



Transportation Committee - Board of Representatives

Steven Kolenberg, Chair

Bradley Michelson, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Thursday, February 21, 2019
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Government Center Lobby (6:00 p.m.)
Republican Caucus Room, 4th Floor, (7:00 p.m.)
Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard

The Transportation Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Kolenberg, Vice Chair Michelson and Committee Member Reps. Di Costanzo, Giordano, Moore, Patterson and Spadaccini. Also present were Reps. Lion, McMullen, Morson, Roqueta, Sherwood and Zelinsky; Jim Travers and Frank Petise, Traffic, Transportation and Parking Bureau; Michael Toma, Law Department; Kieran Ryan, Board of Finance; Patrick Sasser; and State Sen. Alex Bergstein.

Chair Kolenberg called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

| Item No. | Description | Committee Action |
|-----------------|---|-------------------------|
| | Tour of the Bell Street Garage (Committee to meet in the lobby of the Government Center) (6:00 pm) | Tour taken |

The Committee took a tour of the Bell Street Garage with Mr. Travers.

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1. T30.026 | 7:00 p.m. <u>ORDINANCE for public hearing and final adoption</u> ; Deleting Code Section 231-53 and Replacing with Code Section 231-6.D. 10/31/18 – Submitted by Rep. McMullen 11/20/18 – Held by Committee 5-0-0 12/10/18 – Moved to Pending 01/31/19 – Approved, as amended, 7-0-0 | Approved 6-0-0 |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|

Chair Kolenberg opened the public hearing. There being no members of the public present wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Toma explained that this proposed new language would make clear that the City would have the authority to tow vehicles for parking violations. A motion to approve Item No. 1 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Kolenberg, Michelson, Di Costanzo, Giordano, Moore and Patterson in favor).

2. [T30.028](#) RESOLUTION and approval of public hearing; Confirming and Establishing Hours of Enforcement and Fees for On-Street Parking Meters. Held 6-0-0
12/05/18 – Submitted by Bureau Chief Travers
12/20/18 – Approved by Committee, as amended, 7-0-1
01/07/19 – Held by Full Board
01/14/19 – Moved to Pending

Mr. Travers asked that this item and the following item be held until next month, as they have been meeting with downtown merchants. A motion to hold Item No. 2 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Kolenberg, Michelson, Di Costanzo, Giordano, Moore and Patterson in favor).

3. [T30.029](#) RESOLUTION and approval of public hearing; Confirming and Establishing Hours of Enforcement and Fees for City-Owned Garages and Parking Lots (Excluding Commuter Lots). Held 6-0-0
12/05/18 – Submitted by Bureau Chief Travers
12/20/18 – Approved by Committee 7-0-0
01/07/19 – Held by Full Board
01/14/19 – Moved to Pending

A motion to hold Item No. 3 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Kolenberg, Michelson, Di Costanzo, Giordano, Moore and Patterson in favor).

4. [T30.030](#) RESOLUTION and approval of public hearing; Confirming and Establishing Hours of Enforcement and Fees for City-Owned Commuter Parking Lots. Held 7-0-0
12/05/18 – Submitted by Bureau Chief Travers
12/20/18 – Approved by Committee, as amended, 7-1-0
01/07/19 – Held by Full Board
01/14/19 – Moved to Pending

Mr. Travers explained that the Transportation Bureau does not control the list of permittees or people on the wait list and Cashiering and Permitting has had difficulties creating the list. The Committee requested a representative from Cashiering and Permitting as well as IT be present next month to explain the missing monthly permit list. A motion to hold Item No. 3 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Kolenberg, Michelson, Di Costanzo, Giordano, Moore, Patterson and Spadaccini in favor).

5. [T30.032](#) RESOLUTION; Opposing tolls in Connecticut. Approved, as amended, 6-0-1
02/04/19 – Submitted by Reps. Mahoney, Kolenberg, McMullen, Zelinsky, Saftic, Stella, Michelson And Patterson

Mr. Sasser, a member of No Tolls CT, spoke in support of the resolution, stating there would be extra cost to Stamford residents as a result of tolls and the cost of trucking items into the state and congestive tolling will force people off of highways onto other roads. Mr. Sasser distributed the attached [materials](#).

