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Sen. Leone, Rep. Lemar and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee:

I am Sen. John A. Kissel and it is an honor to serve alongside each of you on the Transportation Committee.

I urge you, and all of my legislative colleagues, to vote "No" on LCO #373.

1. Republicans and I have shown that we do not need tolls to invest in transportation by offering a no-tolls alternative (**FASTR CT**) that doesn't look to the taxpayer's wallet as the solution for all the state's problems. The Republican plan can get us started on making improvements and growing jobs right away with no litigation like Rhode Island is now experiencing due to their truck-only tolls. The Republican transportation plan respects the sacrifices Connecticut taxpayers have already made to fund transportation. Meanwhile, tolls put taxpayers' wallets in the bullseye.
2. A review of LCO #373 shows that the toll rate can be increased and that these rate hikes would not be in the control of lawmakers. As lawmakers we should be accountable to the taxpayers we represent. That accountability is sorely lacking in LCO #373. Toll rates would be set by non-elected body (Transportation Policy Council) without limitations. LCO #373 has no limits on rate increases. This lack of clarity provides yet another reason to vote "no".
3. A review of LCO #373 shows that if this legislation becomes law, tolls on passenger cars could soon be our reality in Connecticut. The bond covenant is only for bonds secured over the next two years. You can "break" this bond covenant if you adequately protect bond holders' truck revenue. This provision eliminates the barrier to add car toll revenue, which would bring more funds in, not less. Adding car tolls does not harm bond holders because it does not touch truck toll revenue. So, if bond holders are protected, the covenant can be broken and we open the door - wide open - to car tolls.
4. The Bill mentions 12 toll locations, but there is no language *limiting* the number of tolls. Passage of this bill is a yes vote for adding more toll gantries in the future. Nothing is stopping it.

The bottom line is that the working families and small businesses I represent in north-central Connecticut are taxed to the max. They are struggling. They cannot afford tolls and higher taxes. They are fed up with the never-ending quest for more and new streams of revenue. They feel as if the state views them as ATM machines. Passing this bill would hurt the families and businesses of the 7th Senate District and across Connecticut.

Please vote "No" on LCO #373.

Thank you.

Sen. John A. Kissel