

Tolls in Connecticut

Frequently Asked Questions

The following information details the proposals that have been made by the CT Department of Transportation and legislative Democrats to implement tolls in CT. While there are many unknowns about how tolls will impact CT residents, the following is what we do know.

Who will pay for tolls?

DOT studies have estimated anywhere from 60%-75% of toll revenue coming from Connecticut residents.

Can tolls just be placed on the borders?

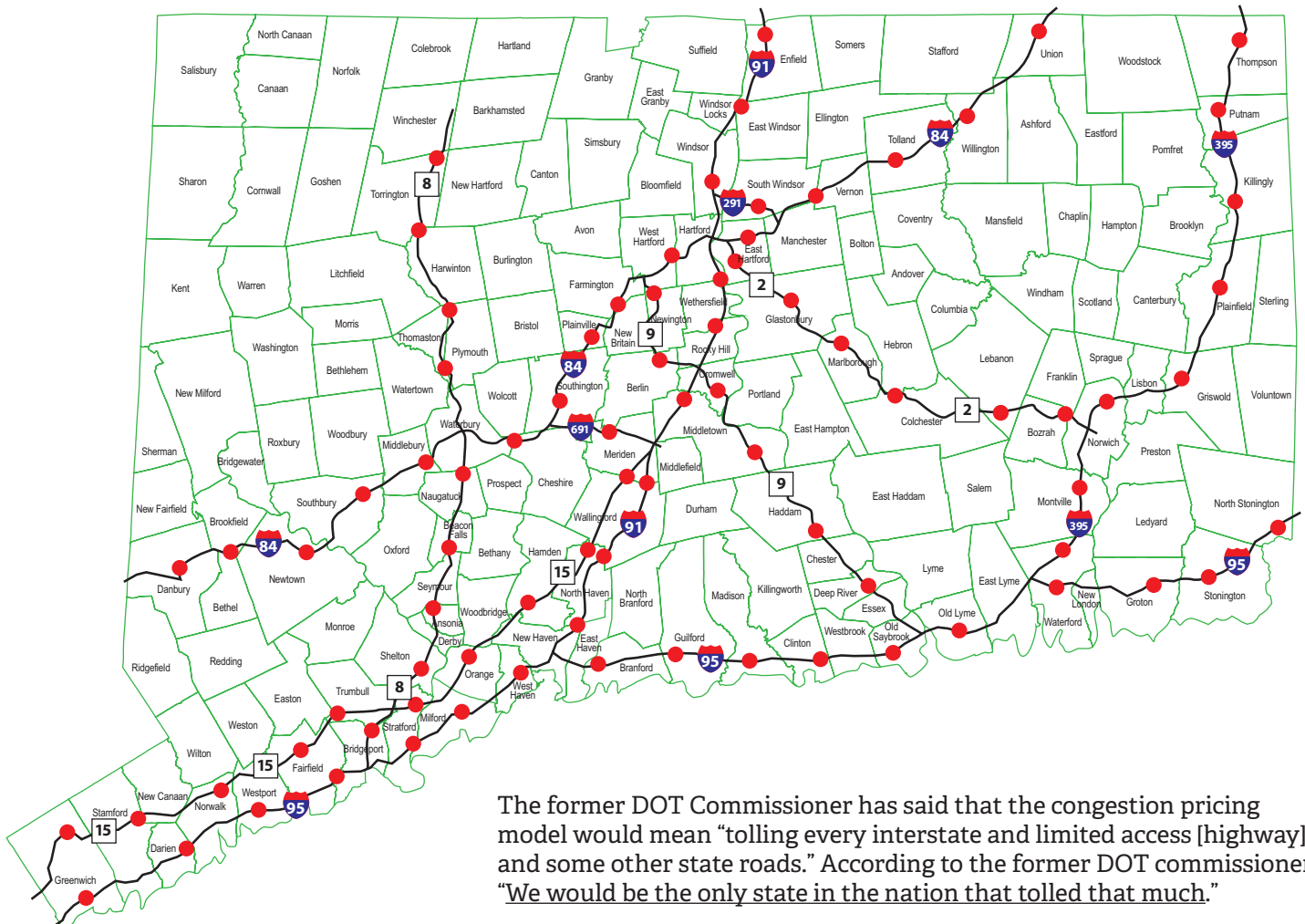
Connecticut cannot implement border tolls without losing federal money and having to pay back the federal government for decades of funding we received because we didn't have tolls (this is unique to CT because of an agreement with the federal government in 1984 when tolls were removed. If we did border tolls, we would have to pay back all federal funding received since that agreement began.)

