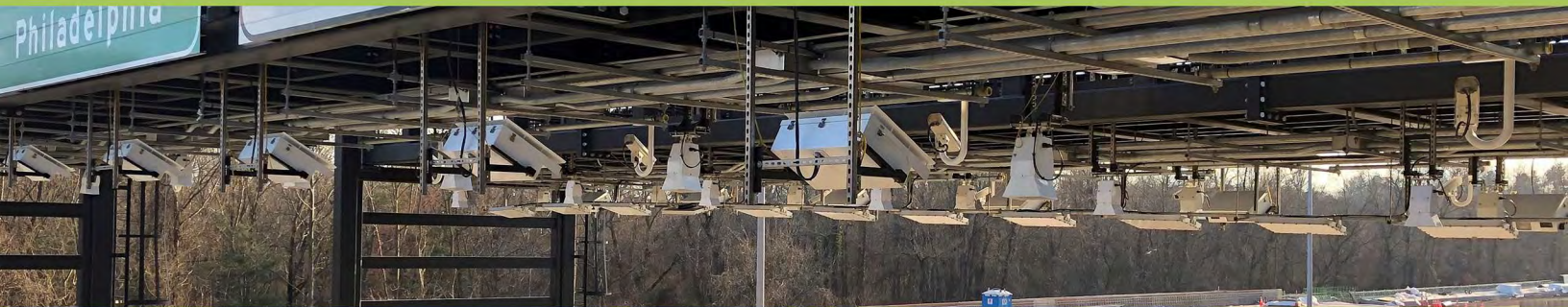


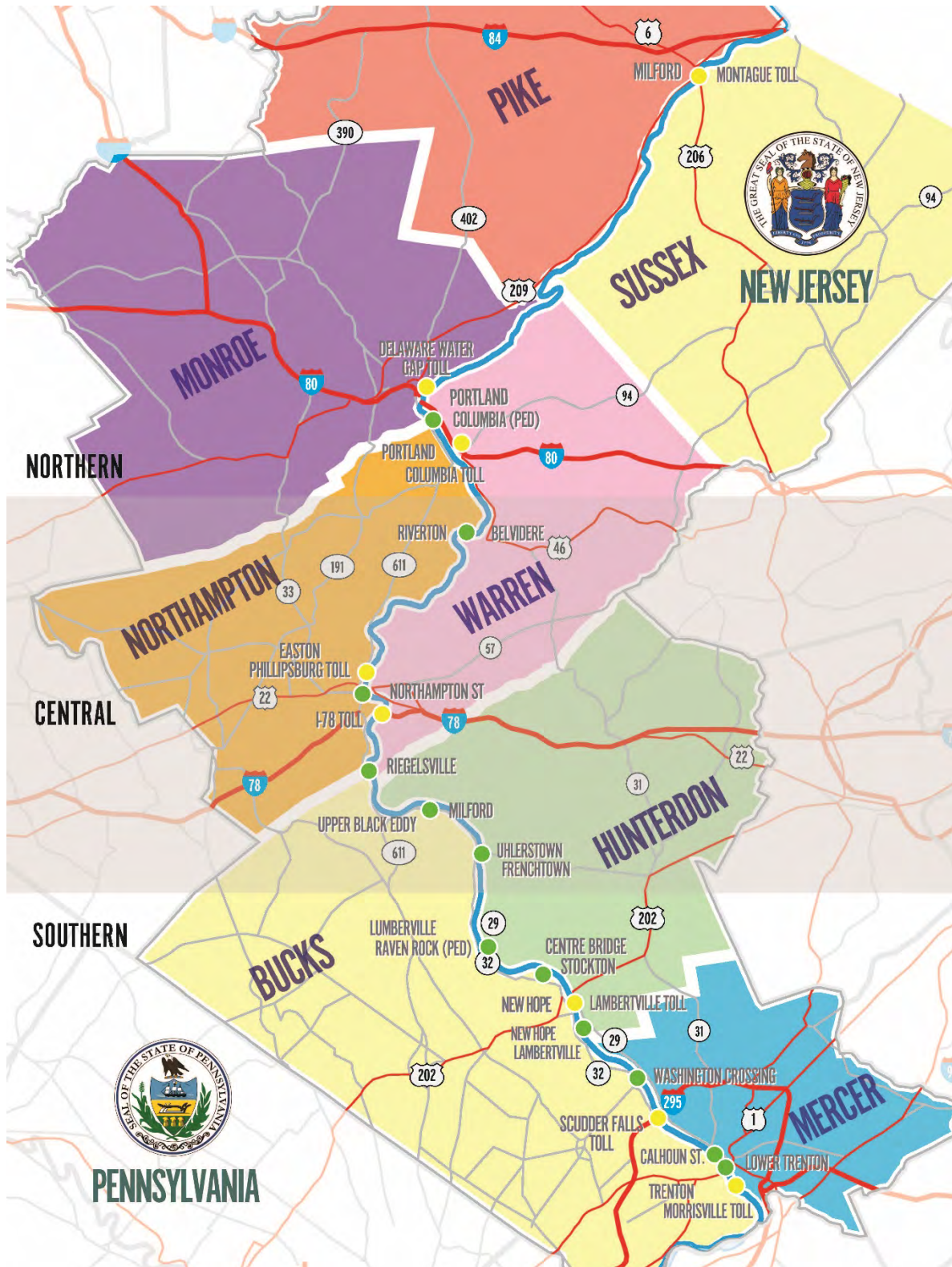


Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission



Public Comment & Hearing Process Report Proposed System-Wide 2021 & 2024 Toll Adjustments





● Toll Bridges

● Toll-Supported Bridges

DELAWARE RIVER JOINT TOLL BRIDGE COMMISSION (DRJTBC)

Public Comment & Hearing Process Report

Proposed System-Wide 2021 & 2024 Toll Adjustments

This report summarizes the public comment process for the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's (DRJTBC) proposed toll adjustments to take effect on or after April 3, 2021 and on or after January 6, 2024. This report includes all comments received before the 4 p.m. February 26, 2021 close of the assigned 26-day public comment period, along with accompanying Commission staff responses. This report is compiled for presentation and review by the DRJTBC's Board of Commissioners prior to its March 29, 2021 meeting. This report is a required element of the Commission's policy on gathering public comments for toll-setting purposes – first adopted on July 29, 2013 and subsequently amended on January 25, 2021 for purposes of holding virtual public hearings during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED TOLL ADJUSTMENTS

The major proposed changes to the agency's toll-rate schedules are summarized as follows:

1. Provide a uniform toll schedule for the DRJTBC's eight toll bridges at: Milford-Montague (Route 206), Delaware Water Gap (I-80), Portland-Columbia (Routes 611, 46 and 94), Easton-Phillipsburg (Route 22), I-78, New Hope-Lambertville (Route 202), Scudder Falls (I-295) and Trenton-Morrisville (Route 1).
2. Establish a two-tier toll adjustment for Class 1 passenger vehicles on or after April 3, 2021; to \$1.25 for E-ZPass, \$3 for cash, and \$3 for TOLL BY PLATE (Scudder Falls).
3. Set the added toll for Class 1 passenger vehicles with bumper-hitch trailers in tow at \$2 on or after April 3, 2021.
4. Authorize the Class 1 E-ZPass passenger vehicle toll to be \$1.50 on or after January 6, 2024.
5. Maintain a frequency-based Class 1 E-ZPass commuter discount for 2021 through 2023 at 20 percent (applied retroactively on 16 or more trips across DRJTBC toll bridges in a calendar month with a Commission-affiliated E-ZPass tag) on or after April 3, 2021.
6. Eliminate the Class 1 E-ZPass commuter discount in its entirety on or after January 6, 2024.
7. Establish a uniform commercial vehicle rate table (Class 2 and above) and set new two-tier rates for trucks, buses and other commercial vehicles (defined as any vehicle with two or more axles and eight-feet or above in height) at \$4.50 per-axle for E-ZPass, \$5 per-axle for cash, and \$5 per-axle for TOLL BY PLATE (Scudder Falls) on or after April 3, 2021.

8. Eliminate the off-peak E-ZPass discount for commercial vehicles on or after April 3, 2021.

The toll changes, if approved, would be the Commission's first system-wide toll adjustment in 10 years.

SUMMARY OF TOLL-SETTING AND COMMENT PROCESS

During the evening of Sunday, January 31, 2021, DRJTBC staff initiated the rollout of a proposed two-stage, system-wide toll adjustment. The adjustment involved a proposed toll schedule containing a broad range of changes to take effect on or after April 3, 2021 and a second proposed toll schedule with a limited set of changes to take effect on or after January 6, 2021.

The Sunday rollout involved communications to Pennsylvania and New Jersey state lawmakers representing communities in the Commission's Delaware River service jurisdiction and the completion/activation of Commission website pages, links, and forms related to the proposed toll adjustments. The rollout initially was planned to start on February 1, but was moved forward due to an intensifying regional snow-storm threat and the unanticipated early online publication of a Public Notice on the *Pocono Record's* website on Sunday, March 31.

The full-scale rollout of the proposed toll adjustment took place on Monday, February 1, with the issuance of a press release and publications of article and online content in media outlets of both states. This marked the official start of the 26-day comment period that ended 4 p.m. February 26.

As explained on the webpage -- www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments -- established for purposes of gathering public comment on the proposed toll schedules, this toll rate-setting process involves four steps:

1. The Commission publishes — on Feb. 1 — a public notice formally announcing the proposed toll adjustment(s) along with corresponding dates and times for virtual public hearings and the time and date that the public comment period will expire. The proposed toll adjustment schedules and this webpage explaining the toll setting/comment process are published on this website for public viewing. Comment submissions may begin via a toll-free phone line and through a form available on this webpage.
2. At least 10 days after publication of the public notice in designated newspapers published in the Commission's Pennsylvania-New Jersey service jurisdiction, three remote/virtual public hearings will be conducted over a two-day period. Comments at a public hearing will be limited to three minutes per person. (People must pre-register with their full name and municipality/state of residence to provide comment at one virtual hearing.) Public comment also will continue to be accepted via an online comment portal accessible from this webpage, through a special toll-free telephone number, and by U.S. Mail.
3. All testimony and comments will be gathered and reviewed by Commission staff. This record will be compiled into a report with accompanying staff responses and a summation of the collected public comments/testimony. Upon completion, this report and summary will be provided to DRJTBC Commissioners before deciding whether to approve, modify/approve, or reject the proposed toll adjustment(s).
4. Under the Commission's toll-adjustment comment/hearing policy (established in 2013 and modified for remote/virtual hearings during the COVID-19 pandemic), the public also may provide comments during the monthly virtual meeting at which Commissioners decide to take action on the proposed toll adjustment(s).

The page also listed the “Key Dates” for the toll-setting process:

Feb. 1 – Publication of Public Notice on the Proposed Toll Adjustments and the Hearings/Comment Period is published in newspapers that regularly publish the Commission’s meeting notices. A webpage depicting the proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024 is published. This webpage explaining the comment/hearing process and other information related to the proposed toll increases also is published on the Commission website — www.drjtbc.org. A 26-day public comment period begins with the Commission accepting comments via hearings, a special online comment portal, a toll-free Public Comment Hotline, and U.S. Mail.

Feb. 2 – Beginning of pre-registration period for making comments at a toll hearing through Zoom or via teleconference. Registration information, Zoom links, and teleconferencing numbers and access codes will be published on this webpage. Registrations will be accepted online through a form published on this webpage and through a second prompt added on this date to the toll-free phone number — 1-855-721-0444 — established for this proposed toll adjustment.

Feb. 10 -- Pre-registration to comment at a virtual hearing ends at 4 p.m.

Feb. 17 – Two virtual hearings will take place via the online Zoom platform and a teleconferencing connection: morning – 10 a.m. to noon; and evening – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Feb. 18 -- Virtual toll hearing 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. via Zoom and teleconferencing.

Feb. 26 -- Public comment period on proposed toll adjustments ends at 4 p.m. EST.

March 29 -- 10-member Board of Commissioners consider the toll adjustment, the compiled public comments, and make a decision. Commissioners may adopt the proposed toll adjustment, adopt it with modifications, or reject it. The public may provide comment – 3-minute time limit per individual – before action is taken.

April 3, 2021 -- On or after this date, the proposed toll adjustments for 2021 — if approved — would take effect.

Jan. 6, 2024 -- On or after this date, the remaining changes of this proposed toll adjustment would take effect.

VARIOUS ITEMS POSTED OR DISTRIBUTED FOR THIS PROCESS

As directed under Commission policy, public notices announcing the proposed adjustments and hearings/comment process were published in newspapers that carry Commission meeting advertisements.

The following sample is a certified copy of a notice published in the Pocono Record’s February 1 print edition:

Your home. Your neighbors. Your news.
POCONO RECORD
www.pocconorecord.com

511 Lenox Street - Stroudsburg, PA 18360

(570) 421-3000

DELAWARE RIVER JOINT TOLL BRIDGE COMM
110 WOOD ST

ACCOUNT # 400001971

MORRISVILLE, PA 19067

Proof of Publication Notice in the Pocono Record

Kelli McFall, Advertising Manager of the Pocono Record having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says the Pocono Record is a Newspaper of general circulation published at 511 Lenc Street, Stroudsburg, Monroe County, Pa. The Pocono Record was established on April 2, 1894 and has been regularly published and issued in Monroe County since that time. The printed notice attached to this affidavit is exactly the same as was printed and published in the regular editions and issues of the Pocono Record on the dates listed below the bottom of this notice. I certify that I am duly authorized to verify this statement under oath and am not interested in the subject matter of the attached notice or advertisement. All allegations in this affidavit as to time, place, and character of publication are true.

Copy of notice

**PUBLIC NOTICE
PUBLIC HEARINGS
AND COMMENT PERIOD
PROPOSED TOLL RATE
ADJUSTMENTS**

FOR DRJTBC TOLL BRIDGES

Notice is hereby given that the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) of Yardley, PA is initiating a public comment process on a series of proposed toll adjustments to take effect in 2021 and 2024.

The major proposed changes to the agency's toll-rate schedules are summarized as follows:

1. Provide a uniform toll schedule for the DRJTBC's eight toll bridges at: Milford-Montague (Route 206), Delaware Water Gap (I-80), Portland-Columbia (Routes 611, 46 and 94), Easton-Phillipsburg (Route 22), I-76, New Hope-Lambertville (Route 202), Scudder Falls (I-295) and Trenton-Morrisville (Route 1).

2. Establish a two-tier toll adjustment for Class 1 passenger vehicles on or after April 3, 2021: to \$1.25 for E-ZPass, \$3 for cash, and \$3 for TOLL BY PLATE (Scudder Falls).

3. Set the added toll for Class 1 passenger vehicles with bumper-hitch trailers in tow at \$2 on or after April 3, 2021.

4. Authorize the Class 1 E-ZPass passenger vehicle toll to be \$1.50 on or after January 6, 2024.

5. Maintain a frequency-based Class 1 E-ZPass commuter discount for 2021 through 2023 at 20 percent (applied retroactively on 16 or more trips across DRJTBC toll bridges in a calendar month with a Commission-affiliated E-ZPass tag) on or after April 3, 2021.

6. Eliminate the Class 1 E-ZPass commuter discount in its entirety on or after January 6, 2024.

7. Establish a uniform commercial vehicle rate table (Class 2 and above) and set new two-tier rates for trucks, buses and other commercial vehicles (defined as any vehicle with two or more axles).

Kelli McFall

Kelli McFall

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
County of Monroe

Sworn to and subscribed
to before me this day February 04, 2021

Lois A. Kirkwood

Lois A. Kirkwood
Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Lois A. Kirkwood, Notary Public
Monroe County
My commission expires March 2, 2023
Commission number 1085876
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

| EXPIRE DATE | AD CAPTION | # TIMES | AMOUNT |
|-------------|----------------------------|---------|--------|
| 02/01/2021 | PUBLICNOTICEPUBLICHEARINGS | 1 | 332.52 |

| START DATE | END DATE |
|------------|------------|
| 02/01/2021 | 02/01/2021 |

cash, and \$5 per-axle for TOLL BY PLATE (Scudder Falls) on or after April 3, 2021.

8. Eliminate the off-peak E-ZPass discount for commercial vehicles on or after April 3, 2021.

The proposed adjusted rate schedules for the DRJ/TBC's toll bridges in 2021 and 2024 are posted at: www.drjtbc.org/newtolls.

A 26-day comment period now commences for the proposed toll actions.

Three remote/virtual hearings will be held as part of this process, pursuant to the Commission's Toll Adjustment Public Hearing and Comment Policy as revised for the COVID-19 Pandemic (FIN-01-21).

The virtual public hearings will be conducted through the Zoom online public platform and by teleconferencing. Pre-registration is required to speak at a public hearing. The three virtual public hearings are as follows:

- February 17, 2021 – 10 a.m. to noon
- February 17, 2021 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- February 18, 2021 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Zoom access links and teleconferencing numbers and codes for the online hearings will be posted Feb. 10 on the webpage the Commission is publishing for this toll adjustment comment process -- www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments.

Individuals interested only in watching the live-stream Zoom broadcast will need to provide, at a minimum, a name and e-mail address. Teleconferencing will be the only means for individuals to listen to the hearings without providing any identifying information.

Members of the public who wish to provide verbal comment at a virtual hearing through Zoom or via teleconferencing must register ahead of the meeting dates. Registrations will be accepted online at a portal on www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments or by phone at 1-855-721-0444 from Feb. 10 to 4 p.m. Feb. 16.

Further instructions for registering online or by phone will be published on www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments by Feb. 10.

Online commenters will need to provide their first name and last name, municipality and state of residence, and an email address (for confirmation purposes). Individuals planning to speak by phone through a teleconference phone number must provide their first name and last name, municipality and state of residence, and the last four digits of the phone number they will use to call into a selected hearing. Individuals are limited to providing comment for up to three minutes at one hearing only.

Registration is first-come, first-served until all available slots at each respective hearing are filled.

Under Commission policy, additional comment methods are available for the public:

- Online: Go to the toll-comment form posted at www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments
- US Mail: address to Director of Community Affairs Jodee Incho, DRJ/TBC Administration Building, 1199 Woodside Road, Yardley, PA, 19087 (Must be postmarked by Feb. 26 to be part of the official record.)
- Phone (comment and pre-registration line): 1-855-721-0444

The webpage www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments provides additional guidance and links on the proposed toll adjustment. The page has a link for downloading Zoom onto a computer or mobile phone, an explanation of the toll hearing/comment process, key dates, frequently asked questions, and other information related to the proposed toll adjustments.




The public comment period officially begins Feb. 1, 2021 and shall end 4 p.m. Feb. 26, 2021. Comments received after the deadline will not be accepted. Anonymous comments will not be accepted.

Eligible commenters' names and municipalities/states of residence will be included with their respective comments as part of the public record for this proposed toll adjustment. All eligible comments will be presented to DRJ/TBC Commissioners prior to taking action (approve, modify-approve, or reject) on the proposed toll adjustments at the Commission's monthly virtual meeting scheduled for 10:30 a.m. March 29, 2021.





P - Feb. 1

As required under Commission policy, the proposed toll adjustments were published on the Commission's website – www.drjtbc.org:

2021 TOLL RATES

| CLASS | VEHICLE DESCRIPTION | TOLL RATES | | |
|--------------|---|---|--|-------------|
| | | E-Z Pass <i>E-ZPass</i> | Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE | |
| CLASS 1 | <p>Includes vehicles with up to 2 axles and less than 8-feet high.</p> <p>*The frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount would be 20 percent. This would reduce the \$1.25 Class 1 E-ZPass toll to \$1 when eligibility is met. The discount is applied as a retroactive credit after 16 or more tolled trips across DRJTBG bridges are recorded in a respective calendar month on a transponder issued by the Commission's toll processor – the New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center.</p> <p>A passenger vehicle with a trailer or vehicle in tow would be charged an additional \$2 regardless of the number of rolling axles.</p> <p>Per-axle commercial/truck rates (\$4.50 for \$5 per axle) apply for Class 1 vehicles with gooseneck/fifth-wheel trailers in tow. See rates for Class 3, 4, or 5, as applicable).</p> | <p>2-Axle</p>  <p>Motorcycles, cars, SUVs and light trucks.</p> | <p>\$1.25</p> <p>20-percent Commuter Discount available*</p> | <p>\$3</p> |
| | <p>w/trailer</p>  <p>1-axle trailer in tow 2-axle trailer in tow</p> | <p>\$3.25</p> | <p>\$5</p> | |
| CLASS 2 & UP | <p>Includes any vehicle 8-feet or above in height with two or more axles.</p> <p>Tolls would be \$4.50 per axle for E-ZPass and \$5 per axle for cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE.</p> <p>The 10-percent off-peak commercial-vehicle discount for Class 2 and above would be eliminated on or after April 3, 2021.</p> <p>Class 2 (two-axle) vehicles include small box trucks, flatbed trucks, school buses, small recreational vehicles, certain sprinter vans, and certain conversion vans.</p> <p>Class 1 vehicles with gooseneck/fifth-wheel trailers in tow also would be charged \$4.50 per axle E-ZPass or \$5 cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE (see rates for Classes 3, 4, and 5).</p> <p>Class 2 (two axles) and Class 3 (three axles) vehicles with trailers would be charged an additional \$4.50 for E-ZPass or \$5 cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE for each additional axle in tow (see rates for Classes 3, 4, and 5).</p> | <p>2-Axle</p>  | <p>\$9</p> | <p>\$10</p> |
| | <p>3-Axle</p>  <p>3-axle RV w/ 1-axle trailer</p> | <p>\$13.50</p> | <p>\$15</p> | |
| | <p>4-Axle</p>  <p>4-axle dump truck 4-axle RV w/ 2-axle trailer 3-axle RV w/ 2-axle passenger in tow Truck w/ GV trailer</p> | <p>\$18</p> | <p>\$20</p> | |
| | <p>5-Axle</p>  | <p>\$22.50</p> | <p>\$25</p> | |
| | <p>6-Axle</p>  | <p>\$27</p> | <p>\$30</p> | |
| | <p>7-Axle</p>  | <p>\$31.50</p> | <p>\$35</p> | |

2024 TOLL RATES

| CLASS | VEHICLE DESCRIPTION | TOLL RATES | |
|--------------|--|---|--------------------|
| | | E-Z Pass <i>Delaware</i> | Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE |
| CLASS 1 | Includes vehicles with up to 2 axles and less than 8-feet high. The frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount would expire on or after January 6, 2024. A passenger vehicle with a trailer or vehicle in tow would be charged an additional \$2 regardless of the number of tolling axles. Permits commercial truck rates (\$4.50 or \$5 per axle) apply for Class 1 vehicles with gooseneck/fifth-wheel trailers in tow. (See rates for Class 3, 4, or 5, as applicable). | 2-Axle  Motorcycle, car, SUV and light truck | \$1.50 \$3 |
| | w/trailer  Heavy trailer in tow, Gooseneck trailer in tow | \$3.50 | \$5 |
| CLASS 2 & UP | Includes any vehicle 8-feet or above in height with two or more axles. Tolls would be \$4.50 per axle for E-ZPass and \$5 per axle for cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE. Class 2 (two-axle) vehicles include small box trucks, flatbed trucks, school buses, small recreational vehicles, certain sprinter vans, and certain conversions. Class 1 vehicles with gooseneck/fifth-wheel trailers in tow also would be charged \$4.50 per axle E-ZPass and \$5 cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE (see rates for Classes 3, 4, and 5). Class 2 (two-axle) and Class 3 (three-axle) vehicles with trailers would be charged an additional \$4.50 for E-ZPass or \$5 cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE for each additional axle in tow (see rates for Classes 3, 4, and 5). | 2-Axle  Flatbed truck, Box truck, School bus | \$9 \$10 |
| | 3-Axle  Gooseneck R/V w/ 2-axle trailer | \$13.50 | \$15 |
| | 4-Axle  Goose dump truck, Gooseneck R/V w/ 2-axle trailer, Gooseneck R/V w/ 2-axle trailer, Truck with 2-axle trailer | \$18 | \$20 |
| | 5-Axle  Flatbed truck, School bus | \$22.50 | \$25 |
| | 6-Axle  Flatbed truck | \$27 | \$30 |
| | 7-Axle  Flatbed truck | \$31.50 | \$35 |

The two proposed toll schedules above are posted for purposes of gathering public comment before the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's Directors decide whether to approve, modify/approve, or reject the proposed rates. If approved, they would be the first system-wide toll adjustment at the Commission in 10 years. The top schedule of toll adjustments would take effect on or after April 3, 2021. The second schedule would take effect on or after January 6, 2024.

Please go to www.drjtc.org/tollcomments for more information on the toll adjustment and the public comment process. The public comment period opens February 1 and ends 4 p.m. February 26. Three virtual hearings will be held as part of this comment process due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Under the proposed toll changes, uniform rates would be charged at the Commission's eight toll bridges beginning on or after April 3, 2021. Motorists with E-ZPass transponders would qualify for lower rates. Drivers without E-ZPass would pay higher rates. All E-ZPass users — regardless of issuing agency — will qualify for the E-ZPass rates. The Commission's volume-based E-ZPass commuter discount, however, can only be applied in passenger vehicle transponders issued by the Commission's toll processor — the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. The commuter discount is proposed to be 20 percent for eligible motorists who record 16 or more tolled trips across DRJTC bridges in a respective calendar month, starting on or after April 3, 2021. The discount is proposed to continue through 2023.

The per-axle rates for trucks, buses, and other vehicles 8 feet or more in height would be \$4.50 per axle for E-ZPass and \$5 per axle for cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE on or after April 3, 2021. (Note: The Scudder Falls Toll Bridge currently is the only DRJTC crossing with all-electronic tolling (AET) and TOLL-BY-PLATE service.) The off-peak E-ZPass discount for trucks, buses and commercial vehicles 8-feet and above in height would expire on or after April 3, 2021.

The proposed 2024 toll adjustment schedule (effective on or after January 6, 2024) would set the E-ZPass Class 3 vehicle rate at \$7.50. The Commission's frequency-based commuter discount also would end at this time.

An additional webpage provided information on the toll-setting process, the public comment period, and three virtual hearings. This page also had forms for the public to submit comments and/or register for one of the virtual hearings. A snapshot of the top of that page's final appearance is pasted below:

The screenshot shows the top of a webpage for the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission. The header includes a customer service number, navigation links (Home, Newsroom, Job Opportunities, E-ZPass, Employee Portal, Active Alerts), and a main menu (ABOUT, BRIDGE INFO, TRAVEL INFO, PROJECTS, DOING BUSINESS, CONTACT). The page title is "Proposed 2021/2024 Toll Adjustments Comment Process". Below the title is a breadcrumb trail: HOME / TRAVEL INFO / PROPOSED 2021/2024 TOLL ADJUSTMENTS COMMENT PROCESS. The main content area starts with a paragraph explaining the Commission's consideration of a two-stage system-wide toll adjustment to address traffic and revenue declines caused by the COVID-19 health crisis. Below this paragraph are two blue buttons: "CLICK HERE TO SEE THE PROPOSED TOLL RATE CHANGES" and "CLICK HERE FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VIRTUAL HEARING PRESENTATION". The section titled "PROCESS" follows, detailing four steps: 1. The Commission publishes a public notice on Feb. 1. 2. At least 10 days after publication, three remote/virtual public hearings will be conducted over a two-day period. 3. All testimony and comments will be gathered and reviewed by Commission staff. 4. Under the Commission's toll-adjustment comment/hearing policy, the public also may provide comments during the

Additional information was published on the website, including a rollup of prospective capital projects to be funded by the proposed toll adjustments over the next five years:

MORE TOLL ADJUSTMENT INFORMATION

Passenger Vehicle Base Toll Rate Comparisons - 2021

Two-Axle Commercial Vehicle Toll Rate Comparisons - 2021

Five-Axle Commercial Vehicle Toll Rate Comparisons - 2021

Authority to Toll

The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission in its Compact, first jointly enacted by the state ratified by Congress in 1935 in accordance with that authority has been reaffirmed in court decisions.

