

**To:** Legislative Workgroup Members

**From:** Sen. Oemig

**Re:** Constituent comment regarding tolling

-----Original Message-----

From: Tom Schmidlin [<mailto:tschmidlin@earthlink.net>]

Sent: Tuesday, November 03, 2009 4:11 PM

To: Oemig, Sen. Eric

Subject: 520 bridge tolls

Hello Senator Oemig,

I previously contacted you about the parking situation at various park and rides on the east side, but I had another thought I wanted to raise regarding tolls on the 520 bridge.

Having heard stories of some people who must travel across the bridge several times per day for work, it seems a shame that they or their companies would be punished financially for this. Also, after leaving work yesterday and getting on the bridge I realized I had left some things at work that I needed, so I was forced to cross the bridge to the west side again to get them, then back to the east side. Requiring payment for this would have bothered me.

There is a potential solution to the problem that should be feasible under the proposed paying systems. While I realize that the toll is to pay for usage and people crossing multiple times a day are using the bridge fully each time, I think it would be helpful to a portion of drivers (and not unfair to other drivers) if the fare were reduced on subsequent trips each day. This should be easy to accomplish with decent software running the smart toll card system.

Initially, I thought maybe it should be free for subsequent trips, however, this could create problems with counterfeit cards - since the owner would only be paying for one trip per day they might not notice or care about additional use. So I would propose a smaller toll of less than 50% of the regular toll for each subsequent trip across the bridge.

It is likely that the large majority of drivers only drive one round-trip each day so this system should still allow collection of tolls at a rate that will meet the needs of the new bridge project. But by reducing the tolls for subsequent trips it will reduce the impact of the new tolls on businesses and the self-employed who have to cross the lake on 520 several times a day.

Thanks for reading,

Tom Schmidlin  
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