



News from the
Ohio Turnpike Commission

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Ohio Turnpike Commission proposes toll adjustments and further plans for electronic toll collection (E-ZPass[®])

BEREA, OH - November 17, 2008 – The Ohio Turnpike Commission (OTC) adopted a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to hold public hearings regarding a proposed revision to the current schedule of tolls.

While the proposed change would not occur until later next year, the Commission felt it was important to begin the process now. The OTC's Executive Director George Distel stated, "We want to give the public ample time to understand what is being proposed, how it might affect them, and how it relates to electronic tolling (E-ZPass[®])." He added that the proposed toll adjustments are designed to coincide with launching E-ZPass[®] in the fourth quarter of 2009.

The following factors were considered in the development of the proposed rates:

- Current Revenues and Operating Budget of the OTC
- Projected Capital Expenditures
- Noise Mitigation Efforts
- Conversion to Axle-Based Tolling System
- Incentive for Heavy Commercial Vehicles
- *E-ZPass*[®] Incentives

The proposed toll adjustments come at a time when the Ohio Turnpike is struggling financially. "It would be challenging to maintain business-as-usual without some type of adjustment," stated Distel. "We've already shaved \$13 million from our budget and pushed back some capital improvement projects, but we want to keep the maintenance and operations of the Turnpike at the level our customers expect."

Under the proposed toll rate structure, heavier trucks will pay slightly less than truckers currently pay, while lighter trucks will pay somewhat more. The proposed toll adjustment will also provide an incentive for Ohio Turnpike customers who utilize E-ZPass®.

The Commission realizes that having E-ZPass® will make traveling between neighboring and other states even easier and more convenient. "While we know that many of our customers, specifically truckers, already have E-ZPass®, we will be encouraging our frequent commuters to get it as well," stated Distel. The Commission will be adding an online enrollment option to its website, as well as developing an E-ZPass® Customer Service Center (CSC) for managing new accounts.

"Customers who already have an E-ZPass® account and transponder from another state will be all set to use it on the Ohio Turnpike when it's available," stated Distel. "If someone wants to open an account now, they can contact another state that offers E-ZPass®, or they can wait until we have established our online processing and Customer Service Center, sometime next summer."

While the exact "go live" date for E-ZPass® has yet to be announced, the Commission is taking steps daily to ensure a smooth transition. "There are many complex pieces to this installation process that must occur before we can make it available to customers. We are installing an entirely new toll collection system and that's a major undertaking," Distel stated.

The Commission's Chairman Joe Balog said, "This technology is an added convenience that our customers have requested over the past few years and we are pleased to be nearing completion of this massive project."

For more information including the proposed toll rates and the schedule for public hearings, visit the OTC's website at www.ohioturpike.org.

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