The Commission was first fully authorized to toll the Easton-Phillipsburg (Route 22) Toll Bridge and amended several times since then. In 1999, the Commission's financing powers and service jurisdiction were expanded to include the replacement of existing bridges and the construction of new bridges as the Commission may determine.

Toll Comparisons of Class 1 Passenger Vehicles

Anticipated Toll-Funded Capital Project Starts 2021-26

Toll Comparisons of Class 2 Two-Axle Trucks

Proposed Toll Adjustments at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge:

2021 – The following would take place on or after April 1, 2021:

- The Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass toll would remain unchanged.
- The frequency-based 40 percent commercial discount would be a 10 percent discount applied as a retroactive credit after 10 more tolls.
- The Scudder Falls Toll Bridge on any combination of CRITICAL bridges a month using a transponder issued by the Commission's toll group Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Result: New discounted transponder.
- The \$2.00 Class 1 passenger vehicle TOLL BY PLATE rate would be reduced to \$1.25.
- The added toll for a Class 1 vehicle with a transponder that is not a dollar to \$2 (currently \$1). Result: New combined toll (vehicle \$1.25 for E-ZPass and \$5 for TOLL BY PLATE).
- The per axle rates for Class 2 transaxles (two axle vehicles) right would be \$4.50 for E-ZPass and \$5 for TOLL BY PLATE (currently \$4.50 for E-ZPass and \$5 for TOLL BY PLATE).

Toll Comparison of Class 5 Five-Axle Trucks

Proposed Toll Adjustments for All Toll Bridges

This document explains how the proposed toll adjustments for the Easton-Phillipsburg (Route 22) Toll Bridge, the Morrisville (Route 1), New Hope-Lambertville (Route 2), Portland-Columbia (Routes 611, 46, 94), Delaware Water Gap (Route 206).

2021 – The following would take place on or after April 1, 2021:

- A two-tier toll schedule would be established for all toll bridges and cash rates will be higher – a pricing policy country including the Pennsylvania Turnpike and Delaware Turnpike.
- The Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass toll (currently \$2.00) would be reduced to \$1.25.

Authority to Toll

Upcoming Projects to be Funded by Toll Proceeds

Proposed Toll Changes for Scudder Falls Toll Bridge

Proposed Toll Changes for Other Toll Bridges

Authority to Toll

OTHER DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [Press Release Announcing the Proposed Toll Adjustment](#)
- [Executive Director's Presentation at Virtual Toll Hearings](#)
- [Financial Resilience Policy](#)
- [Audited Financial Statements – 2018](#)
- [Audited Financial Statements – 2019](#)
- (Note: The Commission's 2020 audit is now underway. By law, that annual statement must be completed and made available by July 1.)
- [Annual Inspection Report – 2019](#)
- [Commission Resolution Authorizing Virtual Public Hearings](#)
- [Authority to Toll](#)
- [Toll-Supported Bridges Explained](#)
- [E-ZPass Information Page](#)

Images of the toll comment and virtual hearing registration forms are pasted below:

TOLL COMMENT FORM

Please use the following form to provide comment on the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024. Asterisk items are mandatory. Boxes marked † are for optional confirmation purposes; these fields would not be included in the official record. Comments will continue to be accepted until 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26.

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| First Name * | Last Name * |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Municipality of residence * | State of residence * |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Your Email † | Phone Number † |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Comment | |
| <input type="text"/> | |

SEND

REGISTRATION FORM TO SPEAK AT A VIRTUAL TOLL HEARING

*Mandatory – †Optional

Check hearing at which you wish to provide a three-minute-long comment (one hearing only per individual) *

How do you plan to provide comment *

To speak at a public hearing, all registrants must provide their first name, last name, and municipality and state of residence. Individuals planning speak online through Zoom must provide an email address. Individuals planning to speak by phone through a teleconferencing phone number must provide the last four digits of the phone number they plan to use to speak at the meeting. Registrations are first come, first served until all slots at a respective hearing are filled.

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| First Name * | Last Name * |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Municipality of residence * | State of residence * |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Phone Number † | Organization affiliation † |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

SUBMIT

Four press releases were distributed for this public comment process and are posted at www.drjtbc.org/newsroom. The cover page of each release is pasted below:



Executive Offices
1199 Woodside Road
Yardley, PA 19067

TEL. (267) 394-6700

FAX (267) 394-6744

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 1, 2021

Contact: Joe Donnelly or Pete Peterson
Phone: (215) 316-0589 or (215) 990-8928

SYSTEM-WIDE TOLL ADJUSTMENTS PROPOSED FOR 2021 & 2024

*Public Comment Period Commences; Three Remote Hearings Scheduled
Two-Tier Pricing Contemplated with Cash/TOLL BY PLATE Tolls Higher than E-ZPass*

YARDLEY, PA - The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) today announced proposed system-wide toll adjustments to offset continuing COVID-19-induced toll revenue declines, ensure payment of financial obligations and provide funding for planned capital projects throughout the agency's Pennsylvania-New Jersey service region. If approved, it would be the Commission's first system-wide toll adjustment in 10 years.

The full schedules of proposed toll changes may be viewed on the Commission website at www.drjtbc.org/newtolls. The first schedule is proposed for implementation on or after April 3, 2021. The second is proposed for implementation on or after January 6, 2024. The Commission also has published a webpage -- www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments -- to provide more information on the adjustments, the comment/hearings process on the proposals, and a series of capital projects that the prospective toll revenues would help fund.

The proposed adjustments would establish a two-tier system of toll rates, under which cash/TOLL BY PLATE customers would pay higher tolls than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is a prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally because it helps cover the increased processing costs associated with cash or license-plate-billing collection methods.

In 2019, slightly more than 75 percent of toll transactions at DRJTBC bridges were handled by E-ZPass. In 2020, nearly 80 percent of the agency's toll transactions were through E-ZPass -- but that figure is skewed higher by emergency "Toll-by-Mail" billing that took place during the COVID spike between late March and early May. The Commission already has a two-tier pricing schedule in effect at its new Scudder Falls (I-295) Toll Bridge.

(Note: The DRJTBC classifies motor vehicles strictly by number of rolling axles and height. Tolls are assessed in the Pennsylvania-bound direction at all Commission tolling points.)

COVID-19

DRJTBC Executive Director Joe Resta said the toll adjustment was necessitated by the continuing recessionary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. He said the Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected 9.36 percent less toll revenue than had been projected for 2020. Like other toll agencies around the country, bond-rating firms assigned a negative outlook to the Commission last year. Resta said COVID-19 impacts have continued into 2021.

"Preserving Our Past, Enhancing Our Future"



TEL: (215) 990-8928

FAX: (215) 990-8711

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 9, 2021

Contact: Joe Donnelly or Pete Peterson

Phone: (215) 316-0589 or (215) 990-8928

REGISTRATION FOR VIRTUAL TOLL HEARINGS STARTS THIS WEEK

*Hearing Comments to Be Accepted Via Zoom Online Meeting Platform & Teleconferencing:
Links and Phone Numbers Posted on Commission Website*

YARDLEY, PA - The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) today posted the Zoom meeting links and teleconferencing phone numbers for the three virtual hearings the agency is planning for gathering public comments on a series of recently proposed toll adjustments.

People must pre-register in order to speak at one of the three hearings, which will be conducted through the Zoom public meeting online platform and teleconferencing. **The Commission will begin accepting registrations online or through a toll-free answering service starting Wednesday, February 10.**

To register online, members of the public can fill out the registration form posted at www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments and hit the submit button when completed. The public also can register by following the prompts on a toll-free phone line – 855-721-0444 – that is operational for this proposed toll adjustment comment period.

Hearing registrants must provide their first and last names and their municipality and state of residence. Individuals who plan to speak online through Zoom also must provide their email address. Individuals planning to speak via teleconferencing also need to provide the last four digits of the phone line they will use to comment at the hearings.

Registration is first-come, first-served until all available slots at each respective hearing are filled. **Virtual hearing registrations will be accepted until 4 p.m. February 16.**

The three virtual hearings are scheduled as follows:

- o February 17, 2021 – 10 a.m. to noon
- o February 17, 2021 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- o February 18, 2021 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Individuals will be restricted to speaking up to three minutes at one hearing only. Hearing comments must be declarative; the hearings will not be question and answer sessions. Comments will be restricted to the proposed toll adjustments posted at www.drjtbc.org/newtolls and the public notice published in various Commission-jurisdiction daily newspapers on or after January 31, 2021. Anonymous comments will not be accepted.



Executive Offices
1199 Woodside Road
Yardley, PA 19067

TEL. (267) 394-6700

FAX (267) 394-6744

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 19, 2021

Contact: Joe Donnelly or Pete Peterson
Phone: (215) 316-0589 or (215) 990-8928

ONE WEEK REMAINS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON PROPOSED TOLL ADJUSTMENTS

Bridge Commission Seeking Input by Online Form, Toll-Free Phone Line & U.S. Mail

YARDLEY, PA – Motorists and other members of the public still have one week to provide comment on a series of recently proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024, the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) announced today.

The Commission rolled out a two-stage system-wide toll restructuring plan on February 1 and has been gathering public input ever since. The public comment period on the proposed toll adjustments is scheduled to end 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26.

Individuals have three ways to weigh in on the proposed toll changes:

- Online: Go to the toll-comment form posted at www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments
- Toll-free answering service: 1-855-721-0444
- US Mail: address to Director of Community Affairs Jodee Inscho, DRJTBC Administration Building, 1199 Woodside Road, Yardley, PA. 19067 (Must be postmarked by Feb. 26 to be part of the official record.)

Anonymous comments will not be accepted. All eligible comments will be transcribed for inclusion in the public record to be reviewed by the DRJTBC's board of commissioners prior to taking action (approve, modify and approve, or reject) on the proposed toll adjustments. Commissioners are expected to take up the matter at their March 29 meeting.

The proposed toll changes were developed in response to the deep traffic and revenue losses the agency has experienced in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic recession it induced. Travel patterns in the Commission's service area have changed as the pandemic, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected commuting, travel and shopping. Toll collections were \$14.5 million less than projected in 2020; the declines have continued in 2021.

Recognizing the evolving revenue challenges, the Commission halted job hiring after February 2020, postponed new capital project starts, and cut discretionary spending lines 10 percent and froze salaries in the 2021 operating budget.

The proposed toll adjustment would address immediate financial concerns while enabling the agency to fulfill its service mission and pursue needed capital project for years to come.

"Preserving Our Past, Enhancing Our Future"



Delaware River
Joint Toll Bridge
Commission

Executive Offices
1199 Woodside Road
Yardley, PA 19067

TEL. (267) 394-6700

FAX (267) 394-6744

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 25, 2021

Contact: Joe Donnelly or Pete Peterson
Phone: (215) 316-0589 or (215) 990-8928

ONE DAY LEFT FOR SUBMITTAL OF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PROPOSED TOLL ADJUSTMENTS

Bridge Commission Seeking Input by Online Form, Toll-Free Phone Line & U.S. Mail

YARDLEY, PA – The public has one day left to provide comment on a series of proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024, the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) announced today.

The public comment period is scheduled to 4 p.m. TOMORROW -- Friday, Feb. 26. The Commission rolled out a two-stage system-wide toll restructuring plan on February 1 and has been gathering public input ever since.

Individuals have three ways to weigh in on the proposed toll changes:

- Online: Go to the toll-comment form posted at www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments
- Toll-free answering service: 1-855-721-0444
- US Mail: address to Director of Community Affairs Jodee Inscho, DRJTBC Administration Building, 1199 Woodside Road, Yardley, PA. 19067 (Must be postmarked by Feb. 26 to be part of the official record.)

All eligible comments will be transcribed for inclusion in the public record to be reviewed by the DRJTBC's board of commissioners prior to taking action (approve, modify and approve, or reject) on the proposed toll adjustments. Anonymous comments will not be accepted.

Commissioners are expected to take up the matter at their March 29 meeting.

The proposed toll changes were developed in response to the deep traffic and revenue losses the agency has experienced in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic recession it induced. Travel patterns in the Commission's service area have changed as the pandemic, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected commuting, travel and shopping. Toll collections were \$14.5 million less than projected in 2020; the declines have continued in 2021.

Recognizing the evolving revenue challenges, the Commission halted job hiring after February 2020, postponed new capital project starts, and cut discretionary spending lines 10 percent and froze salaries in the 2021 operating budget.

The proposed toll adjustment would address immediate financial concerns while enabling the agency to fulfill its service mission and pursue needed capital project for years to come.

"Preserving Our Past, Enhancing Our Future"

REMOTE/VIRTUAL HEARINGS

Three virtual hearings were conducted for this toll adjustment, pursuant to the Commission's Toll Adjustment Public Hearings and Comment Policy as revised for the COVID-19 pandemic (FIN-01-21) adopted on January 25, 2021.

Participation was provided through the Zoom online public meeting platform and its associated teleconferencing function. Pre-registration was required for speaking at a public hearing on a first-come/first-served basis, but this was waived at each session due to low turnout.

Zoom access links and teleconferencing numbers and codes for the online hearings were posted Feb. 10 on the Commission website at www.drtbc.org/tollcomments. Individuals interested only in watching the live-stream Zoom broadcast needed to provide -- at a minimum -- a name and e-mail address. Teleconferencing was the only means for individuals to listen to the hearings without providing any identifying information.

Registrations for hearing speakers were accepted online at a portal on www.drtbc.org/tollcomments or through the toll-free phone line operated for this proposed toll adjustment at 1-855-721-0444 from Feb. 10 to 4 p.m. Feb. 16.

All online commenters were required to provide their first name and last name, municipality and state of residence. Registered commenters also were requested to provide an email address (for confirmation purposes).

Nobody registered to comment at a virtual hearing via the teleconferencing option. If someone had utilized this option, they would have been requested to provide their first name and last name, municipality and state of residence, and the last four digits of the phone number.

It was noted in Commission communications that commenters would be restricted to speaking for up to three minutes at one hearing only; that hearing comments must be declarative; that the hearings would not be question and answer sessions; that hearing comments would be restricted to the proposed toll adjustments posted at www.drtbc.org/newtolls; and that anonymous comments would not be accepted.

The hearings were held as follows:

- February 17, 2021 – 10 a.m. to noon
- February 17, 2021 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- February 18, 2021 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Residents, motorists, stakeholders and office staff of elected officials attended the three virtual toll hearings, along with Commission staff and consultants.

Each virtual hearing was recorded. Each hearing had the following format:

- Pre-Hearing: A scrolling slide show indicating when each hearing would start and an overview of some of the Zoom settings like audio controls.

- **Hearing Introduction:** An opening introduction by the Hearing Officer, Mark Tudor from RK&K, consultant to the Bridge Commission. Mr. Tudor provided an overview of the format of the hearing and the Zoom settings. Mr. Tudor also noted that the “Raise Hand” function would be available to virtual hearing participants who had not pre-registered to notify the Hearing Officer that they would like to provide verbal comments, if time allowed.
- **Joe Resta Toll Adjustment Overview:** After the Hearing Introduction, a pre-recorded presentation of roughly 15 minutes in duration was provided by Mr. Joe Resta, the Commission’s Executive Director. The presentation gave an overview of the traffic and revenue losses arising from the pandemic and recession, the reasons for the proposed toll adjustments, and details of the proposed adjustments in both 2021 and 2024.
- **Verbal Comment Period:** The final segment of each of the Virtual Hearings was to take verbal comments. Verbal comments were first opened to pre-registered public officials, then pre-registered members of the public, and then unregistered participants who had not already provided verbal comments in previous hearings. Participants who were unregistered were asked to use the “Raise Hand” function in Zoom online or the Zoom app to notify the Hearing Officer that they would like to provide verbal comments. During the verbal comment period, the proposed toll adjustments were scrolled on the screen, with the Hearing Officer periodically coming back on camera to remind workshop participants if they would like to provide verbal comments to utilize the “Raise Hand” function. Each hearing lasted the full scheduled two-hour period.

A copy of the hearing PowerPoint presentations is attached to this report as reference.

The recorded eligible comments were transcribed for inclusion in this report to Commissioners for review and deliberation prior to taking action (approve, modify and approve, or reject) on the proposed toll adjustments.

Comment Process Results

As previously noted, the public had four ways to comment on the proposed toll adjustments:

- Three virtual hearings;
- Online: A toll-comment form posted on the Commission website at www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments
- U.S. Mail: address Director of Community Affairs Jodee Inscho, DRJTBC Administration Building, 1199 Woodside Road, Yardley, PA 19067 (Postmarked no later than Feb. 26 to be part of this official record.)
- Toll-free phone answering service (comment and pre-registration line): 1-855-721-0444

A total of 115 comments were received during the course of the 26-day comment period starting February 1 and ending 4 p.m. February 26. This is nearly three times the number of eligible comments received during the 2016 toll-setting public comment process for establishing a toll schedule at the previously non-tolled Scudder Falls location, clarifying the tolls for recreational vehicle/trailer combinations at all Commission toll bridges, and increasing rates system-wide for dual-rear-wheel pickup trucks (dualies), which was rejected. The 2016 toll-setting process, which was not conducted during a pandemic, included six public hearings (two hearings in each of the Commission three service regions, with each of those hearings occurring on opposite sides of the river).

The breakdown of eligible comments (anonymous comments do not qualify) for the proposed 2021 and 2024 toll adjustments were as follows

- 105 eligible comments were received through the online form portal on the Commission website;
- 4 comments were received through the three virtual hearings;
- 5 comments were received through the toll-free phone service; and
- 1 letter from a Pennsylvania state representative.
- Note: Two individuals submitted comments both at a hearing and through the toll comment form on the Commission website.

Summation of Public Input

As would be anticipated, the prevailing expression of public sentiment is in opposition to the toll adjustments either in part or in their entirety. Surprisingly, two individuals expressed support for higher tolls. Following are the top issues cited during this process (ranked in order of repetition):

- Bad time to raise tolls.
- General opposition to toll and discount changes (Note: It's possible that some of these cases are directed toward the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate for passenger vehicles.)
- Opposition to the proposed \$3 toll rate for Cash transactions involving a passenger vehicle.
- Oppose reduction/elimination of frequency-based discount for eligible E-ZPass users making 16 or more trips across Commission bridges in a calendar month.
- Make spending cuts or restructure finances.
- Lower tolls for people living in close proximity to a bridge.
- Concerns that higher bridge tolls would cause more traffic to divert to other bridges without tolls in the Pennsylvania-bound direction.

Among other issues raised during this process were individuals expressing opposition to higher truck tolls as well as other individuals supporting higher truck tolls. Another dichotomy among some commenters concerned the growing trend of cashless all-electronic toll collections regionally and around the country. Some individuals expressed support for such a change, while others expressed opposition. Finally, a few commenters expressed opposition to the limited toll adjustments being proposed at the new Scudder Falls Toll Bridge so soon (less than two years) after the start of toll collections at that location.

The various comments received during this process are attached with respective staff responses. Cited comments were through the Commission website's toll comment form unless noted otherwise.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS AND STAFF RESPONSES

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| Carosella, Nicholas | Tredyffrin, PA | Feb. 1 10:17 a.m. | Traffic diversion E-ZPass |
|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: The tripling of toll rates for the Trenton Morrisville bridge (which I travel several times a month) make no sense, especially when there is a free parallel bridge. Such a large increase will result in significant backups on US 1 as people exit onto the short ramp to access the free bridge. In addition, charging those with non-NJ E-ZPass tags more discriminates against those who have Pennsylvania E-ZPass tags, especially given the bridges are run by a bi-state agency that includes Pennsylvania. The Port Authority of New Jersey and the DRBA both give discounts to tagholders from both border states. Given the significant savings of E-ZPass over cash/plate transactions, there is little reason why non-NJ E-ZPass users should pay that same rate. They should either pay the same rate as NJ tagholders or a rate in between the two.

Staff Response:

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- This \$3 Cash rate is one part of a new two-tier pricing structure prescribed under the proposed toll adjustments. Under this proposed pricing framework, Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally. It is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- As with prior toll adjustments, the Commission fully anticipates that a diversionary spike will occur if the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and implemented. The severity of diversions in 2021, however, will be mitigated by the fact that E-ZPass is now used in 75 percent of the Commission's toll transactions system-wide. The E-ZPass rate is proposed to rise by only 25 cents in 2021.
- Any motorist diverting from a toll bridge to a toll-supported bridge will encounter a diminished customer experience, including higher fuel consumption, traffic congestion and delays in reaching their destinations.
- The toll-supported bridges do not pay for themselves. The proposed toll adjustments will help fund these "free" alternative river crossings and help keep them in operation.
- Geography has nothing to do with the Commission's E-ZPass discount program.
- The Commission's frequency-based commuter discount for Class 1 passenger vehicles equipped with E-ZPass can only be applied to private vehicle transponders issued and administered by the back-office entity that processes toll transactions at the Commission's eight toll bridges. That entity is the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center, which is operated by Conduent

Inc. This toll-processing operation services seven different toll agencies domiciled or operating in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.

- As the Bridge Commission's toll processor, the New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center can track, tabulate, and apply the Commission's frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount – when applicable – to its respective database of E-ZPass account/transponder holders. Our toll processor is not positioned to tabulate and apply the discount to transponders and accounts that are in another E-ZPass service network's database.
- For example, the discount cannot be applied to accounts/transponders administered by the Pennsylvania Turnpike E-ZPass Customer Service Center because that entity does not process the toll transactions at our toll bridges. Its E-ZPass customer database is unaffiliated with that of our toll processor's. The Pennsylvania Turnpike E-ZPass Customer Service Center also serves only one toll agency -- the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission.
- The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey does not offer any "discounts" specifically targeted to residents of New York and New Jersey. Moreover, the Authority's E-ZPass rates actually mirror the two-tier pricing framework in the Commission's proposed toll adjustment, with the E-ZPass-equipped motorists paying lower rates than Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers. The E-ZPass rates are further adjusted by time of travel – lower during off-peak hours and higher during peak hours.
- The Delaware River Bay Authority (DRBA) does offer two frequency-based E-ZPass discounts to passenger vehicles, but -- like the Bridge Commission – these discounts can only be applied through the DRBA's toll processing service provider, which also happens to be the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Unlike the Commission's discount (which is automatic), an eligible E-ZPass customer seeking a DRBA discount must register his/her transponder for the program and pay for the respective discount plan up-front. The DRBA does offer a slightly reduced rate (25-cent savings) for passenger-vehicle drivers enrolled in either the New Jersey or Delaware E-ZPass account systems, but this is not a "discount." It is a set toll rate.
- If the Commission's proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the Commission's Class 1 passenger vehicle base E-ZPass rates of \$1.25 in 2021 and \$1.50 are still lower than the current comparative DRBA base rates: \$5 -- and \$4.75 for E-ZPass transponders issued by either the NJ E-ZPass or DE E-ZPass service centers. The Commission's proposed \$3 Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE rate also would be lower than the current DRBA rates.

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| Connor, Patrick | Blairstown, PA | Feb. 1 11:49 a.m. | Opposes \$3 Cash rate |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: A 300% increase for cash customers is extremely high. For an individual who travels across the border four or five times a month I shouldn't be required to use ez pass in order to save a considerable amount of money, approximately one hundred dollars a year. I would most likely reduce my trips to Pa, and the amount of money I contribute to their economy. Additionally in the near future I suppose the commission will transition to cashless tolls altogether forcing people to either have ez pass, or pay on line or via mail.

Staff Response:

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- This \$3 Cash rate is one part of a new two-tier pricing structure prescribed under the proposed toll adjustments. Under this proposed pricing framework, Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally. It is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- The Commission currently has no immediate plans or schedule to transition to cashless tolls system-wide. However, the Commission is aware that an increasing number of other toll agencies have made -- or are making -- such system-wide shifts to cashless all-electronic tolling. These include -- but are not limited to -- the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and the South Jersey Transportation Authority (Atlantic City Expressway).
- Nobody is forced to use E-ZPass. The proposed toll adjustment, however, would apply higher rates for Cash payments to cover the more expensive processing/collection costs of that toll payment method.

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| DePalma, Michael | Eldred Township, PA | Feb. 1 12:37 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Gas taxes rising Truck tolls hurt consumers |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: With the cost of gasoline increasing along with many lost jobs and furloughs during the pandemic I am against any Toll increases. Everyone is hurting and to raise the prices on commercial trucking will only pass on these increases in goods onto the consumer. Please don't do this.

Staff Response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's proposed toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as COVID-19, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism.
- The Commission does not receive any gas tax revenues from the states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey or the federal government.
- The Commission took proactive steps in an attempt to forestall or dampen the proposed toll adjustments :
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital-project starts were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent in the 2021 operating budget;

- Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget;
- Federal CARES Act stimulus funds were sought to offset toll losses, but the Commission did not receive any of these funds; and
- The Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass base toll rate increase to \$1.50 is being phased in over three years instead of taking effect immediately.
- The proposed toll adjustments to trucks and other commercial vehicles are modest and would remain lower than surrounding agencies. The Commission would still maintain its competitive edge for movements of overland freight across the Delaware River.

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| Barends, Brian | Washington, N.J. | Feb. 1 12:54 p.m. | Make cuts |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: It's never enough for you Union people - Ever hear of CUTS? You make us Hate NJ Thanks!

Staff Response:

- The Commission has a non-union workforce.
- The Commission also took proactive steps to forestall proposed toll adjustments: job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting; new capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day; discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent and salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.
- The Commission is a bi-state agency, not a state agency.

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| Lee, Kirk | Blairstown, N.J. | Feb. 1 2:18 p.m. | Opposes \$3 Cash rate |
|-----------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: There are similar retail establishments in Newton and in hackettstown. I Don't need to use the bridge. I use it because it's closer. I will spend less in gas than the proposed toll so I'll just shop over here going forward, if you triple the cash toll. A smaller increase might be tolerated but triple the current rate is out of the question.

Staff Response:

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- This \$3 Cash rate is one part of a new two-tier pricing structure prescribed under the proposed toll adjustments. Under this proposed pricing framework, Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists.
- This two-tier pricing framework is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally. It is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.

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| Rancan, Elizabeth | Ewing, N.J. | Feb. 1 7:14 p.m. | Opposes Scudder Falls' E-ZPass Class 1 toll & discount changes |
|-------------------|-------------|------------------|--|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: As someone who lives in Ewing, I sometimes cross the bridge multiple times a day to take my kids to and from school, shop at certain stores, etc. while I have EZ pass, the 2014 doubling of the rate makes my shopping, schooling cost prohibitive!!! I'd be spending \$7 a day to cross a bridge to go a few miles! That's ridiculous! And why would you do away with the frequent traveler discount? Makes zero sense! You will be hurting businesses.

