

STATE OF NEW YORK

9493

IN SENATE

March 18, 2026

Introduced by Sen. LANZA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT in relation to directing the commissioner of transportation to conduct a statewide study and review of the tolling authorities' regulations and policies in relation to cashless tolling and tolls by mail collection (Part A); to amend the public authorities law, in relation to fees imposed by public authorities (Part B); to amend the public authorities law and the transportation law, in relation to the office of toll payer advocate (Part C); and to amend the public authorities law, in relation to the cashless tolling amnesty program; and to amend chapter 47 of the laws of 1931 relating to declaring the policy of the states of New York and New Jersey in regard to certain vehicular bridges and tunnels within the port of New York district, in relation to requiring certain public authorities to establish a cashless tolling amnesty program (Part D)

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "toll payer advocacy and relief act".
3 § 2. Legislative findings and intent. Since the adoption of cashless
4 tolling and tolls by mail collection in New York state, many drivers
5 have been complaining of excessive fines and charges resulting in oner-
6 ous debt. Oftentimes, penalties are applied before a driver is aware of
7 a missed toll. Many drivers have complained of insufficient notifica-
8 tion, poor communication with the toll collecting authorities, and lack
9 of advocacy to dispute tolls and fines. This legislation is necessary to
10 make improvements to the cashless tolling and tolls by mail collection
11 systems that will provide relief to drivers from excessive fines, while
12 providing them adequate time to pay the original amount of tolls owed,
13 without penalty. If the owner formally challenges any fine, fee or
14 administrative charge, all such charges that could otherwise be imposed
15 post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst of such dispute.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 § 3. This act enacts into law major components of legislation neces-
2 sary to implement the "toll payer advocacy and relief act". Each compo-
3 nent is wholly contained within a Part identified as Parts A through D.
4 The effective date for each particular provision contained within such
5 Part is set forth in the last section of such Part. Any provision in any
6 section contained within a Part, including the effective date of the
7 Part, which makes a reference to a section "of this act", when used in
8 connection with that particular component, shall be deemed to mean and
9 refer to the corresponding section of the Part in which it is found.
10 Section five of this act sets forth the general effective date of this
11 act.

12 PART A

13 Section 1. The commissioner of transportation, in consultation with
14 the New York state bridge authority, thruway authority, triborough
15 bridge and tunnel authority, metropolitan transportation authority, and
16 port authority of New York and New Jersey, shall conduct a statewide
17 study and review of the tolling authorities' regulations and policies in
18 relation to cashless tolling and tolls by mail collection. Such study
19 shall include, but not be limited to, the financial burden of excessive
20 fines, fees or administrative charges for the late payment of a toll,
21 communication problems between the authorities and vehicle owners in
22 relation to tolls, the effectiveness of the office of toll payer advo-
23 cate in relation to the duration and outcome of requests for assistance,
24 and any unique concerns based on regional issues or out of state owners.

25 § 2. The commissioner of the department of transportation shall, on or
26 before the thirty-first of December next succeeding the effective date
27 of this act, submit a report of such study, including detailed recommen-
28 dations and findings, to the governor, the temporary president of the
29 senate, the speaker of the assembly, the minority leader of the senate,
30 the minority leader of the assembly, and the chairs of the senate and
31 assembly transportation and corporations, authorities and commissions
32 committees and the ranking minority member of each such committees.

33 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

34 PART B

35 Section 1. Section 2855 of the public authorities law, as added by
36 section 1 of part KK of chapter 59 of the laws of 2006, is amended to
37 read as follows:

§ 2855. Electronic method of payment; periodic charges. Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary, if any authority shall offer any electronic method of payment for tolls, fares, fees, rentals, or other charges, including but not limited to a system called E-ZPass, such authority shall not impose any periodic administrative or other charge for the privilege of using such electronic method of payment for such charges. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit any authority from making any charge for extra services requested by a holder of such electronic method of payment, any charge for lost or damaged equipment, or for defaults, such as charges for dishonored checks. The authority shall not enter any agreement with bondholders that would require the imposition of administrative or other periodic charges relating to electronic methods of payment prohibited by this section.

No fine, fee or administrative charge for the late payment of a toll shall exceed ten per centum of the amount of such toll owed or be

accessed within one hundred eighty days from the date of the incurred toll. If the owner formally challenges any fine, fee or administrative charge, all such charges that could otherwise be imposed post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst of such dispute.

§ 2. Subdivision 5 of section 2985 of the public authorities law, as added by chapter 379 of the laws of 1992, is amended to read as follows:

5. An owner found liable for a violation of toll collection regulations pursuant to this section shall ~~[for a first violation thereof]~~ be liable for a monetary penalty not to exceed ~~[fifty dollars or two times]~~ ten percent of the toll evaded ~~[whichever is greater; for a second violation thereof both within eighteen months be liable for a monetary penalty not to exceed one hundred dollars or five times the toll evaded whichever is greater; for a third or subsequent violation thereof all within eighteen months be liable for a monetary penalty not to exceed one hundred fifty dollars or ten times the toll evaded whichever is greater]~~. No fine, fee or administrative charge for the late payment of a toll shall be accessed within one hundred eighty days from the date of the incurred toll. If the owner formally challenges any fine, fee or administrative charge, all such charges that could otherwise be imposed post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst of such dispute.

