

HB 2211 – Relating to the authorization, administration, collection and enforcement of tolls on SR 520

1. All electronic tolling (open road tolling) currently operating in:

- Toronto – 407 ETR (1997)
- Melbourne, Australia – Citylink (2000)
- Texas – Westpark Tollway, Houston (2004); SH 121, Dallas (2006); SH 49, Tyler (2006); US 183A, Austin (2008)
- Illinois – converted 20 toll booths to ORT (2005-06)
- Colorado – E-470, Denver (2009)
- Florida – Orlando-Orange County (2008-09); Miami-Dade Expressway (2006); Tampa (2006)
- North Carolina - Triangle Expressway (2010)
- New Jersey - Turnpike Authority (NJTA) system (2010)

2. Electronic tolling, without toll booths, eliminates:

- congestion caused by toll booths – no need for traffic to stop or exit the roadway, tolls collected at normal highway speeds, for smooth-flowing traffic;
- toll booth related accidents – greatly decreases safety issues related to stop and go traffic;
- need for additional costly right of way in this congested corridor – at least \$100 to \$200 million to install a toll plaza;
- costly cash collection – twice the cost of electronic toll collection;
- delays in tolling commencement – toll booths would require new environmental assessments, right-of-way acquisition, equipment procurement, construction of toll plaza.

3. Paying tolls

- 80% of transactions are projected to be *Good To Go!* account holders using transponders.
- Vehicles without transponders have license plates photographed and can prepay or be invoiced for the toll, which will include an administrative fee. (See below for details)

4. *Good To Go!* electronic toll accounts

With *Good to Go!* electronic tolls are collected with a transponder, about the size of a credit card. Drivers affix the transponder on the inside of their cars' windshields. When driving on a tolled facility, an overhead antenna links the transponder to account information, and deducts the correct toll from a prepaid account. Automatic replenishment allows drivers to easily manage accounts by authorizing payments from a credit card or bank account.

5. Photo tolls

Some people will not have transponders or may be visiting from out of town. Their vehicles will have their license plate photographed. They could pre-pay or post-pay within 72 hours (online or by phone), or be invoiced for the toll, which will include an additional administrative fee for processing. Signage in the 520 corridor will direct drivers on how to easily pay their tolls if they do not have transponders. Transponder technology and license-plate recognizing cameras are used today as part of the *Good to*

Go! program on the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge and at tolling facilities around the world. (See below for more details on the process)

6. Providing information to drivers about this new system

WSDOT will implement a multi-phase campaign to educate drivers about electronic tolling and to ensure that the successful market penetration goals are achieved for the *Good To Go!* program. Using federal monies available through the Urban Partnership Agreement, coupled with funds allocated under the state transportation budget for B5, WSDOT will work with its leading-edge consulting team to conduct market research, develop and execute effective advertising concepts, institute a focused media relations plan, and implement a multi-faceted outreach and education campaign. The public activities will be launched in late 2009, with an intensified effort beginning in early 2010, leading up to the opening of *Good To Go!* customer service centers in summer 2010.

7. Additional information about outreach and accounts

- Customers can establish *Good To Go!* accounts with cash, no need for credit or debit card.
- Low-income users can establish and replenish a *Good To Go!* account using their EBT (Quest) card issued by DSHS. Transportation is an allowable expenditure for cash benefits issued to low-income persons and can be used to pay for tolls.
- Full-service *Good To Go!* customer service centers are available for cash customers.
- Mobile *Good To Go!* centers are available to set up at events, businesses, and high-traffic areas
- The 520 tolling outreach plan will incorporate the following activities:
 - a speakers bureau to make presentations on tolling and the *Good To Go!* program;
 - distribution of materials (including materials in other languages) through businesses, social service agencies, libraries, community groups, and schools;
 - development of a website with information in multiple languages;
 - information booths at community events;
 - posters, newspaper and newsletter advertisements, radio spots;
 - training of social service workers to share accurate information with clients;
 - articles in newsletters, magazines, and newspapers serving diverse populations.