Staff Response:

- If the proposed toll adjustment schedules for 2021 and 2024 were to be approved, the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge base E-ZPass rate would remain at \$1.25 until on or after January 6, 2024, when it is proposed to be increased to be increased to \$1.50.
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission's discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to these criticisms and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for this vehicle class.
- It must be noted that staff originally conceived this \$1.50 toll rate to be implemented in 2021, but decided to phase in the increase to 2024 after further deliberations. Even if the \$1.50 toll were to have been implemented this year with an immediate elimination of the commuter discount program, the Commission's passenger vehicle toll rates would still be the region's lowest base E-ZPass highway bridge toll rates.

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| Bonanni, Heather | Mount Bethel, PA. | Feb. 2 1:42 p.m. | Expressed opposition |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Unnecessary.

Staff Response: The toll adjustments would not be proposed unless they were necessary.

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| Harney, Scott | Hanover Twp., PA. | Feb. 2 4:17 p.m. | Expressed support |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I am in favor of the toll increases. It is important to maintain these critical bridges.

Staff Response:

- The toll adjustment pertains to much more than the Commission’s 20 road bridges. The agency also has 73 lane miles of road surface, 34 short-distance approach bridges (overpasses or viaducts) and various other maintenance and operational facilities.
- The agency operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The tolls would fund services including – but not limited to – snow plowing, roadway lighting, and State Police responses to accidents and emergencies.
- The tolls would help pay down debt-service costs for capital projects and pay for new projects, many of which would generate sorely needed construction-related jobs.
- The proposed adjustments also would enable the Commission to meet the terms of its Financial Resilience Policy: foster improved creditworthiness and credit rating to ensure cost-effective access to capital markets; bolster the agency’s Debt Service Coverage Ratio; and strengthen prospects for maintaining a sufficient balance in the Commission’s indenture-prescribed General Reserve Fund.
- In addition to its 8 toll bridges, the Commission is obligated to operate, maintain, and safeguard 12 non-revenue-generating, low-capacity “free” bridges. These 12 toll-supported bridges are funded solely by a share of revenue collected at the 8 toll bridges. This framework is statutorily required by NJ and PA and by Congress under the Compact Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

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| Olarte, Andrew | Northampton, PA. | Feb. 3 2:49 a.m. | Charge trucks more |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: 81/78 “warehouse” corridor has exploded with tenants. Is it more prudent to keep tolls where they are and triple the burden on commercial vehicles? There is a terrific increase in “big rig” traffic and I believe these enterprises should be stepping up as the revenues from companies like Amazon, FedEx, Walmart, etc has seen terrific increases which could easily cover the Commission shortfall - if they are asked to contribute more.

Staff Response:

- As noted in the press release announcing the proposed toll adjustment, the new toll schedules would address more than a “shortfall.”
- The first paragraph of the Commission’s press release announcing the toll adjustments is transparent in stating a broader need and purpose: “proposed system-wide toll adjustments to offset continuing COVID-19-induced toll revenue declines, ensure payment of financial

obligations and provide funding for planned capital projects throughout the agency's Pennsylvania-New Jersey service region."

- The press release and subsequent communications – notably the executive director's statement prefacing each toll hearing and posted online – further explained that the proposed adjustment would establish a two-tier framework of toll rates, under which Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally because it helps cover the increased processing costs associated with Cash or license-plate-billing collection methods.
- The proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024 collectively increase rates for both passenger vehicles and commercial vehicles. All vehicle-classification groups would be affected. To absolve one class of toll bridges (Class 1 passenger vehicles) users at the expense of others (commercial vehicles Class 2 and above) would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."
- The Commission's proposed Class 1 passenger vehicle toll rates (\$1.25 for E-ZPass and \$3 for Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE in 2021) would remain the lowest for highway bridge travel between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

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| Williams, Jeanne | Town of Deerpark, N.Y. | Feb. 3 7:50 a.m. | Opposes \$3 Cash rate |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: A 77 year old woman I am, whom crosses Milford Pa bridge is asking that you do not raise the crossing price to \$3 Less traffic because of Covid?? Perhaps a bit, but I find states etc are taking advantage of all of us, especially, people with lower incomes whom cannot afford any kind of a \$2 increase. Just upsetting and disgusting.

Staff Response:

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- This \$3 Cash rate is one part of a new two-tier pricing structure prescribed under the proposed toll adjustments. Under this proposed pricing framework, Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists.
- This two-tier pricing framework is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally. It is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- The first paragraph of the Commission's press release announcing the toll adjustments is transparent in stating a broader need and purpose than simply address traffic and revenue declines resulting from the pandemic. The release announced: "proposed system-wide toll adjustments to offset continuing COVID-19-induced toll revenue declines, ensure payment of financial obligations and provide funding for planned capital projects throughout the agency's Pennsylvania-New Jersey service region."

- The press release and subsequent communications – notably the executive director’s statement prefacing each toll hearing and posted online – further explained that the proposed adjustment would establish a two-tier framework of toll rates, under which Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists.
- This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally. It is already in use at the Commission’s Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.

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| Gambhirwala, Manoj | Tabernacle, PA. | Feb. 2 4:17 p.m. | Charge trucks more |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: It is not fair to load the passenger cars with a higher rate of increase than commercial vehicles, if they are contributing more to the wear and tear and maintenance.

Staff Response:

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- This \$3 Cash rate is one part of a new two-tier pricing structure prescribed under the proposed toll adjustments. Under this proposed pricing framework, Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists.
- This two-tier pricing framework is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally. It already is in use at the Commission’s Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- The preponderance of commercial vehicle drivers use E-ZPass (more than 90 percent of commercial transactions at Commission tolling points).
- Commercial traffic has been paying its proportionate share of tolls under toll adjustments implemented in 2002-03, 2007 (Class 1 passenger vehicles were unchanged that year), 2011, and 2016 (Scudder Falls only). The proposed per-axle rate changes for commercial vehicles maintain this spread of costs among different vehicle classes.
- Commercial vehicles classes also are subjected to a new two-tier pricing framework under the proposed toll adjustment.
- The proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024 collectively increase rates for both passenger vehicles and commercial vehicles. All vehicle-classification groups would be affected. To absolve one class of toll bridge users (Class 1 passenger vehicles) at the expense of others (Class 2 vehicles and above) would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls “shall be just and reasonable.”
- The Commission’s proposed Class 1 passenger vehicle toll rates (\$1.25 for E-ZPass and \$3 for Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE in 2021) would remain the lowest for highway bridge travel between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

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| Berger, Margot | Burlington, N.J. | Feb. 3 10:54 a.m. | Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: This is absolutely absurd... for those individuals impacted by COVID, and that will have to start commuting again, this will be detrimental to livelihoods. There has to be another way to offset the costs that will be needed in order to maintain the roads

Staff Response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the pandemic, lockdowns and a fragile economic recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism.
- Tolls are the Commission's ultimate funding source.
- The Commission does not receive any gas tax revenues from the states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey or the federal government.
- The Commission took proactive steps in an attempt to forestall or dampen the proposed toll adjustments :
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital-project starts were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent in the 2021 operating budget;
 - Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget;
 - Federal CARES Act stimulus funds were sought to offset toll losses, but the Commission did not receive any of these funds; and
 - The Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass base toll rate increase to \$1.50 is being phased in over three years instead of taking effect immediately.
- As a total toll schedule, the Commission would continue to have the lowest highway bridge toll rates between New Jersey and Pennsylvania if the proposed adjustments get implemented.

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| Chuchwa, Rhonda | Milford, PA. | Feb. 3 8:25 p.m. | Financial hardship Restore 10-cent tokens Charge less for "locals" Address potholes |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Milford PA is a lower income area and a hike in the toll would put many in an financial hardship. Local residents should be excluded from the hike. The old \$.10 token was a fair for the local people, cost effective to collect, and at that time their were no holes in the bride road surface as there are now.

Staff Response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism.
- To the Commission's knowledge, no toll agency in the United States currently uses tokens as a toll payment method. Such systems were prone to mechanical breakdowns and abuse. The Commission stopped accepting tokens nearly 20 years ago, when it followed the industry trend in converting to E-ZPass electronic collections.
- The Commission is prohibited under its Trust Indenture from excluding local residents from tolls. The indenture requires tolls to be uniform in application to all traffic "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic." To absolve "locals" of tolls would require charging others higher rates to make up the difference. This would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."
- The Commission's proposed Class 1 passenger vehicle toll rates (\$1.25 for E-ZPass and \$3 for Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE in 2021) would remain the lowest toll for highway bridge travel between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- As for potholes in the vicinity of the Milford-Montague Toll Bridge, the proposed toll adjustment would fund future needed capital projects. One of these is the Milford-Montague Toll Bridge Roadway Repaving Project. If the proposed toll adjustment for 2021 were to be approved, planning for this project could move forward this year with subsequent construction taking place in 2022. In the meantime, maintenance crews will continue to patch potholes when weather conditions allow for such work.

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| Coughlin, Brittany | Woodbury Heights, N.J. | Feb. 4 3:37 a.m. | Charge trucks more |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: It is ridiculous that this proposal hurts civilians rather than holding companies accountable for the wear they cause. It is expensive enough traveling to philadelphia, raising the already \$5 tolls will all but ensure that I cannot afford to leave my home. Reallocate city budgets to offset the lost toll revenue & stop passing budget control issues to everyday people

Staff Response:

- Judging from the South Jersey location of this commenter and the reference to a \$5 toll, this individual is confusing the DRJTBC with the DRPA. Her engagement probably springs from a Gannett news services article that appeared in the Courier Post of Cherry Hill, N.J. on Feb. 3.

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| Millroy, David | Monroe County, PA. | Feb. 4 1:59 p.m. | Charge trucks more |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: As an avid cash user, i find this toll hike absurd! %200 hike

at one shot is outrageous as we all are in a pandemic and not bringing in as much income as we did a year ago. paying the same as ez pass would be a fair Compromise. I say NO to the proposed toll hike!

Staff Response:

- The reason behind the proposed \$3 Cash rate is to have toll rates based on the cost of the respective toll-collection method. Maintaining a toll structure where the same rates apply to E-ZPass and Cash customers results in E-ZPass users shouldering an unfair share of the cost of Cash toll collections. Cash transactions are more expensive to process compared to E-ZPass.
- The need for change is further demonstrated by the ratio of E-ZPass transactions compared to Cash transactions. The Commission's system-wide toll collections have reached the point where 75 percent of transactions are handled through E-ZPass and only 25 percent are by Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE.
- This \$3 Cash rate is one part of a new two-tier pricing structure prescribed under the proposed toll adjustments. Under this proposed pricing framework, Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists.
- This two-tier pricing framework is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally. It is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.

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| Arth, Gerald | Lower Makefield Twp., PA. | Feb. 4 2:25 p.m. | Opposes higher tolls amid pandemic & elimination of E-ZPass commuter discount |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I am writing to oppose the outrageous bridge toll increases being proposed by the DRJBC for the Scudders Falls and other bridges under the guise of the COVID-19 pandemic. See <http://www.drjbc.org/newtolls>. As Lower Makefield Township, Pa. residents and frequent users of the Scudders Falls bridge, my wife and I currently pay a "discounted" commuter rate of \$.75, up from the \$-0- we paid for the first 25 years we have lived in the area. years ago. With 40-50 trips per month, we already pay a significant amount to cross a bridge that is still not finished. The proposed tolls going into effect in 2021 would result in an immediate 25% increase in the discounted rate to \$1; in 2024, the proposed rate would be \$1.50 and would eliminate the commuter discount entirely, an increase of 100% over what we currently pay! This is nothing more than bureaucratic robbery that will cost us and all regular users of the bridges dearly, especially those who live in Pennsylvania but travel to New Jersey regularly for work, shopping and other purposes. The idea that the TEMPORARY economic issues caused by the Covid-19 pandemic justifies huge, PERMANENT rate

hikes is absurd and has no factual support. Accordingly, I object to the toll increases and ask that they be rejected.

Staff Response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- The first paragraph of the Commission's press release announcing the toll adjustments is transparent in stating a broader need and purpose than simply the pandemic and related economic recession. The release announced: "proposed system-wide toll adjustments to offset continuing COVID-19-induced toll revenue declines, ensure payment of financial obligations and provide funding for planned capital projects throughout the agency's Pennsylvania-New Jersey service region."
- The press release and subsequent communications – notably the executive director's statement prefacing each toll hearing and posted online – further explain that the proposed adjustment would establish a two-tier system of toll rates, under which Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally because it helps cover the increased processing costs associated with Cash or license-plate-billing collection methods. This pricing framework has been used at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge since it opened in July 2019.
- These are noteworthy distinctions. The pandemic and economic recession may have been the impetus for having to look at prospective toll adjustments in the first place, but the resulting toll adjustments address other issues that have arisen since the Commission last implemented a system-wide toll adjustment 10 years ago. The proposed adjustments would collectively enable the Commission to fulfill its regional transportation mission for the foreseeable future.
- This type of pricing structure has been in effect at the first-completed span of the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge since it opened in July 2019. Two-tier pricing also is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationwide.
- The Commission began collecting tolls as soon as practicable at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge. Had the charging of tolls been postponed until the entire project was completed, the Commission would have faced significantly higher borrowing costs. This, in turn, would have driven toll rates higher than proposed. It also would have indefensibly forced future motorists to cover the costs of motorists who made free use of an improved facility between the time of its opening to traffic and the project's completion.
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application. Meanwhile, the Commission's discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated

and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to these criticisms and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years. Going forward, the Commission's toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use.

- If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass Class 1 car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for passenger vehicles. It would still be the lowest highway bridge toll for travel from New Jersey to Pennsylvania.
- Tolling is necessary at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge to retire the substantial debt service of the 4.4-mile-long Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project and to operate and maintain the new facility after construction, as was thoroughly vetted during the project's environmental-assessment phase ending in 2012 and the crossing's subsequent toll-setting phase in 2016.
- The current \$1.25 base E-ZPass toll at the bridge will be unchanged under the proposed 2021 toll adjustment and would continue until on or after January 6, 2024. The recalibrated 20-percent E-ZPass frequent commuter discount – while reduced – would nonetheless further trim the toll to \$1 per trip when applicable.

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| Stokes, Tara | Phillipsburg, N.J. | Feb. 5 12:23 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I am writing you today in reference to the proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024. As someone that commutes the Route 22 (EASTON,PA) and I-78 (EASTON,PA) toll bridges daily for work, I don't believe that the middle of a pandemic when people are out of work or already have taken a pay decrease while still being employed is the right time to put an additional financial burden on commuters. Most of us are on those struggling just to survive, yet alone make it to work each day. I hope that you can reconsider the proposed toll adjustments for 2021 until a later date. Thank you for your time.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism.
- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the Commission would continue to provide the lowest Class 1 passenger vehicle highway bridge toll rates – E-ZPass or Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE – between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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| Radosti, Ananda | Newtown Twp., N.J. | Feb. 6 6:39 a.m. | Divert toll bridge traffic to non-toll bridges |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Removing the commuter discount between Pa and Nj is really not considering the closeness of the two states. There was already a lot of people using the free methods to cross between states. Increasing the tolls is not encouraging any new traffic to the toll bridges. Even with the new bridge at scutters falls there remains a dangerous on ramp while traveling into Nj.

Staff response:

- As with prior toll adjustments, the Commission fully anticipates that a diversionary spike will occur if the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and implemented. The severity of diversions in 2021, however, will be mitigated by the fact that E-ZPass is now used in 75 percent of the Commission’s toll transactions system-wide. The E-ZPass rate is proposed to rise by only 25 cents in 2021.
- Any motorist diverting from a toll bridge to a toll-supported bridge will encounter a diminished customer experience, including higher fuel consumption, traffic congestion and delays in reaching their destinations.
- The toll-supported bridges do not pay for themselves. The proposed toll adjustments will help fund these “free” alternative river crossings and help keep them in operation.
- Diversion is unlikely to be a factor at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge because the E-ZPass base rate will remain unchanged at \$1.25 and the TOLL-BY-PLATE rate – which figures in only about 10 percent of transactions – will rise by 40 cents. It’s unlikely that there will be a spike in diversions from toll bridges to non-toll bridges in 2024 because the only rate change will be a 25-cent increase in the Class 1 passenger vehicle toll rate – from \$1.25 to \$1.50.
- The Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project, which is on track to be substantially completed by the end of this year, is already providing greatly enhanced throughput of traffic in this formerly heavily congested commuter corridor. Moreover, the project has – or will – eliminate traffic merging situations at interchange ramps on both sides of the bridge through new acceleration and deceleration lanes when the entire dual-span bridge is fully completed later this year.

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| Burgess, William | Lower Macungie, PA. | Feb. 6 9:41 a.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Pennsylvania gas tax Opposes \$3 cash rate Mismanagement claim |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I think it's a terrible idea to even think of raising any tolls at this time. You got rid of toll booth workers to save money. We have one of the highest gas tax rates in the U S. Seems you're trying to penalize people because traffic volume is down. Why are you charging more if we don't use ez pass? Looks like to me you've mismanaged money. And you want to strap the bill for it on the backs of the driving public.

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- Tolls are the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's ultimate funding source. The agency does not receive a share of state or federal gas tax revenues.
- The proposed \$3 toll rate for Cash transactions is not intended as a punitive measure. Rather, it is part of a two-tier rating structure that would compute tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. If the proposed toll adjustment schedules were to be approved, E-ZPass motorists would no longer be in a situation where they are subsidizing the higher collection costs of Cash transactions. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- The agency's finances are audited every year and the resulting financial statements are posted on the Commission website for public review at any time.
- The Commission has not "gotten rid" of toll booth workers. However, the agency halted new hiring since February 2020 because of diminished funds resulting from the pandemic and the economic recession it induced.
- This commenter may be confusing the DRJTBC with the PA Turnpike, which has converted to all-electronic toll collections that no longer require toll booth attendants.

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| Altenbach, Jim | Allentown, PA. | Feb. 6 10:00 a.m. | Where's the money? Force E-ZPass use Will us non-toll routes |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I just read the Morning Call news article concerning these toll increases and part of the story mentioned the declining revenue in 2020. Duh? People did much less driving in 2020 (hello, that also resulted in less wear and tear on the bridges). The declining 2020 revenue, sure, but what about the tons of revenue throughout the life of these already existing tolls. Where the hell is all that money going to? I didn't, once, see, any revenue numbers that these tolls take in throughout the years and what is really being done with it. I, simply, do not trust you people. You want to increase tolls, force people to purchase E-Z PASS? Several years ago I started using alternate routes to avoid these tolls. I'm not throwing money at a wasteful, inefficient and untrustworthy entity that lacks transparency.

Staff response:

- The Commission's service mission doesn't change in a tough economy. It still must operate 24/7 for commuters, commerce, pedestrians and other travelers. The bridges and roadways must remain open and be maintained. Responsibilities like public safety and security, or plowing and de-icing in winter storms, or collecting tolls to fund operations and pay financial obligations cannot be ignored or shirked.
- As for transparency, the current operating budget, 18 years of annual audits, 15 years of meeting minutes, and 14 years of annual inspection reports are posted and viewable on the Commission website. The 2019 inspection report identifies nearly \$1.6 billion in capital expenditures that has either been completed since 2001, is in the process of execution, or is proposed to be expended in coming years.
- Nobody is forced to use E-ZPass. The proposed increase for Cash transactions is part of a two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. If the proposed toll adjustment schedules were to be approved, E-ZPass motorists would no longer be in a situation where they are subsidizing the higher collection costs of Cash transactions. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- It should be noted that this commenter's likely alternate route would involve the Commission's Northampton Street Toll-Supported Bridge between Easton and Phillipsburg. The costs of this non-revenue-generating, low-capacity bridge are covered by the tolls collected at the Commission's eight toll bridges. This funding arrangement is statutorily required by New Jersey and Pennsylvania and by Congress under the Compact Clause of the U.S. Constitution.
- Any motorist diverting from a toll bridge to one of the Commission's toll-supported bridges will encounter a diminished customer experience, including higher fuel consumption, traffic congestion and delays in reaching their destinations.
- The proposed toll adjustments help fund these "free" alternative river crossings and help keep them in operation.
- The Northampton Street Toll-Supported Bridge also is slated for a rehabilitation project this year. As with all Commission capital program initiatives, the funding ultimately is made possible by the proceeds of the agency's eight toll bridges.

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| Kecherson, John | Lopatcong, N.J. | Feb. 6 10:46 a.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Make cuts Reduce monitors at toll-supported bridges |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I oppose the proposed rate hikes on the bridges. The commission sites a reduction in revenue due to covid as the reason for raiding the tolls. I know several people who have lost their jobs or have had a reduction in pay due to

covid. Rising the tolls will only hurt these folks more. The people who have suffered financially due to covid have had to adjust their spending in order to survive. Why doesn't the bridge commission do the same? What is the purpose of the expensive SUV on the Rt. 22 bridge? What is the purpose of not one, but two people staged at each of the free bridges? Cant they be replaced by cameras? It's pretty easy to spend freely when all you need to do is raise tolls to spend other people's money. It is time for the bridge commission to become fiscally responsible.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile economic recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- The Commission has taken proactive steps to forestall proposed toll adjustments: job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting; new capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day; discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent and salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.
- In addition to its 8 toll bridges, the Commission is obligated to operate, maintain, and safeguard 12 non-revenue-generating, low-capacity "free" bridges. These 12 toll-supported bridges are funded solely by a share of revenue collected at the 8 toll bridges. This framework is statutorily required by NJ and PA and by Congress under the Compact Clause of the U.S. Constitution. Many of these toll-supported bridges are weight-restricted. The bridge monitors protect these spans from overweight and oversized vehicles. Cameras can't do the work of stopping, redirecting or detaining non-conforming vehicles.
- The SUV that is often parked in close proximity to Easton-Phillipsburg (Route 22) Toll Bridge is a patrol vehicle that can be used by the scheduled Toll Sergeant, Toll Corporal, or officer in charge (OIC) at that location for accidents, traffic control, and any other incidents. That vehicle's proximity to that tolling point can be a vital time-saving advantage in the event a life-threatening emergency arises at or near the bridge.

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| Moreland, Laura | Yardley, PA. | Feb. 6 12:43 p.m. | Supports higher car E-Z toll Proposed truck rates are too high |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I believe the rates charged for travel trailers and 18 wheelers is much too high. The Delaware River Bridge (i295) is one of the few ways across the river for these vehicles and the rate should not be so high as to make it prohibitive. I

don't have a problem in increasing the auto charges by \$.25 ok since that is most of the vehicles that cross, with a close second being 18 wheel trucks.

Staff response:

- Over three years covered under the proposed 2021 and 2024 tolls adjustments, all vehicle-class categories at all eight Commission tolling points would be affected.
- This would be the Commission's first system-wide toll adjustment in 10 years.
- Commercial traffic has been paying its proportionate share of tolls under toll adjustments implemented in 2002-03, 2007 (Class 1 passenger vehicles were unchanged that year), 2011, and 2016 (Scudder Falls only). The proposed per-axle rate changes for commercial vehicles maintain this spread of costs among different vehicle classes.
- To absolve one class of toll bridges (Class 1 passenger vehicles) users at the expense of others (Class 2 vehicles and above) would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."
- The proposed toll adjustments to trucks and other commercial vehicles are modest. The Commission would still maintain its competitive edge for movements of overland freight across the Delaware River.

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| Wineberg, David | Milford, PA. | Feb. 6 1:23 p.m. | Don't spend on landscaping Spend on roads |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I can only speak to the Milford-Montague Bridge across the Delaware River. It is a horror of potholes, deep and sharp. It would be great if we could zigzag around them, but the lanes are so narrow you're not even allowed to ride a bicycle across the bridge. So we must run through the potholes, at night, blindly. And yet, there is a vast expanse of artificial lawn, constantly manicured for no reason at all. A total and complete waste of money. A perfectly natural forest was cleared away, and now there are acres of useless, unnatural lawn which no one is allowed to use. Oh, and a flower arrangement spelling out DRJTBC to puzzle drivers, who have absolutely no use for that information, or even smell the flowers. What with only one toll booth manned any more, I would guess the landscaping crew vastly outnumbers the toll bridge crew. It is disgraceful that monies are not being spent on the roads, but they are being wasted on landscaping, of all things. Before you raise the toll 25%, it behooves the commission to rationalize its budget to stop wasting toll receipts on useless gardening and apply some of them to repairing the roads you collect the money for. Without all the landscaping, pesticides and fertilizer, I feel confident no toll increase would be necessary. It's a bridge, not an endless golf green

Staff response:

- Ending landscaping would not generate the appreciable sums needed to address the losses of revenue encountered since the start of the pandemic and the economic recession it induced.
- The Commission is cognizant of the aging roadway surfaces in the vicinity of the Milford-Montague Toll Bridge. The support documentation posted for the proposed toll adjustment lists a variety of capital projects that could be funded by the resulting increased toll revenues. One of these is the Milford-Montague Toll Bridge Roadway Repaving Project. If the proposed toll adjustment for 2021 were to be approved, planning for this project could move forward this year with subsequent construction taking place in 2022. In the meantime, maintenance crews will continue to patch potholes when weather conditions allow for such work.

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| Hinkel, Michael | Phillipsburg, N.J. | Feb. 6 3:43 p.m. | Open your books |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Ever since i was a boy and the told was dime I remember my mother telling me it was just another tax on an already overtaxed system. She was right. Lets see the total breakdown of the costs to run and maintain these bridges and the REAL number of vehicles using them. Open your books.

Staff response:

- The following items are posted and viewable on the Commission website www.drjtbc.org:
 - 18 years of annual audits.
 - 15 years of meeting minutes, each respective edition of which contains monthly traffic and revenue data.
 - 14 years of annual inspection reports that identify nearly \$1.6 billion in capital projects and expenditures that have been completed since 2001, are in the process of execution, or are proposed to be expended in coming years.
 - The current operating budget.

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| Smith, Philip | Lower Makefield Twp. PA. | Feb. 6 4:27 p.m. | Toll increase exceeds current inflation rate Charge less for local drivers |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I object to the proposed increase in tolls, as the percent increase is much higher than the rate of inflation (currently close to zero - check the Fed). This is patently ridiculous. Also, as a resident of a township that actually borders the Scutter's falls bridge (I live 200 yards away from the bridge), there should be a hardship clause that gives a reduced rate for those that live in close proximity to the bridge and have to use the Bridge for daily life activities such as shopping, kid activities, etc. Commuters and longer range travelers should foot the bill for the vast majority of

the tolls as they are the reason the bridge needing expanding and requires ongoing maintenance. Local travel accounts for a minuscule amount of road traffic.

Staff response:

- The Commission has not had a system-wide toll adjustment in 10 years.
- The Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass toll at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge will remain at \$1.25 under the proposed toll schedule for 2021. This toll would increase 25 cents under the proposed toll schedule for 2024.
- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle's profile (height) and number of rolling axles. A driver's residency does not enter into the equation.
- The Commission is prohibited under its Trust Indenture from excluding local residents from tolls. The indenture requires tolls be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
- The Scudder Falls river crossing is and always has been a commuter crossing. There is very little long-distance traffic. Commercial vehicle traffic accounted for only 8 percent of traffic in 2020. By contrast, Class 1 passenger vehicles accounted for 92 percent of traffic.
- The Scudder Falls Toll Bridge is primarily a commuter crossing and area residents are therefore the primary beneficiaries of the bridge project and its many other regional transportation improvements; to absolve them of tolls while charging others a higher toll would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."

