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To: MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>
Subject: BATA Oversight Committee 20211110

External Email

Kim and Martha, with thanks, please forward this message to the BATA Oversight Committee for the Meeting of 10 November, 2021.

Good morning Chair Amy Worth and Members.

Aleta Dupree for the record. (she, her).

Today I bring you my thoughts concerning the work and mission of the BATA Oversight Committee.

First this. Much is happening in the toll collection space in this season. The New York State Bridge Authority has begun all electronic tolling on the third of its five Hudson River facilities, the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, on 1 November of this year. In Florida, on 8 November, the entire Florida's Turnpike mainline will commence all electronic tolling, something long awaited and watched for. Over time the old toll barriers will be removed, bringing about the ideal of true open road tolling.

I am in favor of your action items to be presented to you at this Meeting. In order to help more join the Fastrak program, various barriers and frictions need to be removed or at least reduced. I support the elimination of fees for making cash payments, BATA can certainly gain economies of scale by managing cash payment costs internally, rather than many individuals shouldering those costs on their own. It is my hope that as people move away from cash, that they can bring it to BATA and put it to work funding their Fastrak accounts.

I am in support of lowering the upfront fees for acquiring Fastrak transponders and the accompanying account deposits. Again, we want to make it easier for people to use Fastrak, which is really the ideal.

The work we are doing today at BATA is really only the beginning. There will be new technologies such as apps and in vehicle payment protocols, especially as we see a greater separation between vehicle use and ownership. Really all the Public wants is for a seamless customer experience that inspires confidence. And BATA is really about collecting the rightfully owed toll money, and nothing more. Our budget should not be predicated on fines and fees, but in timely collection of the basic toll revenues that all are expected to pay. The vast majority of bridge users intend to pay their tolls in a timely manner, and our systems need to make that as easy as possible, especially in the introductory phase.

With new things there will always be questions, and we have to do our level best in being able to give timely and accurate answers. The work of building a better BATA system needs to keep moving forward, and expeditiously so.

Thank you.