



December 6, 2024

Bay Area Toll Authority Oversight Committee  
375 Beale Street, Suite 800  
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Support for Bridge Toll Increase and Carpool Policy Changes for BATA Bridges

Dear BATA Oversight Committee Members,

On behalf of the Bay Area Council, representing over 325 major employers across the Bay Area, I am writing to express our support for the proposed bridge toll increase to fund critical bridge maintenance projects. We do not take this decision lightly. This increase comes at a very difficult time when Bay Area residents and employers are feeling the strain of the ever-increasing cost of living and doing business in the region. Yet after a thorough evaluation of the proposal, we have ultimately decided there is no other option to raise funds to maintain our bridges.

The seven state-owned bridges are critical to our region's economy, enabling people and goods to move efficiently around our nine-county region. There is no question about the importance of maintaining the bridges in proper condition, and we have ultimately concluded there is no other source of funds to do this essential work. We understand that the costs of maintaining the bridges in a state of good repair has outpaced the amount of toll revenue collected to address this need, particularly as construction costs have risen 30-40% in the years since the pandemic. BATA has a responsibility to maintain the bridges through the collection of tolls, and as such the state does not have funding available to support the bridges. We will also continue to support MTC/BATA advocacy efforts in Washington DC to attract federal infrastructure funding to the region, yet we recognize the political reality that we cannot expect more Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds to become available for Bay Area bridges after securing the seismic retrofit grant for the Golden Gate Bridge last year. Lastly, we understand that raising the money now to maintain the bridges in excellent condition is the fiscally responsible choice, as the cost of repair will only rise in the future.

In addition to the phased toll increase, we support the proposed policy changes to implement a toll differential and increase enforcement of unpaid tolls. Incentivizing adoption of FasTrak will deliver a more cost-effective payment collection system. We also appreciate the analysis conducted to better understand the usage of the bridges and the findings that almost 80% of bridge users travel on the bridges five or fewer days per month. We encourage BATA to further explore ways to mitigate the impact of the toll increase on frequent bridge users, especially low-income households.

We appreciate the thoughtful consideration of this plan that will raise critical funds to maintain and our bridges and minimize the impact to toll payers. We respectfully encourage your support of this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Loper".

**Emily Loper**  
Vice President of Public Policy