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| Shaffer, Matthew | Washington Crossing, PA. | Feb. 6 5:19 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: It is irresponsible and reprehensible that a toll hike is being considered. The old bridge could have been fixed and a lane added for much less than the cost of the new bridge. In addition the Commission could have solicited business from additional companies, some of which that use less expensive labor to lower the cost of the bridge. Renegotiate with the construction firm or find another way to raise revenue, but soaking citizens this soon is disgusting.

Staff response:

- NOTE: Although it is unclear, this commenter apparently is making references to the Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project.
- The pandemic and the economic recession it induced is the reason why the Commission finds it necessary to seek a system-wide toll adjustment at this time.
- The proposed toll adjustments are less impactful at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge compared to the other seven toll bridges in the Commission system. This is due to the fact that the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge toll schedule was established in 2016 and the other seven toll bridges have not been subjected to a toll adjustment in 10 years.

- The former Scudder Falls Bridge was a heavily congested, accident-prone commuter crossing. Built in 1959, the bridge was classified as “functionally obsolete” due to capacity limitations, poor roadway geometry and safety concerns. The idea of adding a lane to the bridge – even if that were to somehow be possible -- would not have addressed the old bridge’s significant deficiencies nor address the many other issues in the 4.4-mile project area of the current project.
- The former bridge was similar in design to the former Mianus River Bridge along I-95 in Connecticut. That bridge collapsed in 1983, killing three people and injuring three others. Like the Mianus Bridge, the former Scudder Falls Bridge had a failure-prone system of pin-and-hanger connections and lacked redundancy in its system of primary support girders. This design prohibited widening. (Note: In 1991, under a Commission contract, an auxiliary support system was installed at each pin-and-hanger location on the Scudder Falls Bridge and drainage troughs were installed at each expansion tooth along the bridge’s deck. These steps were initiated to prevent a Mianus-like collapse.)
- The notion of widening the former Scudder Falls Bridge was dismissed during the nearly-10-year environmental documentation process for the current Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project, culminating in the issuance of a pivotal Finding of No Significant Impact from the federal government in 2012.
- The project is in its last full year of construction, which began in 2017, the result of a public works contract low bid. It is not negotiable, especially after 80 percent completion.

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| Clark, David | Catasauqua, PA. | Feb. 6 5:21 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Sir, to begin the loss of revenue is due to the covid-19 virus, people are making less trips and many businesses cut back their workforce. When the country recovers I doubt you will roll back the rate hikes. What I suggest is revamping the whole bridge commission. The pay rates for the top peopole working there is too excessive and the number of jobs in the higher administration needs some weening out. Time to clean house and then determine the cost of running the bridges. David Clark

Staff response:

- The Commission’s toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission has taken proactive steps to forestall proposed toll adjustments: job hiring was halted after the Commission’s February 2020 meeting; new capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day; discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent and salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

- The Commission must operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It has eight toll bridges and 12 non-revenue-generating low-capacity bridges that are funded by a share of the toll proceeds collected at the toll bridges. The agency also has 73 lane miles of road surface, 34 short-distance approach bridges (overpasses or viaducts) and various other maintenance and operational facilities. Additionally, the Commission has responsibilities like public safety and security, plowing and de-icing in winter storms, and collecting tolls to fund operations and pay financial obligations. The agency consists of much more than eight toll bridges.

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| Leach, Jim | Milford, PA. | Feb. 7 7:49 a.m. | Milford-Montague Toll Bridge comment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Speaking solely about the Milford montague bridge. No doubt the same program of maintenance exists elsewhere. Stop with the excessive amount of landscaping grass cutting and that absurd “initialism” on the New Jersey side.

Staff response:

- This individual’s comment pertains to an operations matter at the Milford-Montague Toll Bridge and not the proposed toll adjustments.

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| Stalter, Ann | Berks County, PA. | Feb. 8 1:50 p.m. | Opposes truck adjustments |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Why is it always the trucking industry footing the majority of these increases? I am ashamed to see that PA and NJ Government feel the need to create additional burdens on their residents and trucking commerce. In case they were unaware, NO ONE has cash floating around the cover these added costs since they shut down the economy and made it illegal for people to work. Last year this time, the truck industry was a hero for keeping food on the shelves. This year, they should be quiet and pay more tolls. Ultimately, the federal government is issuing stimulus payments, and the state level feels the need to take it away. Until they can prove where all the extra fuel taxes are going that the transportation industry already pays to care for the roadways, I whole-heartedly disagree with these added bridge tolls.

Staff response:

- The trucking industry is not footing the majority of increases under the proposed toll adjustments. Quite the contrary.
- The Commission did not receive any funding from the 2020 federal CARES Act stimulus program.
- To absolve trucks from any toll adjustments would require charging passenger vehicles even higher rates to make up the difference. This would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls “shall be just and reasonable.”

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| Summers, Steven | Elizabethville, PA. | Feb. 8 3:34 p.m. | Opposes truck adjustments |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Our company has been operating since 1961. Most of our trips are in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. We are being overburdened with toll increases from the turnpikes in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Ours like most trucking companies have very thin profit margins and really do not have a way to get increases from our customers to cover toll increases they just don't want to hear it. We use BestPass and get discounts when applicable. With that said I am not in favor of the toll increase on bridges. Thank You for your time. Steven C. Summers

Staff response:

- The Bridge Commission is not directly affiliated with either the New Jersey Turnpike or the Pennsylvania Turnpike.
- The trucking industry is not footing the majority of increases under the proposed toll adjustments. Quite the contrary.
- To absolve trucks from any toll adjustments would require charging passenger vehicles higher rates to make up the difference. This would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."

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| McCole, Frances | Blairstown, N.J. | Feb. 8 11:03 | Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Are you kidding! People are being hit from every direction, no jobs, food and gas going up, now tolls.

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

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| Fierro, Mark | Springfield, Virginia | Feb. 9 6:20 a.m. | Opposes cash toll adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: No, the reason for raising these tolls, often by more than

100% is nonsensical. Even if using the rate of inflation since 2011 the increase still would be nowhere near that high. This would cause more financial stress to people who rely on these crossing, or use the from time to time like myself. Reject these increases as it has already been shown that traffic is returning to normal mostly. Unfortunately I believe this board will probably ignore this and do it anyway to grab more of people's money, ignoring the comments against this.

Staff response:

- This apparently applies to the Class 1 passenger vehicle Cash toll, which is proposed to rise from the current \$1 rate to a \$3 rate.
- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change reflects that cost, thereby relieving E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- The proposed toll adjustments would make changes to every vehicle class. The proposed adjustments are based on a new two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. While the percentage of the proposed increases vary among each vehicle class and payment method, the costs of running, maintaining and improving the Commission's transportation system would be spread among all payers. This conforms to the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."

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| Mariano, Martin | Northampton, PA. | Feb. 9 10:27 a.m. | Opposes truck adjustments |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I am in the trucking business and its impossible to get our customers to increase rates based on the small changes in toll rates If you needed to charge tolls why didn't you have them at the correct rate the first time. Why would tolls increase when traffic is down and less weight is hauled to cause road repairs. These tolls are costing the actual cost of living to go up and to travel across states lines makes things even more difficult to afford and conduct business

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

- The proposed toll adjustments to trucks and other commercial vehicles are modest. The Commission would still maintain its competitive edge for movements of overland freight across the Delaware River.

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| Muskey, Joseph | S. Abington, PA. | Feb. 9: 2:39 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: THERE SHOULD BE NO TOLL INCREASE. WE PAY MORE THAN ENOUGH NOW.

Staff response:

- As a total toll schedule, the Commission would continue to have the lowest highway bridge toll rates between New Jersey and Pennsylvania if the proposed adjustments get implemented.

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| Gasparetti, Thomas | Easton, PA. | Feb. 9 3:34 p.m. | Opposes \$3 cash toll Bad time to raise tolls "No improvements" at Easton-Phillipsburg bridges in last 10 years Unsubstantiated claims about Scudder Falls project |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: The proposed commuter tolls are beyond ridiculous, for a 300% increase! If your claim is the pandemic has caused a drop in the tolls collection, please be reminded the pandemic is temporary. Additionally, I have seen little to no improvements to the Pburg/Easton bridges in the past decade - but what I have seen is 9 out of 10 cars exceeding speed limits by 2x or more - set up your electronic scanners and fine these drivers instead. I truly believe you are trying to recover your losses for the Scudder Mills bridge. Well, if you can't afford, it shouldn't have been built in the 1st place. Treat each bridge as its own cost center, and manage your costs accordingly. It's not our problem that your costs aren't contained. I'll propose for \$1.50, which is 3% compounded for 15 years from 2011 (the date of your last increase), so that'll be in line with CPI and you'll be good for 5 more years. If you wish to keep it a round \$2, then there should be no increases until 2035 using the same 3% compounded model. Thank you for your consideration

Staff response:

- This comment apparently applies to the Class 1 passenger vehicle toll, which is proposed to increase from \$1 to \$3.

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change reflects that cost, thereby relieving E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- The Commission’s toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- In the past 10 years, there have been multiple projects at and in the vicinity of the I-78 Toll Bridge and the Easton-Phillipsburg (Route 22) Toll Bridge. These projects can be found among those listed on pages 10 to 13 of the Annual Inspection Reports on the Commission website: http://www.dritbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019_Bridge_Inspection_Report.pdf. The projects include:
 - Easton-Phillipsburg Toll Bridge Rehabilitation (\$30 million);
 - I-78 Toll Bridge PA Approach Paving Improvements (\$16.5 million);
 - I-78 Approach Bridges and Slabs Rehabilitation (\$13.1 million);
 - I-78 Welcome Center and Maintenance Garage Improvements (\$11.6 million);
 - I-78 Open Road Tolling (Express E-ZPass lanes conversion) (\$8.6 million);
 - I-78 Roadway Median Improvements – New Jersey (\$1.5 million);
 - Easton-Phillipsburg Toll Bridge Ramp C Slope Stabilization (Phillipsburg) (\$1.4 million);
 - I-78 Roadway Median Improvements – Pennsylvania (\$493,000).
- A website document -- http://www.dritbc.org/wp-content/uploads/projects_doc_2021-2026_PDF-1.pdf -- posted for this proposed toll adjustment includes a series of new projects that would be funded through resulting increased toll proceeds (if approved). They include:
 - Northampton Street Bridge (Easton-Phillipsburg) Toll-Supported Bridge Rehabilitation (\$18.5 million) slated to begin this year;
 - Cleaning & Painting of the I-78 Toll Bridge’s Twin Spans (\$9.8 million) for 2023-24; and
 - I-78 New Jersey Roadway Milling and Repaving (\$28.5 million) for 2024-25.
- The proposed toll adjustments are not due to “losses” at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge.
- The commenter’s suggestion to “treat each bridge as its own cost center” is contrary to the mission and federal Compact under which the Commission operates. For example, the Northampton Street Toll-Supported Bridge, which does not generate revenue wouldn’t have the funds available to operate, maintain, and rehabilitate the crossing. The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission was created by the State of New Jersey and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the convenience of the respective states to provide an essential interstate flow of traffic and commerce. The Commission’s mission is much broader than the eight toll bridges, and the 12 toll-supported bridges are evidence of that.

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| McCall, Patricia | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 9 5:10 p.m. | Charge less for local drivers |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I would like the commission to please take into consideration the people that live near these crossings. I would like to see a reduced rate for people that use the Columbia/ Portland bridge that live within 10 miles of the bridge. Due to the rural area in NJ many residents use this bridge to do their shopping in PA. It would be a huge burden on us to have to pay an increase to do our shopping.

Staff response:

- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle's profile (height) and number of rolling axles. A driver's residency does not enter into the equation.
- The Commission is prohibited under its Trust Indenture from excluding local residents from tolls. The indenture requires tolls be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
- The vast majority of the Commission toll bridges are primarily used by commuters and area residents. They are the primary beneficiaries of the multiple improvement projects that have been conducted at these river crossings since 2001 and that are slated to be conducted through funding arising from the proposed toll adjustment. To reduce tolls for local residents while charging others a higher toll would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."

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| Landon, Ronald | Phillipsburg, N.J. | Feb. 10 7:35 a.m. | Divert toll bridge traffic to non-toll bridges |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: As safety manager for Easton Coach of Warren County, I can see a nasty increase of the already horrible traffic at rush hour of people using the "free bridge" from S Main St in Phillipsburg NJ to Easton to avoid the \$1 toll. With a \$3 toll there will be a complete daily nightmare of NJ working PA residents.

Staff response:

- As with prior toll adjustments, the Commission fully anticipates that a diversionary spike will occur if the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and implemented. The severity of diversions in 2021, however, will be mitigated by the fact that E-ZPass is now used in 75 percent of the Commission's toll transactions system-wide. The E-ZPass rate is proposed to rise by only 25 cents in 2021.
- Any motorist diverting from a toll bridge to a toll-supported bridge will encounter higher fuel costs, traffic congestion and delays in reaching their destination.

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| Barber, Ronald | Glen Gardner, N.J. | Feb. 10 10:38 a.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Cut operating costs Opposes \$3 cash toll |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I believe this increase at this time will add further hardship our economy. I also believe more cuts in overhead should be looked at again. With the addition of fast pay lines personal should be adjusted. It also seems that you have a large fleet of equipment and I notice most that I see looks to be Fairley new. perhaps their are opportunities within your fleet of motorized vehicles to cut and reduce. With that said I feel every department should be asked to contribute a cost savings within their operating budgets. A \$3.00 increase on cars is a another hardship on family's trying to stay above water.

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission took proactive steps to forestall proposed toll adjustments: job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting; new capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day; discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent and salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.
- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.

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| Barends, Brian | Washington Boro, N.J. | Feb. 10 1:47 p.m. | Opposes adjustment Cut budget |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I am writing to inform you that I am 100% against ANY toll increases. How about budget CUTS? Stop doing work in areas not belonging to DRJTB Sell your FREE cars and cut that Cadillac Heath insurance and other perks.....cut your Labor and start at the TOP Increasing tolls is just another MIDDLE class TAX HIKE

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued

through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

- The Commission took proactive steps to forestall proposed toll adjustments: job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting; new capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day; discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent and salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

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| Scully, Tamara | Columbia, N.J. | Feb. 11 12:16 p.m. | Charge less for local drivers Various unfounded accusations |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: It is outrageous that residents of neighboring communities, who must travel the toll bridges in the course of LOCAL activities, are being charged higher rates to do so. We are regular users, just to get to stores, friends, activities, work, worship, etc. While discounted rates for multiple trip users are appreciated, many of us do not qualify for that, yet make numerous trips each month. ALSO: when the COMMISSION is making such ABSURD profits, how does it make sense to raise the rates? You are not broke! Not even close. Please justify your greed to everyone who travels out of NJ....It's not like there are many other options for getting across the river. BUT THERE SHOULD BE.

Staff response:

- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle's profile (height) and number of rolling axles. A driver's residency does not enter into the equation.
- The Commission is prohibited under its Trust Indenture from excluding local residents from tolls. The indenture requires tolls to be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
- The vast majority of the Commission's toll bridges are primarily used by commuters and area residents. They are the primary beneficiaries of the multiple improvement projects that have been conducted at these river crossings since 2001 and that are slated to be conducted through funding arising from the proposed toll adjustment. To reduce tolls for local residents while charging others a higher toll would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."
- The Commission is a bi-state government agency. It is not a business, as described by the commenter.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

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| Diegel, Robert | Emmaus, PA. | Feb. 11 7:32 p.m. PHONE | Opposes adjustment |
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TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE CALL: My name is Robert - R. O. B. E. R. T. - Diegel - D. I. E. G. E. L. I live in Emmaus Pennsylvania. I'm calling about the rate increase. I understand it may be necessary. But what my concern is is once the need is met for the increase, would there be the removal of that increase back to the original rates? Somehow I don't know that that happens at any time when there is a rate. So, take that into consideration and look to getting the job taken care of but then also eliminating the rate increase once that's done. Thank you very much.

Staff response:

- In a few rare instances, the Commission has authorized limited downward toll adjustments since its creation 86 years ago.
- The current proposed toll adjustment is needed to address the current financial realities arising from changing travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism.
- In the development of this toll adjustment, it was determined that the Commission's toll rating structure should be changed systemically to a two-tier rating structure in which rates would be based on the method of payment a motorist chooses to use for paying his/her respective toll. Under this pricing method, lower rates are assigned to E-ZPass transactions, which are less costly to collect, and higher rates assigned to TOLL-BY-PLATE and Cash transactions, which are more expensive to collect.
- This two-tier structure, if approved, would be considered a permanent toll-pricing methodology going forward.
- As for a prospective rollback of a toll rate in one or more vehicle classes, the Commission cannot predict what the future holds any more than it could have predicted the current pandemic and economic recession when setting rates system-wide 10 years ago. Variables include – but are not limited to – the evolving pandemic, the rise and transmission of coronavirus variants, the efficacy and availability of vaccines, the strength and duration of economic recovery, and traffic growth to a point that could even allow for consideration of a downward toll adjustment.

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| Warren, Rep. Perry PA 31 st Legislative District | Yardley, PA. | Feb. 12 | Bad time to raise tolls Question on future toll adjustments |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT:

The Commission received a letter dated February 12, 2012 from PA Rep. Perry Warren to be made part of this public comment record. It is copied to the following report pages without staff comment:

PERRY WARREN, MEMBER
51ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
27B EAST WING
P.O. BOX 202031
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2031
(717) 787-5475

91 S. MAIN STREET
YARDLEY, PENNSYLVANIA 19067
(215) 493-5420
FAX: (215) 493-5424
REPWARREN@PAHOUSE.NET



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES
& ENERGY
HUMAN SERVICES
INSURANCE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
TRANSPORTATION

MEMBER

SOUTHEAST DELEGATION,
VICE CHAIRMAN

Feb. 12, 2021

Joseph Resta
Executive Director
Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
1199 Woodside Road
Yardley, PA 19067

Re: System-Wide Toll Adjustments Proposed for 2021 & 2024

Dear Mr. Resta:

I represent House District 31, the communities of Lower Makefield Township, Morrisville, Newtown Borough, Newtown Township and Yardley. Thank you for sending notice of the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's proposed two-stage system-wide toll adjustments and for scheduling both a comment period and three public hearings on the toll adjustment.

As you know, two toll bridges connect my district to New Jersey. The Scudder Falls Bridge began tolling only in 2019, and now a toll increase is proposed even before the second span of the bridge is completed. The proposal will increase the least expensive Trenton-Morrisville bridge toll option by 25% in 2021 and a total of 50% in 2024.

Most notably, the imposition of a toll increase at this time, with the community and the world in the throes of the pandemic, adds to the financial struggles being faced by so many of our residents and it seems paradoxical that the proposed toll increase is attributed in part to the lessened demand.

Further, I note that, particularly with a cashless system, tolls do not have to be increments of 25 cents. EZPass and toll-by-plate can accommodate different (lesser) toll amounts without having to stock dimes, nickels and pennies. Perhaps if a toll adjustment is warranted now or in the future, it could be in an increment of less than a quarter.

Finally, I hope that these proposed toll adjustments do not portend of a future of frequent substantial toll increases on the DRJTB bridges similar to the annual Pennsylvania Turnpike toll increases.

I ask that the Commission consider these comments, in addition to those comments you surely will receive from our residents, in determining whether, when and at what amount these proposed toll adjustments are implemented. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Perry Warren', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Perry Warren

CC: Commissioners

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| Gillespie, Andrew | Northampton County, PA. | Feb. 12 11:41 a.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Middle class and working class commuters cannot afford a rate increase like this. Please reconsider.

Staff response:

- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle's profile (height) and number of rolling axles. A driver's economic class does not enter into the equation. The Commission's Trust Indenture requires that tolls be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

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| Taylor, Kathy | Phillipsburg, N.J. | Feb. 13 2:29 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Opposed \$3 cash toll |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Ludacris to triple the toll bridges over the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. Why would you do this in these economic times? Pandemic is still with us, many people are struggling to get by,, jobs are decreasing daily, gas prices have gone up 18% in the last 3 weeks. 2011 you raised the toll .25\$ and now a \$2.00 increase.? Not like the bridge commotion doesn't make enough money to cover their costs, you poured how much into the streets of Phillipsburg, NJ to beautify it for what, I do not see any benefits as a result of that project. Point is money wasted did not bring commerce and will not until politicians clean up the area which they are not. Toll increase of this magnitude is unwarranted and insult to injury at this time.

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the

Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.

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| Gleavy, John | Newtown, PA. | Feb. 14, 10:25 a.m. | Keep commuter discount Toll bridge traffic will divert |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Do not remove the commuter discount. It is not remotely acceptable for this to even be a proposal. The only reason the Scudder Falls Bridge proposal passed was because of reassurances that the commute will be significantly more affordable compared to neighboring toll commissions. It is completely unacceptable for this to be removed and will result in even more increased traffic on neighboring toll-free bridges (such as Washington Crossing Bridge).

Staff response:

- The Scudder Falls Toll Bridge toll schedule that the Commission approved in 2016 did not pass “because of reassurances that the commute will be significantly more affordable compared to neighboring toll commissions.”
- If the proposed toll adjustment schedules for 2021 and 2024 were to be approved, the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge base E-ZPass rate would remain at \$1.25 until on or after January 6, 2024, when it is proposed to be increased to \$1.50.
- This motorist, however, would be immediately affected by a proposed 50-percent reduction in the Commission’s frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount – from 50 cents savings to 25 cents savings (retroactively applied per trip when eligibility requirements are met). This discount is further proposed to be completely eliminated in 2024, when – as previously cited -- the base toll rate would simultaneously rise by 25 cents to \$1.50.
- It must be noted that staff originally conceived this \$1.50 toll rate to be implemented in 2021, but decided to phase in the increase over three years to 2024 after further deliberations. Even if the \$1.50 toll were to have been implemented this year with an immediate elimination of the commuter discount program, the Commission’s passenger vehicle E-ZPass rate would still be the lowest highway bridge toll for travel from New Jersey to Pennsylvania.
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application. Meanwhile, the

Commission's discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to these criticisms and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for phasing out this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.

- Going forward, the Commission's toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for passenger vehicles.
- As with prior toll adjustments, the Commission fully anticipates that diversionary spikes will occur at some toll crossings if the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and implemented. The severity of diversions at Scudder Falls in 2021, however, will be mitigated by the fact that E-ZPass is used in 90 percent of Class 1 passenger vehicle toll transactions at that location, a frequency-based 20 percent discount is proposed to remain in effect until 2024, and the closest non-toll alternative is 2.5 miles upstream and is the narrowest vehicular bridge in the Commission's system.
- Motorists diverting from the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge to a toll-supported bridge will encounter higher fuel costs, traffic congestion and delays in reaching their intended destinations.

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| Poland, Shaun | Hopatcong, N.J. | Feb. 14 4:29 p.m. | Opposes toll rate for gooseneck, 5 th -wheel |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Why is it that it costs me as much as a semi truck to bring my private camper which is a fifth wheel across the bridge. But a tag along trailer is basically the cost of two cars. You need to make it so that private coaches are all the same. Register the listened plate as private is an option. There are plenty of tag alongs that weigh more than my fifth wheel. There needs to be some sort of change for the private coach. Make them all the same.

Staff response:

- The Commission's in-lane toll collection system classifies vehicles by profile (height) and number of axles. The Commission's policy of classifying vehicles by profile and axles dates back to December 2002 and is consistent with the practices of numerous other toll agencies.
- Whether a vehicle configuration is privately owned or commercially owned has no bearing on classification for toll-assessment purposes.
- The commenter does not state what the lead vehicle is in this configuration, but many pickup truck owners outfit their vehicles with fifth-wheel/gooseneck apparatus to haul campers, recreational trailers, multi-car carriers and other long trailers across Commission toll bridges. The profile of such vehicle configurations – a Class 1 passenger vehicle (two axles) outfitted with a fifth wheel/gooseneck and hauling a two-axle camper/trailer eight-feet or above in height – are the equivalent of Class 4 four-axle commercial vehicle.

- The current rate for this configuration is \$16 E-ZPass/Cash or an off-peak discounted rate of \$14.40 if the transaction is recorded between 9:01 p.m. and 5:59 a.m. The proposed toll rates for this transaction in 2021 would be \$18 for E-ZPass and \$20 for Cash.
- The manner in which recreational vehicle combinations and fifth-wheel/gooseneck combinations are assessed was re-affirmed during the 2016 toll-setting process that established a toll schedule for the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge.
- This assessment process and classifications of fifth-wheel/gooseneck trailers that are eight-feet or above in height is not being changed under the proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024.

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| Kelchner, George | Harmony, N.J. | Feb. 15 7:47 a.m. | Opposes toll rate for gooseneck, 5 th -wheel |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: We have a pickup with a fifth wheel RV. We don't make money using your bridge so why are we paying a commercial rate?

Staff response:

- The Commission's in-lane toll collection system classifies vehicles by profile (height) and number of axles. The Commission's policy of classifying vehicles by profile and axles dates back to December 2002 and is consistent with the practices of numerous other toll agencies.
- Whether a vehicle configuration is privately owned or commercially owned has no bearing on classification for toll-assessment purposes.
- The profile of a Class 1 passenger vehicle (two axles) outfitted with a fifth wheel/gooseneck and hauling a two-axle camper/trailer eight-feet or above in height – is the equivalent of Class 4 four-axle commercial vehicle.
- The current rate for this configuration is \$16 E-ZPass/Cash or an off-peak discounted rate of \$14.40 if the transaction is recorded between 9:01 p.m. and 5:59 a.m. The proposed toll rates for this transaction in 2021 would be \$18 for E-ZPass and \$20 for Cash.
- The manner in which recreational vehicle combinations and fifth-wheel/gooseneck combinations are assessed was reaffirmed during the 2016 toll-setting process that established a toll schedule for the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge.
- This assessment process and classifications of fifth-wheel/gooseneck trailers that are eight-feet or above in height is not being changed under the proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024.

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| Hayford, Bill | Nazareth, PA. | Feb. 15 4:31 p.m. | Opposes toll rate for gooseneck, 5 th -wheel Cut operating budget |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: As a business owner traveling 6 to 7 days a week over the phillipsburg bridges. This toll hike is ridiculous. I pull a 2 axle trailer behind a dually pickup and have to pay 16.50 now. Never could understand where those fees came from being It's two wheels (dually)not another axle!! How can I justify raising my customer prices that much to cover toll fees? Maybe some cutbacks need to be looked at and

done in the commission. I can see .10 cents per vehicle which would cover more than enough with all the traffic , but this rate increase will hurt many people.

Staff response:

- Although it's not stated, it appears this commenter uses a dual rear-wheel pickup truck outfitted with a gooseneck/fifth-wheel hitch to pull a two-axle trailer eight feet or above in height. That would make the combined configuration the equivalent of a 4-axle commercial vehicle. The current rate for this configuration is \$16 E-ZPass/Cash or an off-peak discounted rate of \$14.40 if the transaction is recorded between 9:01 p.m. and 5:59 a.m. The proposed toll rates for this transaction in 2021 would be \$18 for E-ZPass and \$20 for Cash.
- As for cutbacks, the Commission took proactive steps to forestall proposed toll adjustments: job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting; new capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day; discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent and salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

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| Grossman, Michael | White Township, N.J. | Feb. 16 10:37 a.m. | Opposes \$3 Cash toll |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: A 300% increase in tolls is completely unjustified. What are you thinking!

Staff response:

- The highest proposed toll adjustment is from \$1 to \$3 for Class 1 passenger vehicle drivers who pay with Cash.
- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.