Representatives discussed with Mr. Sasser:

- Prior tolls were removed because of safety
- These tolls would you travel through at a normal pace

Senator Bergstein stated that there is a crisis in the State regarding infrastructure and truck congestion, which is a problem for the state in recruiting businesses and people living in the State. She asked that Committee members look at the [ATRI](#) congestion study re: the loss of business to Connecticut re: tolling. She stated congestion costs residents \$2300/year in time and gas. She claimed the per mile cost of tolling was about \$0.05 per mile, which would cost a resident commuting 50 miles a day \$650, but would save \$2300 per year. She added residents would have faster commutes. She proposes a public private partnership called "the Infrastructure Bank." Sen. Bergstein distributed the attached [handout](#) re: a proposed Connecticut Infrastructure Bank.

Senator Bergstein explained her bill does not specify amount of toll gantries, but gives authority to the Department of Transportation to determine the amount. Chair Kolenberg pointed out that previous studies commissioned by the Department of Transportation have asked for a high amount of toll gantries.

Representatives discussed with Sen Bergstein:

- Whether residents would be paying increased costs to cover the costs of the tolls
- Connecticut is the only state on the east coast without tolls
- Tolls would speed traffic because the State can only get funding for tolls through congestion pricing (in some states, tolls are free at various times); creating congestion pricing and giving consumers choices about how/when they want to travel would take cars off of the roads
- Using the money to decrease train times would also get people off the roads
- These funds would go into the lockbox and be used for transportation funding
- The program should also include freight trains
- Sen. Bergstein suggested exemptions for low-income residents could be based upon whether a person receives Medicaid as determined when they apply for a transponder
- Other possibilities are HOV lanes, being able to switch traffic flow lanes in the middle of a highway
- The millennial generation is less interested in being dependent upon cars
- A 30 minute train ride would require a land grab
- The Regional Plan Association is an organization focused on economic development in the tri-State area, which has done a study on getting the New Haven line "back on track" by replacing bridges and the signaling system and opening up transportation to Penn Station
- The Connecticut Green Bank has been in existence for 6 years and has offered to sponsor and be an incubator for an infrastructure bank
- Sen Bergstein claims the gas tax is not keeping up with inflation and people are buying less gas as cars become more efficient
- There was a great deal of testimony on this item, which can be found at https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/CommDocTmyBillAllComm.asp?bill=SB-00070&doc_year=2019

Committee members continued to discuss this item:

- This would disproportionately burden the middle class
- We are years away from a 30 minute train ride
- Truck tolls are currently subject to a lawsuit in Rhode Island; this is a toll only of trucks
- There are other less painful avenues to get revenue for infrastructure
- Maybe the BOR should say what they want to have happen rather than what they

oppose

- The trucking industry has gotten a free ride from the state and other states have benefited from the revenue Connecticut should be getting
- It is very early in the process to take a position against this idea before it is fleshed out
- Maybe this should be a resolution to explore all infrastructure issues

A motion to amend the resolution to add a 3rd whereas clause as follows: “**WHEREAS**, the Residents of Connecticut deserve, and the future prosperity of our state depends on the establishment and maintenance of a world class transportation infrastructure, the costs of the implementation of such infrastructure ought not be largely funded by those how cannot afford to pay it, but by means and ideas meant to relieve the citizenry of that burden” was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Kolenberg, Michelson, Di Costanzo, Giordano, Moore, Patterson and Spadaccini in favor).

Committee members continued to discuss this item:

- Constituents are opposed to tolls
- This won't alleviate traffic
- Tolls are a shortcut to get revenue
- Nobody wants to pay more for anything

A motion to approve the resolution, as amended, was approved by a vote of 6-0-1 (Reps. Kolenberg, Michelson, Giordano, Moore, Patterson and Spadaccini in favor; Rep. Di Costanzo abstaining).

Chair Kolenberg adjourned the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven Kolenberg, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#)