Is there a set plan for how tolls will be implemented?

So far we have seen various proposals and ideas discussed. The CT DOT has completed a study that details the implementation of at least 82 toll gantries across Connecticut in a congestion price tolling model which includes higher rates during peak driving times. Some Democrats have also proposed bills to implement tolls with promises of solving the state's transportation problems without even describing comprehensive plans. No proposal has been presented to the federal government for approval yet.

Where will tolls be located?

A CT DOT study has identified 82 locations for toll gantries.



The former DOT Commissioner has said that the congestion pricing model would mean "tolling every interstate and limited access [highway] and some other state roads." According to the former DOT commissioner, **"We would be the only state in the nation that tolled that much."**

How close together will electronic tolls be located?

Under the DOT's plan, the average spacing is every 6.6 miles. The concern here is that tolls essentially would become a mileage tax. Instead of paying to use a certain bridge or one roadway like in other states, CT would see tolls all over and residents would be charged at the toll for every mile they drive.

How much will tolls cost?

A Democrat State Senator has estimated their toll bill could cost the average resident \$600 per year. Under the DOT's plan, which is lacking a complete firm analysis, peak rates for drivers are estimated to be 7.9 cents per mile, with a discount down to 5.5 cents per mile for Connecticut commuters. Rates would change depending on time of day and the type of E-Z Pass. A single, one-way trip on I-95 from New York to New Haven during peak hours would cost \$2.11 or \$4.22 for a round trip. That could equal \$21.10 per week for a regular commuter with a CT E-Z Pass commuter discount, totaling over \$1,000 per year. Heavy trucks could pay as much as 47.3 cents per mile, under the DOT plan. The DOT also admits that these numbers could change based upon a full analysis and driving behaviors.

Who has to approve tolls?

The state legislature would have to vote to move the concept forward. The legislature could also create a state transit authority and give that body the power to implement tolls. Another obstacle is that tolls in CT would still have to be approved by the federal government.

Would tolls allow us to lower other taxes?

Democrat lawmakers and previous administration have proposed tolls at the same time they proposed other new taxes and tax increases. Too often, tax breaks that are promised never come to fruition (look what happened to the promise of eliminating the sales tax which was promised when the income tax was passed). Past proposals have included: governor proposing 7 cent gas tax increase, Democrat lawmakers proposing 4 cent gas tax increase, Governor proposing \$3 per tire fee.

Can't we just toll trucks?

Rhode Island's system of tolling trucks only is facing a federal lawsuit charging the targeted tolls violate the interstate commerce clause of the U.S. Constitution. Trucks also do not travel through our state for free; rather they pay fees and taxes. The CT trucking industry currently pays approximately \$281 million in taxes annually. The industry pays 32% of all taxes owed by CT motorists, despite trucks representing only 5% of vehicle miles traveled in CT. Increasing costs on the trucking industry will also result in higher prices on goods and services.

But we need to get out of state drivers to pay for our roads too, right?

DOT estimates only 40% of tolls would be paid for by out of state residents. Out-of-state drivers also already contribute to Connecticut's transportation budget, through per-mile costs that truck drivers pay and through a disbursement of federal gas tax dollars that benefits Connecticut more than states that have tolls. Because we don't have tolls we get more federal funds as a result of mileage taxes people from all states pay. To get out of state drivers to pay we also would need reciprocity with other states to bill drivers who travel through Connecticut. Just as Massachusetts is struggling to collect tolls from out of state residents – including people from Connecticut – our state will not automatically be able to collect from out of state drivers who do not want to pay.

If not tolls, then what?

Connecticut needs to consider ways to fund transportation without asking for more from state taxpayers who have already been drained enough. If elected officials believe transportation should be a priority, then let's make it a priority. The Republican Prioritize Progress transportation funding plan eliminates excessive use of the state's credit card for political handouts at the same time it prioritizes funding for necessities like roads, bridges and school construction. It operates under a bonding cap to curb borrowing. Today, Prioritize Progress would allow us to provide an immediate and stable funding source dedicated just for transportation totaling as much as \$1.5 billion annually in state resources alone. Over 30 years, with projected federal matching dollars, it would provide \$65 billion for critical transportation infrastructure projects within current resources. Read the plan here:

www.CTSenateRepublicans.com/PrioritizeProgress.