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| Ashton, Lawrence | Warren, N.J. | Feb. 16 1:10 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I remember comments made by DRJTBC in the 60's regarding the Delaware Water Gap bridge that when it was paid off there would be no more tolls. Of course we know how Politicians lie to the public! I would like to see this being truth. That bridge has been paid off many times over!

Staff response:

- This comment does not pertain to the proposed toll adjustments for 2021 and 2024.
- The commenter apparently is making reference to a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement (MUA) that the Commission entered into with the federal government and the states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 1968. Under that agreement, the Delaware Water Gap (I-80)

Toll Bridge was to become a tax-supported bridge after retirement of the bridge's construction bonds at some point in the late 1980s or early 1990s. Under this MUA, the states would have had to increase the annual subsidies they previously provided to the Commission to operate the network of tax-supported bridges then owned by the two states.

- The fact of the matter is the states sought to change this envisioned arrangement as early as 1975. In 1985, they entered into an agreement to have the Commission continue its tolling of the Delaware Water Gap Toll Bridge.
- The latest supplemental agreement to the Commission's Compact – approved statutorily by the two states in 1985 and 1986 and by Congress under the Compact Clause of the U.S. Constitution in 1987 – contains the following text: "The authority of the Commission to fix, charge, and collect fees, rentals, toll or any other charges on the bridges within its jurisdiction, including the bridge at the Delaware Water Gap, is confirmed." This is the preeminent law that the Commission must follow.
- The bridge at the Delaware Water Gap has not been paid off many times. As at any other Commission toll bridge, subsequent toll collections have helped to fund multiple projects at that location. These include – but are not limited to – approach roadway improvements, the Open Road Tolling (Express E-ZPass), and at least two major rehabilitations. The last rehabilitation alone cost \$17.6 million and was completed in 2011. The bonds for this and other major capital projects are still being paid.
- In addition to its 8 toll bridges, the Commission is obligated to operate, maintain, and safeguard 12 non-revenue-generating, low-capacity "free" bridges. These 12 toll-supported bridges are funded solely by a share of revenue collected at the 8 toll bridges. This framework is statutorily required by NJ and PA and by Congress under the Compact Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

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| O'Rourke, Dan | Upper Mount Bethel, PA. | Feb. 16 1:45 p.m. | Opposes adjustment Lower rates for locals |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Your tolls and the proposed increase has unfairly effected people and business owners like myself who live so close to the bridge. Last year I paid over \$3,000 in tolls just to drive a small mason dump and trailer to my customers in NJ. That is a tax I cannot afford, now it's going to increase. My property tax is less per year. People living within close proximity need and should get reduced rates not increases.

Staff response:

- Tolls are the Commission's ultimate funding source.
- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle's profile (height) and number of rolling axles. A driver's residency does not enter into the equation.
- The Commission is prohibited under its Trust Indenture from excluding local residents from tolls. The indenture requires tolls be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
- The vast majority of Commission toll bridges are primarily used by commuters and area residents. They are the primary beneficiaries of the multi-faceted improvement projects that have been

conducted at these river crossings since 2001 and that are slated to be conducted through funding arising from the proposed toll adjustment. To reduce tolls for local residents while charging others an exorbitant toll would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls “shall be just and reasonable.”

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

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| Vail, Michelle | Easton, PA. | Feb. 16 2:16 p.m. | Opposes \$3 Cash toll Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I don't believe there should be such a big jump (from \$1 to \$3). It should only go to \$1.50 or \$2.00 max. There are a lot of people struggling at this time (COVID-19, unemployment, fixed income, etc.) and I don't think it would be fair for such a big increase. Maybe after COVID is gone and our economy recovers (in a year or two), then think about another small increase. Thank you.

Staff response:

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- The Commission’s toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

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| De Mai, Candida | Bethlehem, PA. | Feb. 16 3:25 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: 100% absurd your proposal Shame on you all for total disregard Of your Pennsylvania and nj residents. Cd

Staff response:

- This commenter expresses a general opinion of the proposed toll adjustments.

- New Jersey and Pennsylvania residents are the primary users of the Commission toll and toll-supported bridges. Accordingly, New Jersey and Pennsylvania are the primary beneficiaries of the Commission's facilities and services that are funded by the tolls.

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| Kuntz, Jenny | Chestnut Hill Twp., PA. | Feb. 16 10:24 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Various unfounded accusations |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I do not believe this is a good time to raise rates on people who are already struggling. You are not only raising rates, you are basically doubling it. You have already let go of all of the toll booth workers to help save money. I do not agree with this idea.

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed rate change for Class 1 passenger vehicles to a \$3 cash toll reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- This commenter may be confusing the DRJTBC with the PA Turnpike, as the DRJTBC did not "Let go of all of the toll booth workers to help save money."

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| Oliphant, John | Fairfax, Virginia | Feb. 17 10 a.m. HEARING | TOLL-BY-PLATE |
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TOLL HEARING COMMENT: My concern is the toll-by-plate and it's probably more of a question than a comment, but it is a comment and a concern is to when the plate is read and you get a bill in the mail. Does the Commission have the authority to track people and cars because you're a not a police or an enforcing authority, from what I understand. So it's maybe more of a question and the ability to track license plates on cars, whether they're in state or out of state of that authority. And how is that done

through the different states so that those are it's a concern of privacy issue that I would put in the category of HIPPA, of medical type issues.

Staff response:

- The Commission does not track people or cars using its facilities.
- The Commission contracts with the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center, operated by Conduent Inc., to provide toll-processing services at the Commission's eight toll bridges. The toll processor identifies vehicles through license plate reads to bill TOLL-BY-PLATE customers passing through the Scudder Falls (I-295) Toll Bridge's all-electronic tolling point without valid E-ZPass transponders.
- The toll-transaction processor also uses license plate reads to identify toll violators at the Commission's seven conventional E-ZPass/Cash tolling points.

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| Demaria, Tracey | Easton, PA. | Feb. 17 2:26 p.m. | Toll bridge traffic will divert |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I believe the increase in tolls proposed for the Phillipsburg-Easton route 22 bridge will cause considerable difficulties for both municipalities. The drastic raise increase will print the many commuters and travelers of this road to alter their routes to the 'free bridge'. This will markedly increase local congestion and negatively impact local businesses and residents. If an increase must occur, please take into account the more modest financial resources of the communities most impacted and consider only a 50 cent increase.

Staff response:

Toll bridge traffic will divert

- As with prior toll adjustments, the Commission fully anticipates that diversionary spikes will occur at some toll crossings if the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and implemented. However, the severity of diversions will be mitigated by the fact that E-ZPass is used in 75 percent of Class 1 passenger vehicle toll transactions system-wide. At Easton, the E-ZPass penetration rate for this vehicle class is only slightly lower at 72 percent. The proposed toll rate change for E-ZPass Class 1 vehicles is only 25 cents.
- Motorists diverting from the Easton-Phillipsburg Toll Bridge to the nearby Northampton Street Toll-Supported Bridge will encounter a diminished customer experience along with increased fuel usage, traffic congestion and delays in reaching their intended destinations. Passage of at-grade freight trains on the New Jersey side of the Northampton Street Bridge can further delay travel times.
- The Commission is required by law to use a portion of its toll bridge proceeds to keep non-revenue-generating, limited-capacity crossings like the Northampton Street Bridge operational.

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| Fields, Michael | Yardley, PA. | Feb. 17 3:03 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Cut operating budget |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Every business and citizen had to figure out how to make ends meet (I do not overlook the fact that I am lucky to still have a job). I took a pay cut with my job, which I had no say in, and I was unable to unilaterally take more money from my company to compensate. Most businesses (and people) had to figure out how to do more with less. Ordinary citizens cannot unilaterally decide to pay less for tolls (and other necessities) and private businesses cannot unilaterally raise prices without being punished by market forces. YOU need to figure out how to balance YOUR budget without unilaterally raising your prices on the traveling public and businesses, who are also struggling to make ends meet.

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week because traffic and commerce moves around the clock. It cannot shirk responsibilities like public safety and security, plowing and deicing in winter storms, and toll collecting to fund operations and pay financial obligations. It also is required by the two states and by the U.S. Congress under the Compact Clause of the U.S. Constitution to operate 12 non-revenue generating, low-capacity bridges, the operation and maintenance of which is funded by a portion of the Commission's toll bridge revenues.
- The Commission took proactive steps to forestall the proposed toll adjustments:
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent;
 - Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

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| Bell, Ralph | Washington, N.J. | Feb. 17 4:03 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Opposes \$3 Cash toll |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Really the us citizens haven't been through enough, no work, country shut down, and now a triple toll raise. Just kick us when we're all down. SHAME ON YOU ALL!.

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate for Class 1 passenger vehicles reflects that cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.

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| Jeffrey Laurenti | Trenton, N.J. | Feb. 17 6 p.m. HEARING | Supports 2021's 25- cent E-ZPass toll hike Urges acquisition of federal COVID relief Opposes \$3 Cash toll on the basis of environmental justice |
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TOLL HEARING COMMENT: ...My name is Jeffrey Laurenti. I live in the city of Trenton, County of Mercer in New Jersey. I certainly wouldn't want you to have gone to all this effort to organize a hearing and then -- like throwing a party and nobody comes -- have nobody to speak. So, I thought I would take advantage of this opportunity that you all offer to offer some thoughts. One is the hope that the Commission -- if it finds that unlike with the Cares Act -- *will pursue a portion of (editor insertion)* the one-point-nine-trillion dollar Covid relief package that President Biden and the Congress are currently pushing to enactment and provide funding for bi-state transportation agencies... That the Commission will be able to avail itself of some of that and then be able to reduce the impact of toll increases on the citizenry here. I'm pleased that, in any event, the Commission staff has after consultations -- I assume with members of the Commission -- reduced the toll increases, particularly for E-ZPass drivers to just a quarter... at least for the first round before the 2024 second round. But I do want to raise a question about the stiffer hit on drivers who don't have E-ZPass. This is of interest to me as a resident of the City of Trenton, where a high percentage of our neighbors are immigrant workers of low income. We've got lots of cars and vans with Pennsylvania plates on our streets in our neighborhood here in the Chambersburg

section of Trenton. They, of course, don't know about today's hearing and would probably be loath to present themselves publicly to speak even if they did know of it. My concern is about equity; that our poorer neighbors, our poorer workers, who don't have the means for an E-ZPass account are the ones who are being hit with a toll increase from two to three dollars. And they don't have the means to be able to afford any. It is an issue of equity. We are hitting the poor. And when, in his presentation, the executive director expresses the hope that this should encourage conversions to E-ZPass, that's really not possible for workers at the bottom of the ladder. So, that piece of this projected toll increase is one that I would hope the Commission would rethink -- thinking of who it is who can't get E-ZPass and who would be hit hard either by whether it's by cash-now or by toll-by-plate on that one Scudder Falls Bridge -- and mitigate that. We should not have that level of inequity. We should not punish the poor for not being rich enough to afford E-ZPass. And that is my thought... Thank you.

Staff response:

- Commission staff originally considered raising the Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass rate to \$1.50 this year. After review, it was decided that this proposed increase should be phased in over three years. As a result, the base E-ZPass car rate would rise to \$1.25 at all Commission toll bridges on or after April 3, 2021 – the same rate charged at the new Scudder Falls Toll Bridge since July 2019. The second 25-cent increase in the Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass rate would take effect on or after January 6, 2024 – if approved.
- The Commission sought federal CARES Act stimulus funds in an attempt to offset a portion of the toll losses it encountered in 2020, but was ultimately unsuccessful. The recently enacted \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan COVID relief package provides funds for mass-transit agencies, railroad workers, and airlines, but does not contain funds for toll agencies like the Commission.
- The Commission's assesses tolls on vehicles according to their number of axles and profile (height). The residency and economic status of a motorist does not enter into the equation.
- The Commission's Trust Indenture stipulates that tolls be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
- Commission staff followed the respective Commission policies for announcing the proposed toll adjustments and informing the public about it. This process was initiated with legal notices in the daily newspapers that publish Commission monthly meeting legal ads. The proposed rate schedules were published on the Commission website, as prescribed. An additional webpage was created to explain the toll-setting process, key dates, and the ways that the public could provide comment: virtual hearings with online and teleconferencing access, an online comment form that generated over 100 submissions, a toll-free answering service, and by U.S. Mail. Four press releases also were issued in connection with this process, generating coverage locally, regionally, and even nationally. The proposed toll adjustment made news in a variety of outlets, including daily and weekly newspapers, online publications, radio and cable television. Finally this process generated more public input than the 2016 toll adjustment process that established

a toll schedule for the Commission’s Scudder Falls crossing, a location that previously was untolled; a proposed re-classification for pickup trucks with dual rear wheels, a proposal that was ultimately rejected; and a clarification of how certain vehicle combinations should be classified for tolling purposes. That 2016 process – which included six in-person hearings – generated roughly a third of the comments received in this process.

- The proposed two-tier toll rate system would charge tolls based on the payment method a motorist uses to pay his/her tolls. Under this change, E-ZPass motorists would pay lower rates because that collection method is less costly. Cash and TOLL-BY-PLATE (Scudder Falls only) customers would pay higher rates due to the inherently higher costs of those collection methods. This change would be more equitable to E-ZPass users, who now represent 75 percent of Class 1 passenger vehicle toll payers system-wide. E-ZPass was used in slightly more than 70 percent of car toll transactions recorded at Trenton-Morrisville (Route 1) Toll Bridge in January. If the toll adjustment were approved, these E-ZPass users would no longer shoulder the burden of subsidizing motorists who use the more costly Cash-payment method.
- Even if it were to be approved, the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate would still be the lowest Cash toll for any highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- As for environmental justice, the Trenton-Morrisville location affords its residents with not one but two non-toll travel alternatives across the Delaware River – the Lower Trenton (“Trenton Makes”) Toll-Supported Bridge and the Calhoun Street Toll-Supported Bridge. No other location along the river has two convenient non-toll crossings for its residents. Also, no other location along the river has had the availability of a toll-free river crossing – now up to 103 years – as long as Trenton and Morrisville.
- Statistical analysis shows that no other toll-supported bridges in the Commission system are used as travel alternatives to a nearby toll bridge as the two “free bridges” linking Trenton and Morrisville. Of the 5,212,653 vehicles that used the Lower Trenton Bridge in 2020, 4,312,887 (82.7 percent) traveled westbound – the toll direction at the nearby Trenton-Morrisville Toll Bridge. That means only 17.3 percent of traffic at Lower Trenton traveled eastbound last year. Meanwhile, of the 4,820,191 vehicles that used the Calhoun Street Bridge in 2020, 3,140,947 (65.2 percent) traveled westbound – the toll direction at the nearby Trenton-Morrisville Toll Bridge to the south and the Scudder Falls (I-295) Toll Bridge to the north. This means just shy of 35 percent of traffic at the Calhoun Street Bridge travelled eastbound last year.
- The two toll-supporting bridges serving Trenton last year carried 7.45 million passenger vehicles in the Pennsylvania-bound direction (toll direction). That’s more than the 6.56 million passenger vehicles that traveled Pennsylvania-bound (toll direction) at Trenton’s only toll bridge during 2020.
- It must be noted that a share of the tolls that the Commission collects at its eight toll bridges is used to fund the operation and maintenance of the 12 toll-supported bridges in the Commission’s transportation system.

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| Whitehead, Ramona | Forks, PA. | Feb. 17 7:46 p.m. | What is overhead? Bridge already paid for |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Just saying ~ 5000 cars @ .1.00 per day going over the Easton

Phillipsburg bridge (not counting multi axle vehicles) equals \$5,000 multiplied by 7 = \$35,000 per week. Multiply that by 52 weeks and the grand total = \$1,820,000. Perhaps there are 5 full time employees @ 50,000 per yr. which is \$250,000. Realizing that there is upkeep i.e., salt, vehicle maintenance, etc. that is a lot of money. Just curious, what is the overhead? I imagine this bridge has been paid for over and over again for many years

Staff response:

- This commenter attempts to perpetuate a local myth about the Easton-Phillipsburg Toll Bridge, which originally opened to traffic as the Bushkill Street Bridge in early 1938. The bridge has not been paid for “over and over again for many years.” Conceivably, the original construction bonds for this bridge would have been retired no later than 1968.
- As at any location, tolls pay more than original construction costs. Here are just a few examples of capital projects at this locations that the tolls have supported:
 - Debt service for constructing the original bridge.
 - The construction of modern-highway approach bridges and roadways on the Pennsylvania side during the 1950s. The bridge originally linked with two-lane Bushkill Street in Easton for its first 15 years or so of operation.
 - The construction of new highway approaches and a new toll plaza on the New Jersey side during the early 1960s. This project also included new ramps and an administration building and maintenance facility on the New Jersey side.
 - Installation of automated coin and token collections in the early 1970s.
 - Pennsylvania Approach and Roadway repairs in the 1970s.
 - Blast cleaning and painting of the bridge’s entire truss in the 1970s.
 - Conversion of the toll plaza to strictly Pennsylvania-bound collections in the late 1980s.
 - Structural repairs and resurfacing in the 1990s.
 - Installation of E-ZPass electronic toll collections in the early 2000s.
 - \$1.7 million replacement of the bridge’s twin concrete sidewalks in 2004.
 - \$2.7 million sign structure replacements, repairs and signage upgrades in 2007
 - Electronic toll collection upgrades and removal of toll gates 2009-10.
 - A comprehensive \$30 million rehabilitation of the bridge, its Pennsylvania and New Jersey approaches, and the toll plaza area during 2013-15
 - \$1.4 million Phillipsburg exit ramp slope stabilization in 2016
 - \$2.1 million construction of a new salt-storage building in 2019
- Tolls allow the Commission to fulfill operational responsibilities like public safety and security, plowing and de-icing in winter storms, and collecting tolls to fund operations and meet short-term and long-term financial obligations. Toll-covered expenses include State Police responses to accidents and emergencies, electric and water utilities, personnel etc.
- As is the case at any of the Commission’s 8 toll bridges, a share of the collected tolls must be used to fund the operation, maintenance and protection of 12 non-revenue-generating, low-capacity “free” bridges along the river. These include the Northampton Street Toll-Supported Bridge, which people in the Easton-Phillipsburg area refer to as the “free bridge.” The states conveyed ownership of these non-toll bridges to the Commission on July 1, 1987 with the stipulation that

they be funded by a share of revenues collected at the Commission's toll bridges. This framework is statutorily required by NJ and PA and by Congress under the Compact Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

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| Forbes, Stephanie | Langhorne, PA. | Feb. 17 9:11 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Cut executive salaries |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Why would you increase rates at a time when people are struggling financially? If you are having budget problems cut the salary for the executives.

Staff response:

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission took proactive steps to forestall proposed toll adjustments:
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent;
 - Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

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| Elliot, Ken | Washington, N.J. | Feb. 18 7:08 a.m. | Expand E-ZPass discount to non-DRJTBC-affiliated tags |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: While I'm against any toll increase and encourage you to reconsider the as you term it "adjustment", I find it particularly troubling that not all E-ZPass customers will be treated equally. Either there should be an E-ZPass discount or not. To only allow it for NJ serviced accounts only at best is questionable and seemingly geographic discrimination. I can't imagine your toll by plate or cash costs are the same for non NJ tags. Please change this flawed thinking.

Staff response:

- New Jersey does not service E-ZPass accounts.
- The State of New Jersey – and, for that matter, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – do not issue and are not affiliated with the E-ZPass electronic-toll-collection system.

- Geography has nothing to do with the Commission’s E-ZPass discount program.
- The Commission’s frequency-based commuter discount for Class 1 passenger vehicles equipped with E-ZPass can only be applied to personal vehicle transponders issued and administered by the back-office entity that entity that processes toll transactions at the Commission’s eight toll bridges. That entity is the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center, which is operated by Conduent Inc. This toll-processing operation services seven different toll agencies located or operating in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.
- As the Bridge Commission’s toll processor, the New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center can track, tabulate, and apply the Commission’s frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount – when applicable – to its respective database of E-ZPass account/transponder holders. Our toll processor is not positioned to apply the discount to transponders and accounts that are in another E-ZPass service network’s database.
- For example, the discount cannot be applied to accounts/transponders administered by the Pennsylvania Turnpike E-ZPass Customer Service Center because that entity does not process the toll transactions at our toll bridges. Its E-ZPass customer database is unaffiliated with that of our toll processor’s. The Pennsylvania Turnpike E-ZPass Customer Service Center also serves only one toll agency -- the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission.

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| Moyer, Kalman | Wind Gap, PA. | Feb. 18 8:03 a.m. | Opposes adjustment Various accusations |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: no increases, what does the commission spend their money on anyway?, the whole commission is illegal? its taxation without representation!!! no increases

Staff response:

- The Commission’s website – www.drjtbc.org – has content explaining the Commission’s creation, its operations, and its service mission. Operation reports attached to monthly meeting minutes posted on the website explain Commission activities on a monthly basis.
- The Commission operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It moves commuters, travelers, and commerce around-the-clock.
- Infrastructure includes eight toll bridges and 12 non-revenue-generating “toll-supported” bridges that connect Pennsylvania and New Jersey along the fresh-water portion of the Delaware River separating the two states. The agency also has 73 lane miles of road surface, 34 short-distance approach bridges (overpasses or viaducts) and various other maintenance and operational facilities.
- The Commission has conducted a robust capital program since 2001 that has improved the customer experience at the agency’s transportation facilities.
- The Commission is funded strictly by the tolls it collects at its eight toll bridges. It does not receive state or federal subsidies to run its transportation system and services. The Commission is unique among other toll agencies in the region because it is legally obligated to use a share of its tolls to operate and maintain 10 older low-capacity non-highway vehicular bridges and two other

pedestrian-only crossings along the river. The Commission refers to these 12 spans as “toll-supported bridges.”

- The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission’s authority to toll has always been rooted in its Compact, first jointly enacted by the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania in 1934 and ratified by Congress in 1935 in accordance with the Compact Clause to the U.S. Constitution. That authority has been reaffirmed in court decisions and subsequent Compact changes.

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| Sienicki, Dennis | Pohatcong, N.J. | Feb. 18 5:25 p.m. PHONE | Bad time to raise tolls Go cashless to cut costs |
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TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE CALL: My name is Dennis Sienicki from Pohatcong Township, New Jersey. That's D. E. N. N. I. S.; S. I. E. N. I. C. K. I. And my comment is this is the worst time to raise the tolls. People are out of work. People are just getting back to work. They can't make their bills, pay their bills now. And you're going to raise the tolls, especially as much as you expect to raise them. That's ridiculous. The other thing is maybe you should think about doing TOLL-BY PLATE. That way you could eliminate a lot of your expenses from the expensive workers that you have. Do TOLL-BY PLATE like they do in some other states. It's a very simple process. It doesn't cost that much to do. In the long run, I think you'd save a lot of money. So, those are my two comments. Please don't raise the tolls now. It's just out of this world for the people that especially they use the bridges every single day. It's going to impact them greatly. Thank you.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission’s toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- The cheapest method of toll collection is E-ZPass.
- Operationally, TOLL-BY-PLATE is a more efficient method of toll collection compared to in-lane Cash collections by an attendant in a toll booth, but it is still more expensive than E-ZPass.
- Agency staff recognizes that the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and regionally is away from Cash collections and toward all-electronic tolling points with E-ZPass and TOLL-BY-PLATE billing.
- The Commission’s Scudder Falls (I-295) Toll Bridge has an all-electronic toll (AET) collection system with E-ZPass and TOLL-BY-PLATE rates. The toll schedule at that location, which took effect when the new bridge opened to traffic in July 2019, has a two-tier pricing system that

assigns lower rates to E-ZPass users and higher rates to TOLL-BY-PLATE users. The higher TOLL-BY-PLATES rates are necessitated to cover the additional administrative costs involved in identifying and billing motor-vehicle owners who travel across the bridge without E-ZPass.

- A conversion of the seven toll bridges with current mixed-mode E-ZPass/Cash toll collections to all-electronic E-ZPass/TOLL-BY-PLATE tolling also would involve up-front capital project costs. The Commission currently estimates that a system-wide conversion to AET would cost in excess of \$48 million.

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| Forbes, Stephanie | Langhorne, PA. | Feb. 18 6 to 8 p.m. HEARING | Bad time to raise tolls Cut executive salaries |
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TOLL HEARING COMMENT: Thank you very much. My name is Stephanie Forbes. F o r b e s from Langhorne, Pennsylvania. It is unconscionable that the commission would institute a rate hike in the middle of an economic crisis. In my memory, the commission has never reduced rates when you should have increased. I have no doubt that if usage increased, to the extent it has decreased, the commission would raise rates, arguing that more rates were needed because of the increased usage. Executive Director Resta received a salary of one hundred and sixty five thousand dollars in 2013 and 2013, and I don't doubt that it has increased in the past eight years. The economy is suffering right now and putting that burden onto people who are trying to make ends meet is really unconscionable. If there are budget problems, perhaps the executives should have their salaries cut. Thank you very much.

Staff response:

- Note: Ms. Forbes also provided comment via the website on Feb. 17.
- In a few rare instances, the Commission has authorized limited downward toll adjustments since its creation 86 years ago.
- As for a prospective rollback of a toll rate in one or more vehicle classes, the Commission cannot predict what the future holds any more than it could have predicted the current pandemic and economic recession when setting rates system-wide 10 years ago. Variables include – but are not limited to -- the evolving pandemic, the rise and transmission of coronavirus variants, the efficacy and availability of vaccines, the strength and duration of economic recovery, and traffic growth to a point that could even allow for consideration of a downward toll adjustment.
- Some of the rate changes in this toll adjustment are intended to reflect the costs of the respective toll collection method that a motorist chooses to use. Under this two-tier system of rates, E-ZPass motorists would be charged lower rates while Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would be charged higher rates. If approved, this underlying rate-setting policy conceivably would remain in place as E-ZPass is now used in 75 percent of toll transactions system-wide.
- Salaries were a consideration in the deliberations and formulations of the Commission's 2021 operating budget. Subsequently, a salary freeze was one in a series of proactive steps the Commission took to forestall the proposed toll adjustments:

- Job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting;
- New capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
- Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent;
- Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

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| Gasparetti, Tom | Easton, PA. | Feb. 18 6 to 8 p.m. HEARING | Links consumer-price-index to toll setting Opposes \$3 cash toll Divert toll bridge traffic to non-toll bridges Unsubstantiated claims about the Scudder Falls project |
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TOLL HEARING COMMENT: My name is Tom Gasparetti. G-A-S-P-A-R-E-T-T-I. And I'm from Easton Pennsylvania. And the reason for my commentary tonight is I have reviewed your slide deck and I have noticed that you like to have a debt ratio of two. And it's also important to keep in mind, I'm not sure that there were very good cost controls done on these bridge projects, especially the Scudder News Bridge and secondly in the CPI. So if you go back to the last rate increase, which I believe was twenty eleven. So if you do the CPI for this purpose, let's say three percent per year compounded, it doesn't even come close to your rate increase. So three dollars is a bit much. What's going to end up happening. You're going to have people clogging your twelve free toll bridges and I don't think that's what you want. And I think what we need to do is control costs. If Scudder Mills Bridge cost. that much money charge people that are crossing Scudder Mills. If you couldn't afford it. That's not our problem. It's your problem. You've got yourself to that debt and you figure out how to get out of it. And it's not the public's problem that you got yourself to that high debt ratio and you have a bad bond rating. That's unfortunate on your part. So if you couldn't afford it, you shouldn't have done the bridge. You should repair work, done some other cost engineering methods to save yourself in the public money. That's all I have to say.