§ 3. Subdivisions 3, 4 and 5 of section 2985-a of the public authorities law, as added by section 2 of subpart B of part WW of chapter 56 of the laws of 2024, are amended to read as follows:

3. In the case of an owner who incurs an obligation to pay a toll for the first time in six months under the tolls by mail program at a cashless tolling facility, a toll bill shall be sent within ten business days after the end of the initial billing cycle and of each subsequent billing cycle. In the case of all other owners incurring an obligation to pay a toll at a cashless tolling facility, a toll bill shall be sent at the end of the next billing cycle. Toll bills shall be sent to the owner by first class mail, and may additionally be sent by electronic means of communication upon the affirmative consent of the owner, by or on behalf of the public authority which operates such cashless tolling facility. The owner shall have ~~[thirty]~~ one hundred eighty days from the date of the toll bill to pay the incurred toll. The toll bill shall include: (i) the total amount of the incurred tolls due, (ii) the date by which payment of the incurred tolls is due, (iii) any administrative fees, (iv) the address for receipt of payment and methods of payment for the toll, (v) the procedure for contesting any toll and the contact information for the relevant toll payer advocate office and customer service center, (vi) information related to the failure to timely pay or respond to the notice of liability, in addition to the possibility that a judgment can be entered for repeat unpaid liabilities that could lead to a vehicle being towed or immobilized, (vii) a website address or hyperlink for the owner to access time-stamped photographs or footage of each toll incurred by electronic means, (viii) information related to the availability of the toll payer advocate to discuss payment options, and (ix) other information required by law or by the public authority. Each toll bill shall identify the date, time, location, license plate number, and jurisdiction of the license plate for each toll that has been incurred. Each toll bill shall include an image of the license plate of the vehicle being used or operated on the toll facility. If the owner fails to pay the initial toll bill within thirty days, a second toll bill shall be sent in the next billing cycle, which shall also indicate the ~~[overdue]~~ toll or tolls and any administrative ~~[or late]~~

fees due. If the owner fails to pay within sixty days of the second toll bill, a third toll bill shall be sent in the next billing cycle, which shall also indicate the toll or tolls and any administrative fees due and shall notify the owner that administrative violation fees will be imposed if the owner fails to pay the toll bill within one hundred eighty days from the date of the incurred toll. No fine, fee or administrative charge for the late payment of a toll shall exceed ten per centum of the amount of such toll owed or be assessed within one hundred eighty days from the date of the incurred toll. If the owner formally challenges any fine, fee or administrative charge, all such charges that could otherwise be imposed post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst of such dispute.

4. In the case of an owner who does not pay a toll incurred under the tolls by mail program on a cashless facility at the place and time and in the manner established for collection of such toll in the ~~[second]~~ third toll bill, a notice of violation shall be sent notifying the owner that the toll is unpaid and administrative violation fees are being imposed. The notice of violation shall be sent to the owner by first class mail, and may additionally be sent by electronic means of communication upon the affirmative consent of the owner, by or on behalf of the public authority which operates such cashless tolling facility. The notice of violation shall include: (i) the total amount of unpaid tolls and administrative violation fees due, (ii) the date by which payment of the tolls and administrative violation fees is due, (iii) the address for receipt of payment and methods of payment for the toll, (iv) the procedure for contesting any toll and the contact information for the relevant toll payer advocate office and customer service center, (v) information related to the failure to timely pay or respond to the notice of liability, in addition to the possibility that a judgment can be entered for repeat unpaid liabilities that could lead to a vehicle being towed or immobilized, (vi) a website address or hyperlink for the owner to access time-stamped photographs or footage of each toll incurred by electronic means, (vii) information related to the availability of the toll payer advocate to discuss payment options, and (viii) other information required by law or by the public authority. Each notice of violation shall identify the date, time, location, license plate number, and jurisdiction of the license plate for each unpaid toll that has been incurred.

5. Any fee or administrative violation fee that is assessed on a notice of violation pursuant to subdivision four of this section shall be dismissed if the notice of violation was not sent within ninety days of the ~~[second toll bill]~~ alleged violation, provided that any toll or tolls incurred remain due and payable and provided further that such dismissal shall not apply in the event that exceptional circumstances, including but not limited to technological failures, have delayed the timely mailing of the notice of violation and the public authority has posted notice of such circumstances prominently on its website within a reasonable time of becoming aware of such circumstances, which shall be adequate record of such circumstances.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, section three of this act shall take effect upon the enactment into law by the state of New Jersey of legislation having an identical effect with this act, but if the state of New Jersey shall have already enacted such legislation, this act shall take effect immediately; provided that the state of New Jersey shall notify the legislative bill drafting commission upon the occurrence of the enactment of the legislation

provided for in section one of this act in order that the commission may maintain an accurate and timely effective data base of the official text of the laws of the state of New York in furtherance of effectuating the provisions of section 44 of the legislative law and section 70-b of the public officers law. Any rights or remedies granted to an individual pursuant to this act prior to the expiration and repeal of this act shall not be affected by such expiration.

