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Good morning Chair Amy Worth and Members.

Aleta Dupree for the record.

I speak to you today with my various comments concerning BATA, some of which pertains to Budget and customer service matters.

These are challenging times as you all know, not just in the work of this agency, but in the community at large. I desire for us to return to sense of normalcy, much like before this crisis began. I also, as I have said before, acknowledge that there will indeed be new normals as well.

I see various toll bridge and highway agencies going forward with their daily operations in different ways. Some, such as the New Jersey Turnpike and the New York State Thruway have resumed manual cash toll collections. Others, such as the Pennsylvania Turnpike, have made all electronic tolling permanent. And some others have not made any new decisions as of this writing.

Invoicing is indeed challenging, I ask for you to continue the work of innovating, to reduce the amount of mail being sent out. The aggregation of toll invoicing can mitigate that issue, and fewer, albeit larger electronic transactions can result in fewer swipe fees as well. Electronic invoicing should be instituted, and allowing for timely push, text, and email notifications.

It is true that invoicing is creating a time lag in the receipt of revenue. It is essential to allow for that, and at the same time ensuring collections. It is reasonable to resume processing for violations, and that is being done already by agencies that have permanent all electronic tolling in place.

I have seen several agencies resume cash collection, and in each case I've seen so far, such decisions haven't been accompanied by public explanation, as far as news reports go. And so customers in those locations have lost the options they did have in the electronic environment, only to return to the congestion and inconvenience of before.

COVID-19 is still real, and I do not advocate for bringing people back into the tollbooths, putting them at risk, even with mitigations such as plexiglass barriers, face coverings, and hand sanitizer. Even before COVID-19, manual toll taking still has its attendant risks. Safety needs to be first and foremost, not just about COVID-19, but in the challenging environment of stop and start.

I look forward to you passing this Budget, and continuing to contract for enhanced customer service. It's time to continue forward and keep practicing these new methods of contactless toll collection.

I bring to you that during my times in the Bay Area, I used the various Amazon Go stores, often daily, sometimes two or three times a day. I believe that traveling on the seven State owned bridges administered by BATA should have that same ease of use.

Given this, I maintain that all electronic tolling on the bridges needs to continue, and FasTrak needs continuing promotion.

Thank you.
Sent from my iPad