Staff response:

- Note: Mr. Gasparetti also filed a comment via the website on Feb. 10.
- Linking tolls to the consumer price index would require toll adjustments on an annual basis.
- The impetus to pursue a proposed toll adjustment was triggered by the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the

Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021

- Tolls are the Commission’s ultimate funding source. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- During the review of potential toll actions, it was decided to make other needed changes to the Commission’s toll structure, notably a proposal to establish a two-tier rate system reflecting the cost of respective toll-collection methods AND projecting revenue needs for a series of new capital projects throughout the Commission’s service jurisdiction. The proposed toll changes also would enable the Commission to meet the terms of its Financial Resilience Policy, which includes language to maintain a debt-service coverage ratio of 2.0 or higher. This would better enable the Commission to avoid bond-rating downgrades and increased borrowing costs for future projects.
- Under the proposed two-tier rate-setting system, E-ZPass motorists would be charged lower rates while Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would be charged higher rates. Cash and TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions are more expensive to process than ones conducted through E-ZPass. E-ZPass is now used in 75 percent of toll transactions system-wide. The two-tier pricing would free E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing motorists who currently use Cash to pay tolls.
- The Scudder Falls project is on budget and on schedule to be fully completed in May 2022.
- Traffic and revenue has declined at all of the Commission’s toll bridges – not just Scudder Falls.

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| Hobson, Richard | Mercer, N.J. | Feb. 19 9:13 a.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Cut operating budget |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: It is upsetting to hear about the rising toll charges. I understand how revenues are down. What I don't understand is what the commission has done to cut costs. Many people and businesses are hurting from the virus. It is not right to use the virus as a way to increase tolls. Will you reduce them once traffic increases? Also, what has the Commission done to reduce the operating budget? Can you honestly say you have looked at everything from salaries, to supplies, to building costs, etc. to determine that there are no costs that can be reduced? We all have rising costs, but we all don't have ways to increase income, we find ways to reduce costs. Thank you.

Staff response:

- The virus is not being used “as a way to increase tolls.”
- The long-term financial consequences of the pandemic and the economic recession it induced forced staff to initiate consideration of prospective toll adjustments.
- The reality is that travel patterns have changed as the coronavirus, lockdown and the fragile recovery are affecting job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a

result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.

- There are no assurances – or professional projections – that traffic and revenue at Commission toll crossings will recover to pre-pandemic levels any time soon.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission most certainly did examine cost containments. The agency took a series of proactive steps to forestall the proposed toll adjustments:
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission’s February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent;
 - Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

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| L Williams | Mercer, N.J. | Feb. 19 1:01 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I agree with the gentleman who commented that the proposed create an unfair burden on the workers who don't have the means for an e-z pass or the increase.

Staff response:

- This individual appears to be repeating Trenton-based comments that Mr. Laurenti made at the toll hearing on the evening of July 17 and which subsequently were included in an article on NJ.COM -- the website for the Star-Ledger and Trenton Times.
- Even if it were to be approved, the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate would still be the lowest Cash toll for any highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- As for the environmental justice issue of disenfranchised individuals not being able to maintain E-ZPass accounts or afford the proposed \$3 Cash toll, the Commission operates and maintains 12 non-revenue-generating, low-capacity bridges that are funded by a share of the tolls collected at the Commission’s 8 toll bridges.
 - Three of these bridges are in Mercer County
 - Some of these bridges actually compete against nearby toll bridges run by the Commission.
 - No other bridge agency affords its customer base with such “free” alternatives.

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| Rothfuss, Kirk | Roosevelt, N.J. | Feb. 19 2:19 p.m. | Opposes adjustment Cites environmental justice issues |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: This rate hike is not fair to working class essential workers who have to use their bridges to get to and from work. And the working poor definitely

can not afford it and don't have the means to set up easy pass to try to minimize the impact.

Staff response:

- This individual appears to be repeating Trenton-based comments that Mr. Laurenti made at the toll hearing on the evening of July 17 and which subsequently were included in an article on NJ.COM -- the website for the Star-Ledger and Trenton Times.
- As previously noted:
 - The Commission's Trust Indenture stipulates that tolls be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
 - Even if it were to be approved, the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate would still be the lowest Cash toll for any highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- As for environmental justice issue of disenfranchised individuals not being able to maintain E-ZPass accounts or afford the proposed \$3 Cash toll, the Commission operates and maintains 12 non-revenue-generating, low-capacity bridges that are funded by a share of the tolls collected at the Commission's 8 toll bridges. Some of these bridges actually compete against nearby toll bridges run by the Commission. No other bridge agency affords its customer base with such "free" alternatives.

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| Rothfuss, Jane | Roosevelt, N.J. | Feb. 19 2:38 p.m. | Opposes \$3 cash rate Cites environmental justice issues Frequent commuter discount unfair |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: The proposed toll hike for cash users is much too high, and quite unfair. For a variety of reasons, not everyone has an EZ pass account, perhaps unable to afford one or perhaps a person doesn't want one. Working poor and lower income people should not experience a 200% increase, while those with an account who commute at least 16 times a month will not pay that excessive toll. There should always be a reasonably-priced cash lane available to folks who need to cross the bridge for work, family, emergencies, or a rare trip without being subjected to such a difference in price.

Staff response:

- The Commission's Trust Indenture stipulates that tolls be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
- The two-tier toll rating system outlined under the proposed adjustment would assign toll rates based on the payment method a motorist uses to pay his/her tolls. Under this change, E-ZPass motorists would pay lower rates because that collection method is less costly. Cash and TOLL-BY-PLATE (Scudder Falls only) customers would pay higher rates due to the inherently higher costs of

those collection methods. This change would be more equitable to E-ZPass users, who now represent 75 percent of Class 1 passenger vehicle toll payers system-wide. If the toll adjustment were approved, these E-ZPass users would no longer shoulder the burden of subsidizing motorists who use the more costly Cash-payment method.

- If it were to be approved, the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate would still be the lowest Class 1 passenger vehicle Cash toll for any highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- As for poor and lower-income individuals experiencing a 200-percent increase in the Cash toll rate, the Commission operates and maintains 12 non-revenue-generating, low-capacity bridges that are funded by a share of the tolls collected at the Commission’s 8 toll bridges. Some of these bridges actually compete against nearby toll bridges run by the Commission. No other bridge agency affords its customer base with such “free” alternatives.
- The proposed toll adjustment actually would phase out the Commission’s nearly 20-year-old frequency-based commuter discount for passenger vehicles equipped with an E-ZPass transponder administered by the Commission’s toll processor – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center.
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application. Meanwhile, the Commission’s discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission’s toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to these criticisms and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years. Going forward, the Commission’s toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE passenger vehicle toll.

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| Heil, Robert | Trenton, N.J. | Feb. 19 2:46 p.m. | Opposes \$3 cash rate |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Raising the toll for non EZ Pass holders is grossly unfair to citizens without EZ Pass, I believe that most of those folks can't afford to maintain a \$25.00 balance and pay \$12.00 per year for the service. Anyone driving by your latest new headquarters should question the need for any increase at all!

Staff response:

- The two-tier toll rating system outlined under the proposed adjustment would assign toll rates based on the payment method a motorist uses to pay his/her tolls. Under this change, E-ZPass motorists would pay lower rates because that collection method is less costly. Cash and TOLL-BY-PLATE (Scudder Falls only) customers would pay higher rates due to the inherently higher costs of those collection methods. This change would be more equitable to E-ZPass users, who now represent 75 percent of Class 1 passenger vehicle toll payers system-wide. If the toll adjustment

were approved, these E-ZPass users would no longer shoulder the burden of subsidizing motorists who use the more costly Cash-payment method.

- Even if it were to be approved, the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate would still be the lowest Class 1 passenger vehicle Cash toll for any highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- As for citizens with E-ZPass, the Commission operates and maintains 12 non-revenue-generating, low-capacity bridges that are funded by a share of the tolls collected at the Commission's 8 toll bridges. Some of these bridges actually compete against nearby toll bridges run by the Commission. No other bridge agency affords its customer base with such "free" alternatives.

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| Brown, Ron | Northumberland, PA. | Feb. 20 9:13 a.m. | Opposes bridge tolls Use gas taxes |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I am opposed to the bridge toll proposal. I am in the tourist business and my business is dependent on travelers coming from other states into Pennsylvania. With the Pennsylvania gas tax already the highest in the country, it should be unnecessary to have more tax. The increased gas tax was suppose to cover the cost of repairing roads and bridges. We have the highest gas tax in the nation. We should not be subject to more taxation for this purpose. More taxes and tolls mean less travelers to Pennsylvania.

Staff response:

- It's unclear if this individual is commenting on the Commission's proposed toll adjustments or the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's proposal to toll nine bridges on six interstate highways in the state as a new revenue source for state bridge repairs. PennDOT identified the prospective nine bridges for tolling on February 19.
- Tolls are the Commission's ultimate funding source.
- The Commission does not receive any gas-tax revenues from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, or the federal government.
- The Commission has used its toll proceeds over the past 20 years to improve the customer experience of travelers using the agency's bridges to enter Pennsylvania. Some of these improvements include (but are not limited to):
 - Introduction of E-ZPass toll collection and removal of toll gates at all toll bridges;
 - Rehabilitation projects at five of its toll bridges.
 - Rehabilitation of the approach roadways and bridges leading to the I-78 Toll Bridge.
 - The replacement of the functionally obsolete Scudder Falls Bridge and the introduction of all-electronic tolling at that I-295 location.
 - The implementation of Express E-ZPass collections at prevailing highway speeds at the toll bridges service I-78 and I-80.
- Collectively, these projects have reduced – if not eliminated – travel delays and congestion at the Commission's highway bridges.

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| Purcell, Marcie | Milford Township, PA. | Feb. 20 2:26 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: We have all been effected in some way over COVID. The cost to increase road travel as gas prices are going up also is harmful as the economy keeps squeezing people financial. May people commute over this bridge daily for work. Hopefully as more companies open and people move from state to state revenue will come back to normal so a raise in tolls won't be necessary. It is too soon to tell the damaging effects on the economy as of yet. People are looking forward to getting back to normal and able to travel and go back to work at their normal settings. Please rethink this increase and review it at a later time.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.

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| Markowitz, Howard | Mercerville, N.J. | Feb. 20 11:56 p.m. | Opposes \$3 cash toll Bad time to raise tolls Will divert toll traffic to toll-supported bridges |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I believe your planned increase in cash tolls will just acerbate your problems. Most people don't have money to make all of their living expenses due to virus. Increasing the tolls will result in moving more traffic to the "free", older bridges, which will require additional maintenance and upkeep. After all of the bans are lifted I'm sure more folks will move back to the more convenient bridges but not at the exorbitant tolls you want to charge! I for one, will never use the Scudder Falls bridge again. I used to use it at least one a week, We in this county have to many other excellent, options to use for free. LOWER THE TOLLS and maybe some people will return to the big bridges.

Staff response:

- The proposed \$3 toll rate for Class 1 passenger vehicles is one facet of a two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. If the proposed toll adjustment schedules were to be approved, E-ZPass motorists would no longer be in a situation where they are subsidizing the higher collection costs of Cash transactions. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- As with prior toll adjustments, the Commission fully anticipates that a diversionary spike will occur if the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and implemented. The severity of diversions in 2021, however, will be mitigated by the fact that E-ZPass is now used in 75 percent of the Commission's toll transactions system-wide. The E-ZPass rate is proposed to rise by only 25 cents in 2021.
- Any motorist diverting from a toll bridge to a toll-supported bridge will encounter a diminished customer experience, including higher fuel consumption, traffic congestion and delays in reaching their destinations.
- The toll-supported bridges do not pay for themselves. The proposed toll adjustments will help fund these "free" alternative river crossings and help keep them in operation.

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| Lieb, Jeffrey | Lower Makefield, PA. | Feb. 21 6:41 p.m. | Keep commuter discount Cut tolls after recession ends Make cuts |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Reducing and then eliminating the commuter discount is not a good decision. The commuters are the customers who pay the most on a daily basis and therefore this discount should stay in place. There was a decision to give the discount long ago and you should re look at why you made that decision and not change it. Toll collections are down because of the pandemic which will be over in less than a year so that means when ridership gets back you will decrease rates? Is the toll commission managing its business and trying to save money and reduce cost like the rest of the world is because of the pandemic. Has the commission eliminated raises in 2020? 2021? Has the commission stopped 401K matching in 2020? 2021? Has the commission held all expense account spending in 2020? 2021? Has the

commission eliminated jobs in 2020? 2021? Has the commission implemented a hiring freeze in 2020? 2021? Most companies and businesses have implemented these cost saving plans and more, hopefully the commission has also and not just did the easy way out and decided to raise tolls.

Staff response:

- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission's discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to these criticisms and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- Going forward, the Commission's toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for this vehicle class.
- In a few rare instances, the Commission has authorized limited downward toll adjustments since its creation 86 years ago. There's no crystal ball that says if such changes might be possible again.
- There are no guarantees that traffic volumes and revenue collections will rise quickly or sufficiently if the pandemic and economic recession were to end. Job commuting, shopping and tourism have all changed within the past year and some prognosticators say those trends are likely to continue to some degree if and when the pandemic subsides and a sustained economic recovery takes root.
- Part of the proposed toll adjustment is a system-wide shift to a two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. If the proposed toll adjustment schedules were to be approved, E-ZPass motorists would no longer be in a situation where they are subsidizing the higher collection costs of Cash transactions. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates. While modifications might be made to individual rates, this two-tier framework is envisioned to remain in place for the foreseeable future regardless of any economic recovery.
- The Commission most certainly did undertake cost containments. The agency took a series of proactive steps to forestall the proposed toll adjustments:
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent;
 - Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

- Raising tolls is not “easy.” The Commission’s last broad-based toll adjustment was in 2011. After due consideration and necessity, the Commission is considering a toll adjustment phased in during 2021 and 2024.

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| Massara, Donald | Lawrenceville, N.J. | Feb. 21 12:12 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Cut tolls after pandemic/recession |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Oh Please.....Toll increase ... unbelievable....no wonder why people are tuning out by non voting or people are registered as Independent voters... Please reconsider this at this time because folks need a break from the Pandemic , never ending searching for vaccine shots and all the craziness that occur with Trump. We need a healing period of time to catch our breaths.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission’s toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- The proposed toll adjustment has nothing to do with voting tendencies or party affiliation.

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| Bruno, JoAnne | Hamilton Twp., N.J. | Feb. 21 12:26 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Dear Sir or Madam: I hope this comment will count as I did not get all of my newspapers until late Saturday. It is unfortunate that the comments were cut off on Friday when no one got a paper. In any event, I will give my thoughts. At this time I do not use the bridges that much due to COVID. I do use the bridges under normal circumstances. I know people who do have to use those bridges to cross for their livelihood. Some of them work in Philadelphia and on top of tolls they have to pay a lot for their parking. Add that up and subtract it from take-home pay... What happens once the pandemic is more controlled and more are back to working in their physical plant in NJ or PA. Will the tolls be decreased? I highly doubt it. These increases are too high. Think of the people paying them. No one thinks about the workers, some of whom work

multiple jobs just to make ends meet. This is a bad move. Too much at once. Wages are not increasing but food costs, oil for heat, gasoline...where does it stop? Everyone is making a fuss because they don't want the \$15 wage increase implemented too quickly, but here we go with tolls going up with big increases. Please reconsider.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Commission staff followed the respective Commission policies for announcing the proposed toll adjustments and informing the public about it. This process was initiated with legal notices in the daily newspapers that publish Commission monthly meeting legal ads. The proposed rate schedules were published on the Commission website, as prescribed. An additional webpage was created to explain the toll-setting process, key dates, and the ways that the public could provide comment: virtual hearings with online and teleconferencing access, an online comment form that generated over 100 submissions, a toll-free answering service, and by U.S. Mail. Four press releases also were issued in connection with this process, generating coverage locally, regionally, and even nationally. The proposed toll adjustment made news in a variety of outlets, including daily and weekly newspapers, online publications, radio and cable television.
- The comment period for this toll adjustment lasted 26 days. It did not end the Friday before this commenter's submission. It ended five days after this commenter's submission – at 4 p.m., February 26, a date and time repeated in Commission communications and on its website.
- In a few rare instances, the Commission has authorized limited downward toll adjustments since its creation 86 years ago. There's no crystal ball that says if such a change might be possible again.
- There are no guarantees that traffic volumes and revenue collections will rise quickly or sufficiently if the pandemic and economic recession were to end. Job commuting, shopping and tourism have all changed within the past year and some prognosticators say those trends are likely to continue to some degree if and when the pandemic subsides and a sustained economic recovery takes root.
- Part of the proposed toll adjustment is a system-wide change to a two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. If the proposed toll adjustment schedules were to be approved, E-ZPass motorists would no longer be in a situation where they are subsidizing the higher collection costs of Cash transactions. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates. While modifications might be made to individual rates,

this two-tier framework is envisioned to remain in place for the foreseeable future regardless of any economic recovery.

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| Church, Kelly | Glendon, PA. | Feb. 22 9:24 p.m. | Opposes \$3 cash toll |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: This fare hike is absolutely ridiculous. The rates you are demanding from daily local commuters is untenable and will cause great financial hardship to those who prefer not to use E-Z Pass.

Staff response:

- The proposed \$3 toll rate for passenger vehicles is one facet of a two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- This change would be more equitable to E-ZPass users, who now represent 75 percent of passenger vehicle toll payers system-wide. If the toll adjustment were approved, these E-ZPass users would no longer shoulder the burden of subsidizing motorists who use the more costly Cash-payment method.
- If it were to be approved, the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate would still be the lowest passenger vehicle Cash toll for any highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

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| Snover, Layton | Slatington, PA. | Feb. 23 10:30 a.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: These rate increases are ridiculous. You are getting rid of people and automating which is great. It should SAVE us money, not costs us DOUBLE or MORE! You folks are OUT OF CONTROL. Please stop with the exhorbitant increases!

Staff response:

- The invoking of the words "double or more" in this comment would appear to refer to three possible scenarios under the proposed toll adjustments:
 - The increased Cash toll rate would be \$3;
 - The 2024 increase in the E-ZPass rate to \$1.50 coupled with the elimination of the frequent commuter E-ZPass discount;
 - The 2024 increase in the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge's E-ZPass rate to \$1.50 and the elimination of the frequent commuter discount now provided to eligible E-ZPass passenger vehicle drivers at the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge.

- The proposed \$3 toll rate for Class 1 passenger vehicles is one facet of a two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission’s Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- This change would be more equitable to E-ZPass users, who now represent 75 percent of Class 1 passenger vehicle toll payers system-wide. If the toll adjustment were approved, these E-ZPass users would no longer shoulder the burden of subsidizing motorists who use the more costly Cash-payment method.
- If it were to be approved, the proposed \$3 Cash toll rate would still be the lowest passenger vehicle Cash toll for any highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- The Commission’s frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission’s toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- Going forward, the Commission’s toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for this vehicle class.
- This commenter might be confusing the DRJTBC with the PA Turnpike, as the DRJTBC is not in the process of “getting rid of people and automating.”

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| Kirk, Susan | Bushkill Township, PA. (Northampton County) | Feb. 23 4:26 p.m. PHONE | Bad time to raise tolls |
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TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE CALL: This comment is from Susan S. U. S. A. N. Kirk K. I. R. K. Bushkill Township, Northampton County, Pennsylvania. The increase in the toll for small business people who do business on both sides of the river -- since we're so close to New Jersey -- is going to put an extra thing on them because they'll be paying a higher total and at the same time they'll be paying a whole lot higher amount of gas to get there. So, I think your timing is really not too good and that should be looked at again from the standpoint of small businesses like grass cutters and whatnot. Thank you.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- As a total schedule, the Commission would continue to offer the lowest highway bridge toll rates between Pennsylvania and New Jersey if the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and implemented.

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| Vaughan, Jason | Smithfield, PA. | Feb. 24 10:56 a.m. | Opposes adjustment Questions rating classifications of trailers, motorhomes |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Thank you for allowing public comment on proposed toll schedules for both the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission and PennDOT's proposed tolling of nine bridges throughout Pennsylvania. Tolls detract from tourism and put Pennsylvania at an unfair disadvantage to other states. While we understand there is a fiscal need to maintain roads and bridges in Pennsylvania, we are already dealing with the third highest gas tax and a dramatic drop in tourism spending due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The tourism industry has been greatly affected by the pandemic and is not predicted to return to 2019 levels until 2024. The toll increased proposed on recreational vehicles will have a detrimental impact on the campground industry in Pennsylvania. Not only will the tolling effect out of state families traveling to Pennsylvania but it will effect Pennsylvania families traveling throughout the Commonwealth. Further, the nuisance of toll plaza installation for traffic on heavily congested roads will push families to choose out of state locations. Furthermore, the toll rates established by the DWRJTB authority have several unfair discrepancies in the classifications. A two-axle trailer in tow is charged at dramatically different rates than a motorhome and the charge against a fifth wheel unit, which creates the same demand on our road system, is over five times the charge of an equivalent travel trailer. A motorhome towing a car is charged at four times what a motorhome and a car not being towed would be charged. These discrepancies would encourage families to stop at rest areas and along the highway to unhook their units or drive their entire trip through Pennsylvania unhitched. This is inconvenient as well as not very friendly in trying to reduce carbon emissions and fossil fuel use. If we can be of any assistance or could be involved in the conversation for equitable tolling and affordable increases, we would

like the opportunity to work towards a system that benefits the state of Pennsylvania and is fair and affordable to families. Campgrounds represent \$741 million, 8.5% of all lodging spending in Pennsylvania. The total annual economic impact from the RV industry in Pennsylvania is \$2.8 billion. Let's work together to keep families camping and supporting Pennsylvania.

Staff response:

- This comment concerns both the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's proposed toll adjustment and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's proposal to toll nine bridges on six interstate highways in the state as a new revenue source for state bridge repairs. Obviously, the DRJTBC's comment process has nothing to do with the PennDOT proposal.
- The Commission assesses tolls on a respective vehicle's profile (height) and number of rolling axles.
- The vehicle classifications identified in the Commission's proposed toll adjustment schedules are unchanged. The classifications pertaining to fifth-wheel/gooseneck-equipped pickup trucks with trailers in tow that are eight feet and above in height and motorhomes eight-feet and above in height with cars in tow were articulated in the 2011 system-wide toll adjustment and further affirmed in the Scudder Falls Toll Bridge toll-setting comment process of 2016.

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| Maisto, Michelle | Florence, N.J. | Feb. 24 6:07 p.m. | Opposes adjustment Unsubstantiated claims about Scudder Falls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Don't increase tolls, I agree with Jeff Tittel who says They are raising the tolls to help pay for the Scudder Falls pork barrel project," he said Wednesday in a press statement. "This is shameful because the Scudder Falls Bridge was built wider than was needed, which meant we had to put tolls on it to pay for it. Now they are raising all of the other tolls to help pay for the massive project." "Raising tolls in the middle of a pandemic and fiscal emergency won't solve anything," Tittel added. "It will only make people avoid these bridges and push more traffic and congestion onto free bridges."

Staff response:

- The Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project is on budget and on schedule.
- The declines in toll transactions and revenues have occurred at all eight Commission toll bridges, not just Scudder Falls.
- For the record, Jeff Tittel of the New Jersey Sierra Club did not comment directly to the Commission on this proposed toll adjustment.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities brought on by the coronavirus, lockdowns, and the fragile recovery and the resulting long-term impacts on job

commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021. Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

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| Dowdy, Preston | Williamson, Georgia | Feb. 25 9:43 a.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: The proposal itself states the adjustments are for the continuing decline in traffic and revenue. Less traffic means less damage and less revenue required for maintenance. It should balance out unless the revenue is not being used explicitly for the bridges themselves. It's a crock to have to pay a toll to begin with, don't add insult to injury by breaking it off in us for 20% more. Sincerely, a Trucker

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities brought on by the coronavirus, lockdowns, and the fragile recovery and the resulting long-term impacts to job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Less traffic does not mean that you plow less snow; that you de-ice less; that fewer potholes arise from freezing-and-thawing temperatures; that storm drains clog less; that less tree trimming is needed; that weight-restricted toll-supported bridges no longer need protection; or that emergency responses can be compromised. The Commission provides many services required to effectuate safe and efficient travel between the states.
- While the coronavirus, lockdowns and fragile recovery prompted staff to examine toll adjustment actions, the resulting proposed toll schedules were crafted with a broader purpose. In addition to addressing the Commission's current financial situation, the proposed toll adjustment would establish a new two-tier toll pricing framework, provide funds for needed capital projects, and ensure payment of Commission financial obligations for the foreseeable future.
- Toll collection is a user-based fee, and the original funding method to construct and maintain infrastructure, with a long history in our country, and not "a crock."

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| Garrahan, Serena | Bucks County, PA. | Feb. 25 4:56 p.m. | Opposes elimination of commuter discount |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I understand the financial strain caused by covid 19 but please understand this affects the toll payers as well. I am not opposed to the .25 rate

increase in the ez pass rate on the scorer's fall bridge but I do not agree that this is coupled with a reduction and eventual elimination of the commuter discount.

Staff response:

- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission's frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- Going forward, the Commission's toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for this vehicle class.
- Unless other agencies reverse rates, this will still be the lowest possible highway bridge toll between Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 2024.

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| Kyzer, Anthony | Allentown, PA. | Feb. 26 8:01 a.m. | Enhance the E-ZPass commuter discount |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I need to travel these toll roads every day for work. I'm not supposed to toll increase but I would prefer that there is a deeper discount for easy pass customers who need to use these roads every day.

Staff response:

- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission's frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- Going forward, the Commission's toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for this vehicle class.

- Unless other agencies reverse rates, this will still be the lowest possible highway bridge toll between Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 2024.

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| Bush, Anthony | Lower Makefield, PA. | Feb. 26 8:56 a.m. | Opposes E-ZPass toll adjustment for 2024 |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: The short-term toll hikes are understandable given the effect of the pandemic on revenues over the last year. The longer-term toll hikes proposed for 2024 are not justified and appear to be a money grab. A more logical and reasoned approach would be short-term toll hikes until 2024 to be revisited then. If traffic volumes approach pre-pandemic levels by 2024 there would be no justification for what would have been unplanned toll hikes in 2024.

Staff response:

- Only the Class 1 passenger E-ZPass toll rate is proposed to be raised in 2024 – a 25-cent increase to \$1.50.
- Staff originally conceived this \$1.50 toll rate to be implemented in 2021, but decided to phase in the increase to 2024 after further deliberations.
- Unless other agencies reverse rates, this proposed \$1.50 toll would still be the lowest possible highway bridge toll between Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 2024.
- The \$1.50 toll would be half of the proposed \$3 Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE toll.

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| Antonello, Patrick | Bristol Township, PA. | Feb. 26 9:04 a.m. | Opposes Scudder Falls toll adjustments |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: This toll schedule, especially where it concerns the Scudders Falls Bridge is outrageous. It shouldn't be allowed, permitted, or have even been considered in the first place. I'm disgusted and insulted with this decision. As a commuter and frequent user of this bridge which was free since first erected, we now have to pay for the state of Pa.'s abject failure as a manager of the states infrastructure. Toll commission coffers will be brimming after the new toll goes into effect and yet we'll still hear them crying poor. That organization is a sham and a joke.