8. Privacy issues for toll payers

Only photos of vehicles are taken, not the driver or occupants. All personal data is kept as confidential information. Each transponder is assigned a unique number that is linked to a specific customer account. The radio frequency identity (RFID) chips used in transponders do not hold any personal information, only a number that matches to a customer's prepaid account. The system is encrypted. Under no circumstances is individual customer information disclosed for use by marketing firms. Information is only available to the account holder(s) and to authorized law enforcement officials in the conduct of criminal investigations with a bona fide court order or subpoena.

9. An interoperable toll system

The intent is to create one system that allows drivers to have one transponder, one customer service contact, and one statement for all toll transactions in the state. Their *Good To Go!* account will be valid anywhere they travel in Washington. Such an integrated system requires a coordinated statewide effort to ensure all operations work together and all tolling policies are consistent. This single consolidated system also will allow for cost savings with a single operations structure and an opportunity for efficiencies in staffing, inventory, and equipment.

10. Who sets the toll rates?

Under state law, the Transportation Commission is the entity that sets toll rates. The roles of the department and transportation commission are expected to be in accordance with RCW 47.56 as established by the legislature. The commission is the toll setting authority and the department builds and operates toll facilities.

11. Who processes bills and collects payments?

WSDOT would be the entity that would process bills and collect payments, either through transponders or a photo toll system. A customer service center vendor would be selected to administer the program. As noted below, people will be given multiple opportunities to pay the toll. Only if they do not respond to bills will the case be turned over to the courts for adjudication. This is a different approach than is used on Tacoma Narrows. This process could at some point be used on TNB as well.

12. WSDOT toll collection process as proposed for SR 520

How can a toll be paid?

A toll can be paid through a *Good To Go!* account that is in good standing, or by pre-payment, or paid within 72 hours of use with an additional Photo Toll fee.

What happens if the toll is not paid within the initial 72 hours?

A Toll Bill for the Photo Toll will be mailed to the registered owner of the vehicle. It will include the missed toll travel information i.e., date, time, lane, etc. and an administrative fee.

How can the Toll Bill be paid?

The Toll Bill can be paid online with any major credit card, through the mail by check, money order or credit card or at any customer service center, which accepts all of the above forms of payment in addition to cash and debit card payments.

What happens if the Toll Bill is not paid by the due date?

A Notice of Infraction with a \$40 penalty fee will be issued and sent to the county courts for adjudication.

What happens if the Notice of Infraction is not paid?

The courts may pursue Department of Licensing holds and/or assign charges to collections.

13. Urban Partnership Agreement

Designed to reduce congestion through the “Four T’s”: **Transit, Technology, Telecommuting, Tolling**. Awarded \$154.5 million to assist WSDOT, Puget Sound Regional Council and King County in applying these innovative approaches to reduce congestion in the 520 corridor in Western Washington.

Transit (new buses and park & rides)	\$41 million
Technology (active traffic management systems)	\$23.1 million
Telecommuting (builds on existing TDM programs)	\$0
Tolling (variable tolling of existing bridge)	\$63 million
Ferry Projects (throughout the Puget Sound)	\$27.4 million
Total Funding	\$154.5 million

Transit monies will be used to:

- purchase 45 additional buses for the 520 corridor (38,000 more service hours in corridor);
- make improvements to Park and Rides (Redmond and South Kirkland);
- enhance passenger facilities (new shelters and lighting);
- install Real Time Information signs at bus stops.

Technology monies will be used to:

- purchase and install overhead variable speed limit signs – improves safety by alerting drivers of backups down the road.
- implement variable lane information - alerts drivers to steer away from trouble spots and clear the way for emergency vehicle access.
- purchase and install travel time signs - allow drivers to make trip decisions.

Tolling monies will be used to:

- toll the existing highway beginning in 2010
 - implement variable tolls and all electronic tolling (no toll booths)
 - purchase and install toll collection equipment
 - establish customer service centers and toll collection system
 - market electronic toll collection system

Ferry monies will be used to:

- purchase additional Puget Sound ferries (WSF, King Co., Kitsap Transit); and
- make improvements at ferry terminals and docks (Steilacoom, Guemes Island, Mukilteo).

To date, \$18,093,650 has been released. Should the state legislature authorize variable tolling beginning in 2010, the remaining \$136,306,350 should be released. The pending money includes: \$78 million for Active Traffic Management (ATM) and tolling to WSDOT; \$39 million to King County for transit; and \$19.4 million for ferry programs throughout the Puget Sound.