8

PART C

Section 1. Subdivision 13 of section 2985-a of the public authorities law, as added by section 2 of subpart B of part WW of chapter 56 of the laws of 2024, is amended to read as follows:

13. Every public authority that operates a cashless tolling facility shall establish an office of such authority's toll payer advocate, designed to further assist owners who remain unsatisfied after first attempting resolution in writing of their concern with, and receiving written determination from, such authority's customer service center. The office of the toll payer advocate shall also endeavor to identify any systemic issues and recommend reasonable improvements regarding the use of and process involved with the payment of tolls under the tolls by mail program at cashless tolling facilities to the public authority. The office of toll payer advocate shall respond to every request for assistance by an owner within forty-eight hours of such request. The office of toll payer advocate shall settle any request for assistance by an owner within sixty days of such request. If the owner formally challenges any fine, fee or administrative charge, all such charges that could otherwise be imposed post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst of such dispute. The state department of transportation must maintain a central website with the contact information for each authority's relevant toll payer advocate office and customer service center including phone numbers, email addresses and a website address or hyperlink for each authority's toll payer advocate help request form.

§ 2. Section 138 of the transportation law is amended by adding a new subdivision 11 to read as follows:

11. In consultation and cooperation with the New York state thruway authority, the New York state bridge authority, the metropolitan transportation authority, and the port authority of New York and New Jersey, maintain a central website with the contact information for each authority's relevant toll payer advocate office and customer service center including phone numbers, email addresses and a website address or hyperlink for each authority's toll payer advocate help request form. Such website must also include information, a website address or hyper link for each public authority's online registration system for owners to choose to receive an electronic means of communication alert that a toll has been incurred under the tolls by mail program at a cashless tolling facility.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, section one of this act shall take effect upon the enactment into law by the state of New Jersey of legislation having an identical effect with this act, but if the state of New Jersey shall have already enacted such legislation, this act shall take effect immediately; provided that the state of New Jersey shall notify the legislative bill drafting commission upon the occurrence of the enactment of the legislation provided for in section one of this act in order that the commission may maintain an accurate and timely effective data base of the official text of the

1 laws of the state of New York in furtherance of effectuating the
2 provisions of section 44 of the legislative law and section 70-b of the
3 public officers law. Any rights or remedies granted to an individual
4 pursuant to this act prior to the expiration and repeal of this act
5 shall not be affected by such expiration.

6 PART D

7 Section 1. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new
8 section 386-c to read as follows:

9 § 386-c. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any
10 other provisions of this title or any other law, the authority shall
11 provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other
12 entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of
13 any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority prior to the
14 effective date of this section.

15 2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or
16 other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use
17 of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority to pay such
18 tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related
19 to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one
20 hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

21 3. The authority shall conspicuously post on its website information
22 on such amnesty program.

23 § 2. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section
24 538-a to read as follows:

25 § 538-a. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any
26 other provisions of this title or any other law, the authority shall
27 provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other
28 entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of
29 any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority prior to the
30 effective date of this section.

31 2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or
32 other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use
33 of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority to pay such
34 tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related
35 to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one
36 hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

37 3. The authority shall conspicuously post on its website information
38 on such amnesty program.

39 § 3. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section
40 553-l to read as follows:

41 § 553-l. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any
42 other provisions of this title or any other law, the authority shall
43 provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other
44 entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of
45 any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority prior to the
46 effective date of this section.

47 2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or
48 other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use
49 of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority to pay such
50 tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related
51 to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one
52 hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

53 3. The authority shall conspicuously post on its website information
54 on such amnesty program.

§ 4. Chapter 47 of the laws of 1931 relating to declaring the policy of the states of New York and New Jersey in regard to certain vehicular bridges and tunnels within the port of New York district, is amended by adding a new section 4B to read as follows:

§ 4B. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this act or any other law, the port authority shall provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by such authority prior to the effective date of this section.

2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the port authority to pay such tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

3. The port authority shall conspicuously post on its website information on such amnesty program.

§ 5. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section 1279-m to read as follows:

§ 1279-m. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this title or any other law, the authority shall provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority prior to the effective date of this section.

2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority to pay such tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

3. The authority shall conspicuously post on its website information on such amnesty program.

§ 6. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, section four of this act shall take effect upon the enactment into law by the state of New Jersey of legislation having an identical effect with this act, but if the state of New Jersey shall have already enacted such legislation, this act shall take effect immediately; provided that the state of New Jersey shall notify the legislative bill drafting commission upon the occurrence of the enactment of the legislation provided for in section one of this act in order that the commission may maintain an accurate and timely effective data base of the official text of the laws of the state of New York in furtherance of effectuating the provisions of section 44 of the legislative law and section 70-b of the public officers law. Any rights or remedies granted to an individual pursuant to this act prior to the expiration and repeal of this act shall not be affected by such expiration.

§ 4. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of

1 the legislature that this act would have been enacted even if such
2 invalid provisions had not been included herein.
3 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, that
4 the applicable effective date of Parts A through D of this act shall be
5 as specifically set forth in the last section of such Parts.