Staff response:

- The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission is a bi-state agency with a federal Compact. It is not a Pennsylvania state agency.

- There is no such thing as a truly free bridge. Somebody is paying for it somewhere. Depending on the location, bridges are governmentally owned and supported by either tolls or taxes; or – in rare instances – area privately owned and supported by tolls.
- The former bridge at Scudder Falls may have been free to cross, but its operating and maintenance costs were initially shouldered by taxpayers and later by Bridge Commission toll payers – many of whom never used the bridge. The bridge was jointly owned by New Jersey and Pennsylvania from June 1961 through June 1987 and the two states sent tax subsidies to the Bridge Commission to keep the crossing in operation. After ownership was transferred to the Commission on July 1, 1987, a share of the revenue collected at the Commission’s seven toll bridges were used to pay for the bridge’s operation and maintenance.
- The former Scudder Falls Bridge was a heavily congested, accident-prone commuter crossing. Built in 1959 and opened to traffic in 1961, the bridge was classified – before its demise -- as “functionally obsolete” due to capacity limitations, poor roadway geometry and safety concerns. The bridge was at the end of its useful lifespan before being replaced. It carried an average 52,700 vehicles a day in 2018, its last full year of operation. Even that construction-impacted figure exceeded the amount of traffic that the bridge was designed to handle.
- Tolling was instituted on the new Scudder Falls Toll Bridge to pay the costs of its construction and the many other regional transportation improvements included in the soon-to-be-completed 4-1/2-year-long Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project. The tolls also help fund the operation, maintenance, repair and capital improvement costs of the Commission’s entire bridge system.
- Current and future users of the new Scudder Falls Toll Bridge are the primary beneficiaries of this new facility and the many other transportation improvements being made under the Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project. To absolve these motorists of these costs while charging the Commission’s other toll payers a higher toll would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls “shall be just and reasonable.”

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| Lear, Mary | Pipersville, PA. | Feb. 26 9:09 a.m. | Embraces cashless all-electronic tolling |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Because of covid a few of these proposed changes are out of date already. You will never have anyone collecting cash now. Prices need to be posted for EZ Pass VS Toll by Plate.

Staff response:

- The Commission still collects Cash at seven of its eight toll bridges.
- Tolls are collected via a cashless all-electronic toll system at the Commission’s new Scudder Falls (I-295) Toll Bridge, with lower rates for E-ZPass and higher rates for TOLL-BY-PLATE. Those current rates and proposed toll-adjusted rates are posted on the Commission website.
- Agency staff recognizes that the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and regionally is away from Cash collections and toward all-electronic tolling points with E-ZPass and TOLL-BY-PLATE billing.

- A conversion of the seven toll bridges with current mixed-mode E-ZPass/Cash toll collections to all-electronic E-ZPass/TOLL-BY-PLATE tolling also would involve up-front capital project costs. The Commission currently estimates that a system-wide conversion to AET would cost in excess of \$48 million.

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| Leitman, Ken | Bucks, PA. | Feb. 26 9:10 a.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: People have been hit hard by covid. We have seen food prices double and many people out of work. Causing more financial stress now would be unconscionable. NJ also just raised tolls. Could not pick a worse time to do this. PA raising income tax too.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities brought on by the coronavirus, lockdowns, and the fragile recovery and the resulting long-term impacts to job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.

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| Conner, Gary | Horsham Twp., PA. | Feb. 26 9:24 a.m. PHONE | Urges all-electronic toll collection at all bridges |
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TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE CALL: My name is Gary Connor. G-A-R-Y C-O-N-N-E-R. I lived in Horsham Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania and have been for many years. I just want to know why your proposal does not include eliminating toll takers. They cost a tremendous amount and they're not necessary anymore. It just doesn't make any sense. You have to get to the 21st century because living in the 18th century is long gone. This is unacceptable – totally. Other states have completely eliminated toll takers and we should have years ago. Goodbye!

Staff response:

- The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission is a bi-state agency, not a Pennsylvania state agency.

- The proposed toll adjustment is constructed to provide the funding that the Commission needs to operate and maintain its transportation facilities, ensure the fulfillment of its public service mission, and meet its long-term financial obligations. Toll schedules should be constructed for the purpose of raising needed funds, not “eliminating toll takers.”
- With respect to the assertion that the Commission is somehow ignoring 21st century technology or advances, we must respectfully point out that the Commission opened its first cashless all-electronic tolling (AET) collection point at the first completed span of the new Scudder Falls (I-295) Toll Bridge in July 2019.
- Likewise, Commission staff is acutely aware that cashless AET systems are the growing trend internationally, nationally and, now, regionally. They are now in use at the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge (former Tappan Zee), at Metropolitan Transportation Authority crossings like the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, and along the entire length of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey also is converting its vehicular crossings to cashless, and already has such systems at the Holland Tunnel and three Staten Island bridges.
- It might be argued in some quarters that the proposed toll adjustment’s two-tier toll-pricing framework would allow the Commission to undertake an immediate conversion of its mixed-mode E-ZPass/Cash toll plazas to AET technology without any trouble, but that would be a false assumption.
- The fact is that any prospective AET conversion would require planning, time and expense. Current engineering estimates show it would cost the Commission – and, ultimately, its toll payers -- \$48 million to carry out such a conversion.
- However, if the Commission were to take a leap toward AET, it would be for the broad and defensible purposes of enhancing customer experience at our toll bridges, promoting safety, and reducing traffic congestion, air pollution and fuel consumption – AND not a wholly punitive aim of “eliminating toll takers.”

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| Mrozinski, Michael Pike County Council of Governments (COG) | Pike County, PA. | Feb. 26 9:30 a.m. | Pike County Council of Governments opposes adjustment Opposes commuter discount elimination |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: The Pike County Council of Governments (COG) motioned unanimously to oppose the rate hike as proposed. The Milford-Montague bridge provides essential passage for services for Pike County residents. The rationale for the rate hike is loss of revenue due to COVID. This reduction will be temporary although the increase will be permanent and the COG found this unacceptable, especially the reduction and termination of the commuter discount. The Pike County COG recommends rescinding this proposal and restructuring DRBC finances until stabilization occurs similar to all other businesses dealing with lost revenue during this crisis.

Staff response:

- Note: Michael Mrozinski is planning director at the Pike County Office of Community Planning.
- The Commission never said that the “rationale” for the proposed toll adjustment was solely a loss of revenue due to COVID. The first paragraph of the Commission’s press release announcing the toll adjustments is transparent in stating a broader need and purpose: “proposed system-wide toll adjustments to offset continuing COVID-19-induced toll revenue declines, ensure payment of financial obligations and provide funding for planned capital projects throughout the agency’s Pennsylvania-New Jersey service region.”
- The press release and subsequent communications – notably the executive director’s statement prefacing each toll hearing and posted online – further explain that the proposed adjustment would establish a two-tier system of toll rates, under which Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally because it helps cover the increased processing costs associated with Cash or license-plate-billing collection methods.
- These underlying reasons for the toll adjustment are noteworthy distinctions. The pandemic and economic recession may have been the impetus for having to look at prospective toll adjustments in the first place, but the resulting toll adjustments address other issues that have arisen since the Commission last implemented a system-wide toll adjustment 10 years ago. The proposed adjustments would collectively enable the Commission to fulfill its regional transportation mission for the foreseeable future.
- There are no guarantees that the current reduced traffic volumes are temporary. The pandemic and recession have ushered in profound changes in the way Americans commute (work from home), shop (online commerce), and travel (staycations).
- The Commission cannot predict what the future holds any more than it could have predicted the current pandemic and economic recession when last setting rates system-wide 10 years ago.
- As has been cited elsewhere in this report, any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission’s frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission’s toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment would phase out this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- Going forward, the Commission’s toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for this vehicle class.
- Unless other agencies reverse rates, this E-ZPass rate would still be the lowest possible highway bridge toll between Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 2024.

- Likewise, motorists without E-ZPass would still be afforded the lowest passenger vehicle cash toll rate -- \$3 -- for a highway bridge linking Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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| Mrozinski, Michael Pike County Planning Board | Milford, PA. | Feb. 26 9:45 a.m. | Pike County Planning Commission opposes toll adjustment Opposes commuter discount elimination |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: The Pike County Planning Commission (PCPC) motioned unanimously to oppose the rate hike as proposed. The Milford-Montague bridge provides essential passage for services for Pike County residents. The rationale for the rate hike is loss of revenue due to COVID. This reduction will be temporary although the increase will be permanent and the COG found this unacceptable, especially the reduction and termination of the commuter discount. The PCPC recommends rescinding this proposal and restructuring DRBC finances until stabilization occurs similar to all other businesses dealing with lost revenue during this crisis.

Staff response:

- Note: Michael Mrozinski is planning director at the Pike County Office of Community Planning and the wording of this submission is virtually identical to the Pike County Council of Government's motion.
- The Commission never said that the "rationale" for the proposed toll adjustment was solely a loss of revenue due to COVID. The first paragraph of the Commission's press release announcing the toll adjustments is transparent in stating a broader need and purpose: "proposed system-wide toll adjustments to offset continuing COVID-19-induced toll revenue declines, ensure payment of financial obligations and provide funding for planned capital projects throughout the agency's Pennsylvania-New Jersey service region."
- The press release and subsequent communications – notably the executive director's statement prefacing each toll hearing and posted online – further explain that the proposed adjustment would establish a two-tier system of toll rates, under which Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally because it helps cover the increased processing costs associated with Cash or license-plate-billing collection methods.
- These underlying reasons for the toll adjustment are noteworthy distinctions. The pandemic and economic recession may have been the impetus for having to look at prospective toll adjustments in the first place, but the resulting toll adjustments address other issues that have arisen since the Commission last implemented a system-wide toll adjustment 10 years ago. The proposed adjustments would collectively enable the Commission to fulfill its regional transportation mission for the foreseeable future.
- There are no guarantees that the current reduced traffic volumes are temporary. The pandemic and recession have ushered in profound changes in the way Americans commute (work from home), shop (online commerce), and travel (staycations).

- The Commission cannot predict what the future holds any more than it could have predicted the current pandemic and economic recession when last setting rates system-wide 10 years ago.
- As has been cited elsewhere in this report, any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission's frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment would phase out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- Going forward, the Commission's toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for this vehicle class.
- Unless other agencies reverse rates, this E-ZPass rate would still be the lowest possible highway bridge toll between Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 2024.
- Likewise, motorists without E-ZPass would still be afforded the lowest passenger vehicle cash toll rate -- \$3 – for a highway bridge linking Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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| Wessel, Kevin | Phillipsburg, N.J. | Feb. 26 10;10 a.m. | Opposes adjustment Decrease expenditures |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Less traffic should mean less maintenance. That should equal less expense. Less traffic should equal less staff. That should equal less expense. If this was a household the idea would be to decrease expenditure and work within a budget. Why is it when we deal with anything government related the first idea is to raise the price? 2012 Rep. Joe Emrick, R-Northampton "It's nothing but a rogue government agency that's able to function without accountability to the people," he said of the commission. 2003 Sen. Lisa Boscola, D-18 "These are the same people who just bludgeoned thousands of commuters with an excessive toll increase — and they want a raise for doing a good job?" asked Boscola in a written statement. "That's like tipping the pick-pocket for stealing your wallet. They don't deserve a pay raise, they deserve to be fired." <https://www.mcall.com/news/mc-xpm-2003-06-10-3467265-story.html>

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities brought on by the coronavirus, lockdowns, and the fragile recovery and the resulting long-term impacts to job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- Less traffic does not mean that you plow less snow; that you de-ice less; that fewer potholes arise from freezing-and-thawing temperatures; that storm drains clog less; that less tree trimming is needed; that weight-restricted toll-supported bridges no longer need protection; or that emergency responses can be compromised. The Commission provides many services required to effectuate safe and efficient travel between the states.
- While the coronavirus, lockdowns and fragile recovery prompted staff to examine toll adjustment actions, the resulting proposed toll schedules were crafted with a broader purpose. In addition to addressing the Commission's current financial situation, the proposed toll adjustment would establish a new two-tier toll pricing framework, provide funds for needed capital projects, and ensure payment of Commission financial obligations for the foreseeable future.
- The Commission did not propose toll adjustments as a first step. The agency actually took a series of proactive steps to forestall potential toll adjustments:
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent;
 - Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.

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| Dooley, Joseph | Milford Borough, PA. | Feb. 26 10:44 a.m. | Opposes adjustment Cut expenses, staff Keep commuter discount |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed rate increase by the DRJTBA. This request for an increase during the Covid pandemic and because of the Covid pandemic is unwarranted. The pandemic will soon end yet the rate increase will stay which is unfair if you are at least part blaming the requested increase on the loss of revenue during the pandemic. Perhaps you should have reduced staff and other expenses at this time like most of the business world did. The requested elimination of the commuter break is also unwarranted and unfair. Based on what I have seen while using your bridges you spend too much time and money on things unrelated to bridge maintenance and safety. The large lawn near the Milford bridge is wasteful as are the two bridge police officers in Easton, PA. Do you think someone is still going to steal this bridge? I would like to reiterate my strong opposition to this increase since you first need to reduce expenses.

Staff response:

- The Commission has not implemented a system-wide toll adjustment in 10 years.
- As has been cited elsewhere in this report, any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- While the coronavirus, lockdowns and fragile recovery prompted staff to examine the need for higher toll rates, the resulting proposed toll schedules were crafted with a broader purpose. In addition to addressing the Commission's current financial situation, the proposed toll adjustments would establish a new two-tier toll pricing framework, provide funds for needed capital projects, and ensure payment of Commission financial obligations for the foreseeable future.
- The proposed two-tier pricing structure for the Commission's eight toll bridges would establish a framework under which Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally because it helps cover the increased processing costs associated with Cash or license-plate-billing collection methods.
- There are no guarantees that the current reduced traffic volumes are temporary. The pandemic and recession have ushered in profound changes in the way Americans commute (work from home), shop (online commerce), and travel (staycations).
- The Commission cannot predict what the future holds any more than it could have predicted the current pandemic and economic recession when last setting rates system-wide 10 years ago.
- The agency actually took a series of proactive steps to forestall potential toll adjustments:
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission's February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent;
 - Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.
- With respect to the bridge monitors at the Commission's weight-restricted bridge at Easton (the Northampton Street Toll-Supported Bridge), they are an absolute necessity. That is the second oldest bridge in the Commission's system and there is only one other bridge of that particular design in the entire world – the Liberty Bridge in Budapest, Hungary.
- Operationally, the Northampton Street Bridge has limited capacity and a weight restriction prohibiting vehicles in excess of three tons. The primary function of the bridge monitors posted at this location is to prevent passage of vehicles in excess of that three-ton limit. And they do that job very well. Last year alone, they prevented the crossings of 5,439 overweight/oversized vehicles. Over the years, these bridge monitors have prevented attempted suicides, performed first-aid, and assisted local and state police in emergencies and criminal investigations.

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| Starrs, Adele Township Committee | Knowlton Township, N.J. | Feb. 26 10:54 | Conveyance of municipal resolution |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Please find the following resolution, approved by vote of the Knowlton Township Committee on February 25, 2021, regarding the proposed toll increase:

**TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY RESOLUTION
2021-31 RESOLUTION ON THE PROPOSED DELAWARE RIVER JOINT TOLL BRIDGE
COMMISSION TOLL INCREASES**

WHEREAS, at 50.7 cents per gallon, New Jersey has the fourth highest gas tax in the United States, making it a very expensive state to drive in; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey has the highest property taxes in the nation, making it a very expensive state to live in; and

WHEREAS, the median household income in Warren County is almost \$16,000 lower than the New Jersey state median, giving local residents 18.4 % less income than their neighbors to spend; and

WHEREAS, many Knowlton Township residents commute daily across a DRJTBC bridge for work and to reach the closest hospital and major shopping centers; and

WHEREAS, the toll proposal would reduce discounts currently provided to drivers who made more than 16 tolled trips each month from 40% to 20% thereby increasing costs to locals; and

WHEREAS, the trucking industry plays an essential role in the American economy, moving 70% of all freight in the United States, and faces narrow profit margins; and

WHEREAS, several trucking businesses are based in Knowlton Township and daily cross a DRJTBC bridge; and

WHEREAS, the reason cited for the rate increase is "to offset continuing COVID-19-induced toll revenue decline" that was 23.6% less than the previous year; and

WHEREAS, in the year prior to the pandemic, DRJTBC's operating revenues topped \$144.9 million, an increase of more than 10.2% from the previous year; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic is not permanent and traffic volume and revenue will rebound; and

WHEREAS, other bridge agencies, including the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA), have announced they will not increase tolls on their bridges, despite similar decreases in revenue due to the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Scudder Falls Bridge, which began collecting tolls in the second half of 2019, represents a new, additional revenue stream for the Delaware Bridge Joint Toll Bridge Commission; and

WHEREAS, the proposed toll increase is a tax; and

WHEREAS, government agencies best serve the public when they cut expenses, such as downsizing renovation plans and negotiating personnel concessions, rather than increasing taxes; and

WHEREAS, government agencies best serve the public when they do not increase taxes permanently in response to temporary decreases in revenue.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Township of Knowlton, as a community adjacent to the I80 Delaware Water Gap Toll bridge, requests an exemption in tolls on that bridge for Knowlton residents and businesses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Township of Knowlton requests that if a blanket exemption for Knowlton residents and businesses is not feasible, then a schedule of several days per month that local residents and businesses may cross the bridge without toll is hereby requested to ease the impact on local communities. February 25, 2021

Staff response:

- Note: Adele Starrs is Knowlton Township's Mayor.
- The Commission does not receive gas tax revenues from the State of New Jersey (or, for that matter, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the federal government).
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission's frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment would phase out this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- Going forward, the Commission's toll rates would incentivize E-ZPass use. If the proposed toll-adjustments were to be approved and fully implemented, the E-ZPass car toll in 2024 would be \$1.50 – one half of the cost of the Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE charge for this vehicle class.
- Unless other agencies reverse rates, this E-ZPass rate would still be the lowest possible highway bridge toll between Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 2024.
- The proposed toll adjustments for trucks and other commercial vehicles are modest. If those rates were to be approved and implemented, they would maintain the Commission's significant competitive edge for movements of overland freight across the river in comparison to the rates of other toll agencies along the river.
- The proposed toll adjustment was not developed solely to address the substantial toll revenue declines the Commission has experienced in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the

pandemic and the economic recession it induced prompted staff to examine possible toll increases, the resulting proposed toll adjustment has a broader scope and purpose. The Commission has been transparent about this in its communications.

- In addition to addressing the Commission’s current financial situation, the proposed toll adjustments would establish a new two-tier toll pricing framework, provide funds for needed capital projects, and ensure payment of Commission financial obligations for the foreseeable future.
- The proposed two-tier pricing structure for the Commission’s eight toll bridges would establish a framework under which Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE customers would pay higher rates than E-ZPass-equipped motorists. This type of pricing is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally because it helps cover the increased processing costs associated with Cash or license-plate-billing collection methods.
- There are no guarantees that the current reduced traffic volumes are temporary. The pandemic and recession have ushered in profound changes in the way Americans commute (work from home), shop (online commerce), and travel (staycations).
- The Commission cannot predict what the future holds any more than it could have predicted the current pandemic and economic recession when last setting rates system-wide 10 years ago. Knowlton Township cannot predict the future either.
- The reference to the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) omits that the DRPA is receiving \$40 million of 2020 federal CARES Act funding to compensate for COVID-related losses on its commuter rail line. This funding provided toll relief for the agency, since its toll collections help subsidize its rail services. The Commission’s proposed two-tier passenger toll rates for 2021 -- \$1.25 for E-ZPass and \$3 for Cash/TOLL-BY-Plate -- are both lower than the DRPA’s \$5 passenger vehicle toll rate.
- The new Scudder Falls Toll Bridge is a relatively new revenue source for the Commission. However, toll collections at that bridge were lower than projected for 2020. This was not an outlier; toll collections were reduced at each of the Commission’s eight toll bridges in 2020 and that downward trend has carried over into 2021.
- The Knowlton resolution fails to mention that the Commission took a series of proactive steps to reduce expenditures before pursuing its proposed toll adjustments:
 - Job hiring was halted after the Commission’s February 2020 meeting;
 - New capital projects were postponed and remain on hold to this day;
 - Discretionary spending lines were cut by 10 percent;
 - Salaries were frozen in the 2021 operating budget.
- The Commission is prohibited under its Trust Indenture from bestowing a Knowlton-resident toll reduction. The indenture requires tolls to be uniform in application to all traffic “regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic.” Toll holidays also are not authorized.
- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle’s (or combined vehicle’s) height and number of rolling axles. The proposed toll adjustments – if approved – would modify this by adding the method of toll payment (E-ZPass versus Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE) as another toll-assessment factor. A motorist’s residency does not enter into the equation. To do otherwise would run afoul of the federal stipulation that tolls “shall be just and reasonable.”

- As has been cited elsewhere in this report, any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission has not implemented a system-wide toll adjustment in 10 years.
- If the proposed toll adjustment schedules for 2021 and 2024 were to be approved, the Commission's passenger vehicle rates (\$1.25 for E-ZPass and \$3 for (Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE) would still rank as the lowest highway bridge tolls between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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| Cuntala, Kathy | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 26 11:05 a.m. | Lower rates for locals |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: This toll increase seems very excessive. Especially to the residents of our town who travel over the bridge very frequently. Perhaps a rate adjustment for towns in a certain proximity can be considered.

Staff response:

- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle's profile (height) and number of rolling axles. A driver's residency does not enter into the equation.
- The Commission is prohibited under its Trust Indenture from excluding local residents from tolls. The indenture requires tolls be applied "regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic."
- The vast majority of the Commission toll bridges are primarily used by commuters and area residents. They are the primary beneficiaries of the multiple improvement projects that have been conducted at these river crossings since 2001 and that are slated to be conducted through funding arising from the proposed toll adjustment. To reduce tolls for local residents while charging others a higher toll would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."

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| Raser, Keith | Shohola, PA. | Feb. 26 11:26 p.m. | Opposes \$3 cash toll |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: As a life-long Pike County resident, and an elected Supervisor in Shohola Township, I strongly object to the proposed toll increase. To raise the toll from \$1 to \$3 is absurd, and shows no concern for those who must cross the bridges for work, pleasure, or other reasons. An increase of .50 would be tolerable, and even that is hard to justify during a pandemic. I strongly suggest you rethink this proposed increase. Thank you

Staff response:

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed \$3 rate for Class 1 passenger-vehicle drivers paying cash reflects that higher collection cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing Cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.

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| Dapkins, Mathew | Hope Township, PA. | Feb. 26 11:30 a.m. | Opposes combination of higher toll and reduction/elimination of commuter discount |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: As a commuter who lives, raises a family, pays taxes to and chooses to reside in NJ but works in PA I am vehemently opposed to the toll hike along with the structure of the Ezpass discount. I now travel at least 16 times across the Delaware Water Gap bridge a month and receive a 40% discount, not only are you increasing the base toll price by 25% you are Lessing the percentage of my 16 plus trip discount down to 20%. One or the other would be a bitter pill, but to receive a hit on both ends is un-palatable.

Staff response:

- The Commission has gone 10 years without a system-wide toll adjustment.
- The proposed 25-cent increase in the 2021 Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass toll rate to a \$1.25 charge would still be the lowest highway bridge toll between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.
- The additional proposed 25 cent increase in the 2024 Class 1 passenger vehicle E-ZPass toll rate to a \$1.50 charge would still be the lowest highway bridge toll between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.
- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the resulting \$1.50 E-ZPass rate for a Class 1 passenger vehicle would be half of the \$3 Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE rate for the same vehicle.
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission’s frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission’s toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.

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| Simpson, Debbie | Northampton County, PA. | Feb. 26 11:38 a.m. | Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: It seems like the toll increase and lack of in person meetings are all being blamed on COVID. This is a crucial time for so many families who have had dramatic income reductions if not complete loss. The insurance companies are sending

rebates to their customers, due to the reduction of driving which means the bridges must be having a reduction in usage...so we are increasing?? Social distancing has been successful in many in person meetings. Not a good excuse..No increases until the econmy is back to 'normal' as we are promised.

Staff response:

- The long-term financial consequences of the pandemic and the economic recession it induced forced the consideration of proposed toll adjustments.
- The reality is that travel patterns have changed as the coronavirus, lockdown and the fragile recovery are affecting job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.
- There are no guarantees that the current reduced traffic volumes are temporary. The pandemic and recession have ushered in profound changes in the way Americans commute (work from home), shop (online commerce), and travel (staycations).
- The Commission cannot predict what the future holds any more than it could have predicted the current pandemic and economic recession when last setting rates system-wide 10 years ago.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The use of virtual toll hearings for this toll adjustment process was a necessity, not an "excuse." The coronavirus pandemic has been the greatest threat to public health in generations. The virtual hearings were prudent.

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| Pike, Annie | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 26 11:45 a.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Lower rates for locals |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|---|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: For people who live on the border of Pennsylvania and New Jersey with limited access to retail stores We rely heavily on going across the Delaware water Bridges. An increase in the fair especially now when many of us are out of work and will not return to permanent jobs is a hardship. Perhaps residents within a 20 mi area of the bridges can get acknowledged with cheaper rates when they cross the bridge closest to their home this can be done I'm sure through the E-ZPass system. Thank you

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism. The Commission recorded 11.8 million fewer toll transactions than had been anticipated in 2020, a 23.6 percent decline. As a result, the

Commission collected \$14,484,007 less in tolls than projected, a 9.36 percent reduction. The declines have continued through the first two months of 2021.

- As a total schedule, the Commission would continue to offer the lowest highway bridge toll rates between Pennsylvania and New Jersey if the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved and implemented.
- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle's (or combined vehicle's) height and number of rolling axles. The proposed toll adjustments – if approved – would modify this by adding the method of toll payment (E-ZPass versus Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE) as another toll-assessment factor. A motorist's residency simply does not enter into the equation.
- The Commission's toll bridges are primarily used by commuters and resident within 20 miles of the river. As such, they are the primary beneficiaries of the multiple improvement projects that have been conducted at these river crossings since 2001 and that are slated to be conducted through funding arising from the proposed toll adjustment. To reduce tolls for local residents while charging others an exorbitant toll would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."

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| Craig Lewis | Hamilton, PA. | Feb. 26 12:16 p.m. | Supports adjustment |
|-------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I fell it's a good idea for new tolls, I also think the tolls coming from New Jersey should go up to pay for more State Police to stop all the speeder coming from New York and New Jersey. The speed limit is only 50 and they drive by you like your setting still. The only vehicles I see stop are 18 wheelers. So I say new tolls and higher tolls Thank You Craig Lewis

Staff response:

- The Commission is authorized to charge tolls to fund its operations and services, conduct capital projects, and meet its long-term financial obligations. It does not use tolls as a punitive or speed-enforcement measure. To do otherwise, would run afoul of the federal stipulation that tolls "shall be just and reasonable."

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| McCoy, Robert | Monroe County, PA. | Feb. 26 12:49 p.m. | Opposes \$3 cash toll |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: A two hundred percent increase on cash paying commuters is highway robbery. Pun intended.

Staff response:

- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed \$3 rate for Class 1 passenger-vehicle drivers paying Cash reflects that higher collection cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing Cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.

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| Clasen, Jack | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 26 12:51 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: NJ already taxes the hell out of us. Why would we pay more money to cross a bridge? You have less employees manning the toll booths than ever. Either keep the current rates, or even decrease it. What the hell are we paying for?

