merrimack. Congestion on the FEET causes wasted money for companies transporting goods and services through the corridor which will reduce the impact of the toll increase.
- We concur that the extension of the turnpike system to the northern end of the Merrimack River bridges in Concord, which would free up nearly \$180M in future federal funds is a good decision. We strongly encourage that those federal funds be used to fund projects that would benefit users /payers of the toll increase including the

long awaited improvements to the Route 101 A corridor and the third river bridge (south end of the Circumferential Highway).

Thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the proposal. The Town of Merrimack looks forward to these projects helping to improve our Town.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eileen Cabanel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "E".

Eileen Cabanel, Town Manager

CC: Merrimack Town Council