Staff response:

- The Commission does not receive any funding from New Jersey or Pennsylvania.
- It also does not get a share of state or federal gas-tax revenues.
- Tolls are the Commission's ultimate funding source.
- The Commission operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to move commuters, travelers and commerce. Our bridges are economic necessities. They must remain open and be maintained. The agency can't shirk responsibilities like public safety and security, or plowing and de-icing in winter storms, or collecting tolls to fund operations and financial obligations.
- The current operating budget, 18 years of annual audits, 15 years of meeting minutes, and 14 years of annual inspection reports are posted and viewable on the Commission website. The 2019 inspection report identifies nearly \$1.6 billion in capital projects and expenditures that have been completed since 2001, are in the process of execution, or are proposed to be performed in coming years.

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| Smith, Maty | Blairstown, N.J. | Feb. 26 1:21 p.m. | Opposes \$3 Cash toll |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: prove that you need to increase the tolls to maintain the bridges. tolls are not another source of revenue for the states. come on. a 300% increase is a complete rip. off and you jerks know it.

- The Commission is not a state agency.
- The Commission does not receive any funding from New Jersey or Pennsylvania.
- It also does not get a share of state or federal gas-tax revenues.
- The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's authority to toll has always been rooted in its Compact, first jointly enacted by the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania in 1934 and ratified by Congress in 1935 in accordance with the Compact Clause to the U.S. Constitution. That authority has been reaffirmed in court decisions and subsequent Compact changes.
- Since 1987, tolls have been the sole funding means for the Commission's operations, services, capital improvements and long-term financial obligations. The Commission operates as a wholly self-funded entity without any tax revenues from either of its two jurisdictional states or the federal government. Funding for the operation, maintenance and upkeep of its bridges and service-delivery system is solely derived from revenues collected at its toll bridges.

- The highest increase under the proposed toll adjustments is the Cash toll rate for Class 1 passenger vehicles – from the current \$1 rate to a new \$3 charge on or after April 3, 2021.
- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass and the proposed \$3 rate for Class 1 passenger-vehicle drivers paying Cash reflects that higher collection cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing Cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.

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| Schmitt, Cheryl | Porter Twp., PA. | Feb. 26 1:40 p.m. | Opposes commuter discount elimination |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|

ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Understand a slight rate increase but strongly object to loss of computer discount

Staff response:

- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program as a customer incentive tool when the agency first implemented E-ZPass service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission's frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission's toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for phasing out this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the resulting \$1.50 E-ZPass rate for a Class 1 passenger vehicle would be half of the \$3 Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE rate for the same vehicle.

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| Barinas, Joseph | Hardwick, N.J. | Feb. 26 1:45 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: The toll hike is a financial hardship on me & my family. Those on a fixed income are financially burdened by a toll increase. Please reconsider it.

Staff response:

- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the Commission would continue to provide the lowest Class 1 passenger vehicle toll rates – E-ZPass or Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE – for travel across the river between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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| Flanagan, Wendy | Blairstown, N.J. | Feb. 26 1:47 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Raising the tolls hurts everyone. It traps poor people within a local footprint, unable to travel, thereby keeping people impoverished and feeding the online mail order economy. Dont kill the potential for economic recovery by trapping people with tolls. We dont even go to NYC at all anymore because of the tolls. The same will be true of PA. We will not pay to shop 15 minutes into PA if it costs too much to cross the border.

Staff response:

- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the Commission would continue to provide the lowest passenger vehicle toll rates – E-ZPass or Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE – for travel across the river between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission’s current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.

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| Gettler, William | Wantage, N.J. | Feb. 26 2:10 p.m. PHONE | Opposes \$3 Cash toll |
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TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE CALL: This is William Gettler, residing in Wantage New Jersey. Since I live in Sussex County and I don't use the Interstate Highway System, I don't have E-ZPass on my car. Just to increase the toll from \$1 to \$3 on the Milford Bridge is obscene. The only time we go to Milford is to have a nice dinner at one of the restaurants. We'll have to figure now the meal is going to be \$2 more expensive. Or we can just go and cross over in Port Jervis, use Route 6, and just use the bridge on the way back and not on the way there. Again, I believe the increase is obscene. A dollar to a dollar and a half I think would be fine, but the \$3 is way too much. Thank you. Bye.

Staff response:

- The proposed increase for Cash transactions is part of a two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. If the proposed toll adjustment schedules were to be approved, E-ZPass motorists would no longer be in a situation where they are subsidizing the higher collection costs of Cash transactions. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission’s Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.

- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the Commission would continue to provide the lowest Class 1 passenger vehicle rates – E-ZPass or Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE – for a highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

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| Csezmadia, Scott | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 26 2:53 p.m. | Opposes adjustment |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: This is absolutely ridiculous! Living so close to the border and using the toll so often adds up quickly already.

Staff response:

- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the Commission would continue to provide the lowest passenger vehicle toll rates – E-ZPass or Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE – for a highway toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
- Due to proximity, the Commission’s bridges are primarily used by the roughly 2 million residents living and working within its bi-state service jurisdiction. As such, they are beneficiaries of the Bridge Commission bridges, related transportation facilities, and services which are ultimately funded through tolls.

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| Hartig, Ann | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 26 3:16 p.m. | Opposes adjustment E-ZPass billing issue |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I have a business across the river. My husband has a 2 axel duel wheel. Your ez pass charges us more \$\$ Than should. It is not accurate. Also the increase is ridiculous since if you go to this it will not increase employees. Also still arguing what we were charged when Covid shutdown ocured.

Staff response:

- A dual-axle pickup truck with dual-rear wheels would be classified at a Commission tolling point as a Class 1 passenger vehicle, providing it is less than eight-feet high and does not have a trailer in tow. The current E-ZPass base toll would be \$1.25 at the new Scudder Falls (I-295) Toll Bridge and \$1 at the Commission’s seven other toll bridges. The E-ZPass rate for this vehicle is proposed to rise by 25 cents this year to \$1.25 at the seven older Commission tolling points and another 25 cents to \$1.50 at all eight tolling points in 2024.
- As for the proposed increase in the Cash toll rate for this vehicle, Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass. The proposed \$3 rate for Class 1 passenger-vehicle drivers paying cash reflects that higher collection cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing Cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.
- It’s unclear what this individual’s E-ZPass billing issue is and whether it even involves a Commission tolling point. It’s possible it involves late fees on a Toll-by-Mail invoice that was issued when the Commission temporarily suspended cash toll collections during the severe

COVID-19 pandemic spike in the spring of 2020. Commission staff will attempt to contact the individual to see if the E-ZPass customer service staff can assist her.

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| Hamill, Kristen | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 26 3:21 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: To impose a toll increase on drivers at this time is not practical. People are out of work and gas prices are quickly increasing. You are making it even more difficult for residents that are already strapped for funds to be able to cross state lines and shop in other communities. Please reconsider this increase.

Staff response:

- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.
- The Commission's toll adjustment stems from the current financial realities arising from changed travel patterns as the coronavirus, lockdowns and a fragile recovery have affected job commuting, shopping, and tourism.
- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the Commission would continue to provide the lowest Class 1 passenger vehicle toll rates – E-ZPass or Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE – for travel across the river between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.
- Due to proximity, the Commission's bridges are primarily used by the roughly 2 million residents living and working within its bi-state service jurisdiction. As such, they are primary beneficiaries of the Bridge Commission's bridges, related transportation facilities, and services which are ultimately funded through tolls.

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| Lucas, Alexis | Blairstown, N.J. | Feb. 26 3:28 p.m. | Opposes \$3 Cash toll Opposes cashless tolling |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: Why does it seem like you want to punish people that use cash instead of an ez card? Cash should be less than an ez pass prices for sure because it can take days to get those funds out of peoples bank accounts. Cash prevents people from running tolls if their bank account don't have the funds. Stop trying to make this world cashless.

Staff response:

- This commenter is confusing the immediacy of a toll's collection with the actual costs of respective toll collection methods.
- Cash tolls are more expensive to collect than E-ZPass. The proposed \$3 rate for passenger-vehicle drivers paying cash reflects that higher collection cost. This proposed rate would relieve E-ZPass customers of the burden of subsidizing Cash toll payers. E-ZPass customers now represent 75 percent of toll payers system-wide.

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| Kise, Kristen | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 26 3:40 p.m. | Opposes \$3 Cash toll |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: I no longer have easy pass because they were constant charges on my account for crossing the bridge that were not valid. I got tired of fighting it so I canceled my account now I pay cash, to triple the amount of the cash toll is absolutely unacceptable. Is the end goal here to force people to get easy pass so tolls can be charged that are not valid so E Z Pass can make more money!?!

Staff response:

- A response cannot be provided with respect to the vague E-ZPass billing issue relayed in this comment.
- Nobody is forced to get E-ZPass. The proposed increase for Cash transactions is part of a two-tier rating structure that would base tolls according to costs associated with each respective collection method. Lower rates would be assigned to E-ZPass transactions because they are cheaper to collect. Higher rates would be assigned to Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE transactions because they are more costly to process and collect. If the proposed toll adjustment schedules were to be approved, E-ZPass motorists would no longer be in a situation where they are subsidizing the higher collection costs of Cash transactions. This two-tier pricing method is the prevailing trend among toll agencies nationally and is already in use at the Commission's Scudder Falls Toll Bridge, which provides lower E-ZPass rates and higher TOLL-BY-PLATE rates.
- E-ZPass is not a profit-making company. It's a trade-marked electronic toll collection system operated in 19 Northeast, Southern, and Midwest states by over 40 participating toll and transportation agencies. The system services more than 27 million accounts, 43 million transponders, and the collection of over \$11.3 billion dollars in electronic tolls. Billions of toll transactions are processed through the system annually. The system is robust and mature; while billing errors might occur, they are the vast exception to the rule.

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| Mezzanotte, Tara | Knowlton, N.J. | Feb. 26 3:55 p.m. | Opposes adjustment Opposes commuter discount elimination |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: If the proposed rate was in affect when my children were younger, it might have prohibited them from attending school at Notre Dame - East Stroudsburg, and our daughter may not have been able to swim for the Pocono Family YMCA swim team from age 8 thru 17. Many of us do not view the river as a boundary between states. We rely on the stores and services in PA for our everyday needs - groceries, doctors, restaurants, friends, family, entertainment and more. It is especially

disappointing to read our frequent toll discount might disproportionately go away while the truck frequent toll discount might remain. This seems extremely unfair and unjust. Please consider a discount for those with zip codes in Knowlton Township and at the very least give us the same discount as trucks for frequent crossing. Thanks you

Staff response:

- The Commission does not provide – and never has provided – a frequency-based E-ZPass discount for trucks/commercial vehicles.
- The only discount currently afforded to trucks/commercial vehicles is a 10-percent off-peak E-ZPass discount for travel between 9:01 p.m. and 5:59 a.m. This discount would be eliminated this year under the proposed toll adjustments.
- The Commission established a frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount program for passenger vehicles as an incentive tool when the agency first implemented the electronic toll-collecting service in late 2002. Other E-ZPass-use incentives were trimmed or eliminated in early 2010, but the frequent-commuter discount continued past its originally conceived term of application.
- The Commission’s frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount actually has come under fire in some quarters because it can be tabulated and applied as a retroactive credit only on E-ZPass accounts administered by the Commission’s toll-processing service provider – the regional New Jersey E-ZPass Customer Service Center. Due in part to this criticism and the complicated process of executing the discounts, the proposed toll adjustment calls for the phasing out of this nearly 20-year-old program over the next three years.
- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the resulting \$1.50 E-ZPass rate for a Class 1 passenger vehicles in 2024 would be half of the \$3 Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE rate for the same vehicle.
- Unless other agencies change their rates, both the Commission’s \$1.50 E-ZPass rate and \$3 Cash/TOLL-BY-Plate rate would continue to be the lowest highway bridge tolls between Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 2024.
- The Commission assesses tolls based on a vehicle’s (or combined vehicles’) height and number of rolling axles. The proposed toll adjustments – if approved – would modify this by adding the method of toll payment (E-ZPass versus Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE) as another toll-assessment factor. A motorist’s residency does not enter into the toll-assessment process.
- The Commission is prohibited under its Trust Indenture from excluding local residents from tolls. The indenture requires tolls be applied “regardless of the status or character of any Person participating in the traffic.”
- To reduce tolls for local residents while charging others an exorbitant toll would run afoul of the federal requirement that tolls “shall be just and reasonable.”
- Due to proximity, the Commission’s bridges are primarily used by the roughly 2 million residents living and working within its bi-state service jurisdiction. As such, they are primary beneficiaries of the Bridge Commission’s bridges, related transportation facilities, and services which are ultimately funded through tolls.

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| Dowd, Edward | Pike, PA. | Feb. 26 3:57 p.m. | Bad time to raise tolls |
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ONLINE FORM COMMENT: It is my opinion that a total increase at this time is totally unreal. We're facing a major economic downturn, and many people are without work and you want to increase tolls. You're worried about your bond rating, you're worried about your projects the proposed project sustainability. That doesn't seem like a concern to the public it seems like management problem to me. I oppose your proposal in every way at this time, I realize spare a later time when the economy is recovering a job market is recovered review of this increase is reasonable but not at this time. Thank you for your attention.

Staff response:

- If the proposed toll adjustments were to be approved, the Commission would continue to provide the lowest Class 1 passenger vehicle rates – E-ZPass or Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE – for a highway toll bridge between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.
- Any deferral or delay in confronting the Commission's current financial situation would necessitate even steeper toll increases at a later date.



Virtual Public Hearings – Feb. 17-18, 2021

Proposed 2021/2024 Toll Adjustments

JOSEPH J. RESTA – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Delaware River
Joint Toll Bridge
Commission



Introduction



- First system-wide toll adjustment in 10 years
- Prompted by continuing traffic and revenue losses arising from the pandemic and recession
- Traffic/revenue declines have carried over into 2021



Why We Are Here



- Pandemic and resulting recession have changed travel patterns
- During week of April 5 to April 11, 2020
 - Commission experienced 58-percent less traffic than in the last pre-pandemic week of 2020 (March 1-7)
 - 373,120 transactions versus 895,436 five weeks earlier
 - Loss of more than \$1 million in one week
 - \$1.945 million April 5-11 compared to \$2.98 million March 1-7



Year 2020 DRJTBC Weekly Toll Traffic Analysis



Why We Are Here



- Traffic and revenue improved from late May through December
 - BUT – never returned to normal anticipated levels
 - AND – further worsened the Commission's financial outlook
- 2020 year-end
 - 11.8 million fewer toll transactions
 - Collected 9.36 percent less revenue

Why We Are Here



- 2020's losses left a big hole in the Commission's finances
 - Net Toll Revenue at year's end –
 - \$14.5 million less than projected
- Earned \$1.3 million less than projected on investments
 - Reinvestment opportunities for the Commission diminished due to lower interest rates

Cost-Containment Actions



- 2020-21 actions
 - No new hiring since February 2020
 - Postponed new capital project starts
 - 10-percent cuts in discretionary accounts in 2021 operating budget
 - Salary freezes in 2021 operating budget
- Attempted to be included in federal CARES Act stimulus measure but was unsuccessful



Mission



- Our mission doesn't change in tough economic times
 - Still a 24/7 operation of moving commuters and commerce
 - Bridges and roadways to maintain
 - Ensure public safety and security
 - Plow and salt during winter storms
 - Must collect tolls to fund operations and pay financial obligations



Unique Mandate



- Operate eight revenue-generating highway toll bridges
- Also operate 12 non-revenue generating, low-capacity bridges
- We call these smaller crossings “toll-supported” bridges because their operating and maintenance costs are paid through a share of the revenue collected at our toll bridges
 - Statutorily required by the two states and Congress under the Compact clause of the U.S. Constitution
- Prohibited from tolling the 12 toll-supported bridges



Unique Mandate



- The toll-supported bridges provide additional travel options for our patrons
- Last year, these bridges carried twice as much traffic westbound (toll-direction) as they did eastbound (non-toll direction)
- Only bi-state toll agency with such a unique mandate



Only Recourse



- Commission's ultimate funding source is tolls
 - Do not receive any funding from PA or NJ
 - Do not share in state or federal gas-tax revenues
- Tolls pay the debt-service costs of capital projects
- Pay for plowing, repairs, security, lighting, State Police, etc.
- They support the mission of ensuring safe and efficient travel between the states



Only Recourse



- Faced with \$14.5 million 2020 revenue loss
- Traffic/revenue declines continuing into 2021
- DRJTBC staff is proposing a system-wide adjustment
- Risk possibility of steeper toll increases later if action is delayed



Proposed Adjustment



- Proposing a two-tier toll structure like many other agencies are doing
 - E-ZPass customers to pay lower rates
 - Cash/TOLL BY PLATE (Scudder Falls) customers to pay higher rates because those methods cost more to collect
- 75 percent of toll collections now through E-ZPass
- Two-tier structure would encourage more Cash/TOLL BY PLATE conversions to E-ZPass
- Long-term, the comparatively lower E-ZPass rates would generate customer usage instead of outdated discount programs




Proposed Adjustment



- Toll adjustments to take effect in two stages
 - Majority of adjustments proposed to take effect on or after April 3, 2021
 - Second set of limited adjustments proposed for on or after January 6, 2024
- The proposed 2021 adjustments for our three largest vehicular classifications are as follows:

Class 1 – Personal Vehicles



| VEHICLE DESCRIPTION | | TOLL RATES | |
|---------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| | | E-Z Pass <i>EZPass</i> | Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE |
| 2-Axle |  Motorcycles, cars, SUVs and light trucks | \$1.25 20-percent Commuter Discount available* | \$3 |

- E-ZPass rate increases by 25 cents - \$1.25 rate already charged at Scudder Falls Toll Bridge
- Cash/TOLL BY PLATE increases to \$3



Class 1 - Trailers



| VEHICLE DESCRIPTION | | TOLL RATES | |
|---------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------|
| | | E-Z Pass <i>EZPass</i> | Cash/TOLL-BY- PLATE |
| w/trailer |  1-axle trailer in tow  2-axle trailer in tow | \$3.25 | \$5 |

- Bumper-hitch trailers only
- Proposed increase to a \$2 surcharge, irrespective of number of trailer's rolling axles
- Pickups with gooseneck/5th-wheel trailers would continue to be charged commercial per-axle rates

Class 2 – Two-Axles 8-feet +




| VEHICLE DESCRIPTION | | TOLL RATES | |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| | | E-Z Pass <i>E-ZPass</i> | Cash/TOLL-BY- PLATE |
| 2-Axle |  | \$9 | \$10 |

- \$4.50 per axle for E-ZPass
- \$5 per axle for Cash/TOLL BY PLATE



Class 5 – 5-axle Combos



| VEHICLE DESCRIPTION | | TOLL RATES | |
|---------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------|
| | | E-Z Pass <i>EZPass</i> | Cash/TOLL-BY- PLATE |
| 5-Axle |  | \$22.50 | \$25 |

- \$4.50 per-axle E-ZPass
- \$5 per-axle Cash/TOLL BY PLATE




All Vehicle Classes

At drjtbc.org



Delaware River
Joint Toll Bridge
Commission

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|--------|--|---------|------|
| CLASS 2 & UP | <p>Includes any vehicle 8-feet or above in height with two or more axles.</p> <p>Tolls would be \$4.50 per axle for E-ZPass and \$5 per axle for cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE.</p> <p>The 10-percent off-peak commercial-vehicle discount for Class 2 and above would be eliminated on or after April 3, 2021.</p> <p>Class 2 (two-axle) vehicles include small box trucks, flatbed trucks, school buses, small recreational vehicles, certain sprinter vans, and certain conversion vans.</p> <p>Class 1 vehicles with gooseneck/fifth-wheel trailers in tow also would be charged \$4.50 per axle E-ZPass or \$5 cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE (see rates for Classes 3, 4, and 5).</p> <p>Class 2 (two axles) and Class 3 (three axles) vehicles with trailers would be charged an additional \$4.50 for E-ZPass or \$5 cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE for each additional axle in tow (see rates for Classes 3, 4, and 5).</p> | 2-Axle |  | \$9 | \$10 |
| | | 3-Axle |  2-axle RV w/ 1-axle trailer | \$13.50 | \$15 |
| | | 4-Axle |  4-axle dump truck 2-axle RV w/ 2-axle trailer 2-axle RV w/ 2-axle passenger in tow Truck with GM trailer | \$18 | \$20 |
| | | 5-Axle |  | \$22.50 | \$25 |
| | | 6-Axle |  | \$27 | \$30 |
| | | 7-Axle |  | \$31.50 | \$35 |





E-ZPass Discounts



- Frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount for Class 1 vehicles
 - Proposed reduction from current 40-percent retroactive credit to new 20-percent retroactive credit
 - Transponder-based discount applies after 16 or more tolled trips across one or more Commission bridges per calendar month
 - Can only be applied to transponders administered by Commission's toll processor – the regional NJ E-ZPass Customer Service Center
 - Proposed total elimination of this discount in 2024
- 10% off-peak commercial vehicle E-ZPass discount to end in 2021

Proposed 2024 Rate Changes



| CLASS | VEHICLE DESCRIPTION | TOLL RATES | | | |
|---------|--|---|---|--------|-----|
| | | E-Z Pass <i>E-ZPass</i> | Cash/TOLL-BY-PLATE | | |
| CLASS 1 | <p>Includes vehicles with up to 2 axles and less than 8-feet high.</p> <p>The frequency-based E-ZPass commuter discount would expire on or after January 6, 2024.</p> <p>A passenger vehicle with a trailer or vehicle in tow would be charged an additional \$2 regardless of the number of rolling axles.</p> <p>Per-axle commercial/truck rates (\$4.50 or \$5 per axle) apply for Class 1 vehicles with gooseneck/fifth-wheel trailers in tow. See rates for Class 3, 4, or 5, as applicable.)</p> | 2-Axle |  Motorcycles, cars, SUVs and light trucks | \$1.50 | \$3 |
| | w/trailer |  1-axle trailer in tow  2-axle trailer in tow | \$3.50 | \$5 | |



DRJTBC Outcomes If Approved



- Continue to have the region's lowest highway bridge tolls
- Uniform rates for all eight toll bridges
- 2024 E-ZPass car toll of \$1.50 would be half of Cash/TOLL BY PLATE rate
 - Lower E-ZPass rates would apply to all E-ZPass accounts regardless of issuer



DRJTBC Outcomes If Approved



- Offset losses arising from this pandemic and recession
- Ensure sufficient funding for capital projects that also generate construction-related jobs
- Mitigate a bond-rating downgrade that would increase future borrowing costs for future projects
- Build financial reserves so smaller projects can be pursued without having to borrow money



DRJTBC Outcomes If Approved



- Position the Commission to meet the terms of its Financial Resilience Policy
 - Improve its creditworthiness and credit rating to ensure cost-efficient access to capital markets
 - Achieve a 2.0 Debt Service Coverage ratio
 - Ensure a sufficient balance in its bond-holder prescribed General Reserve Fund

Hearing Purpose



- This virtual hearing is one part of an extensive public comment process for the proposed toll adjustments
- Comments provided at this hearing will be included in the official record and reported to the Board of Commissioners before deliberating and voting on the proposed adjustments
- Commissioners currently are scheduled to consider the proposed toll adjustments on March 29
- Comment period to end 4 p.m. February 26
- Multiple ways for the public to be heard

Other Comment Options



Online: Comment form at www.drjtbc.org/tollcomments



Toll-free phone line (three-minute limit): 1-855-721-0444



US Mail – address to:

Director of Community Affairs Jodee Inscho

DRJTBC Administration Building

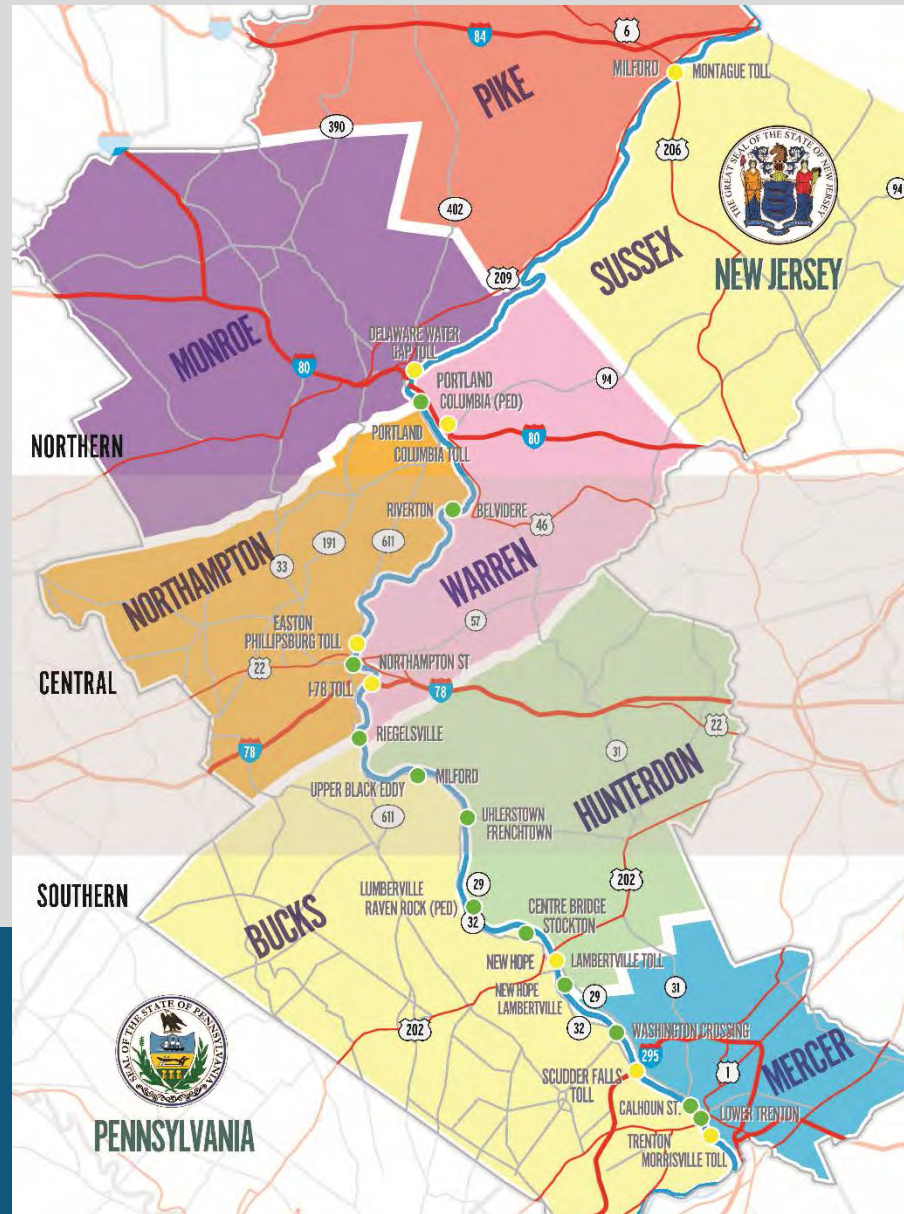
1199 Woodside Road, Yardley, PA 19067

Note: There is no limit to written comments submitted online or by U.S. Mail

Closing



- We have stated our case for the proposed toll adjustments
- Now it is your turn to be heard
- The hearing officer will now explain how this virtual session will proceed before taking comments from this hearing's registered participants



www.drjtbc.org



Delaware River
Joint Toll Bridge
Commission