

MAINE MOTOR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION

142 Whitten Road

P.O. Box 857

Augusta, Maine 04332-0857

(207) 623-4128 • FAX (207) 623-4096 • www.mmta.com

"The spokesman for the Maine Trucking Industry"

May 8, 2017

Maine Department of Environmental Protection
Attn: Marybeth Richardson, Hearing Officer
312 Canco Road
Portland, ME 04103

RE: York Toll Project

Dear Ms. Richardson:

Please consider the following comments in relation to the applications of the Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA) to replace the existing barrier plaza in York with a new highway speed Open Road Tolling Plaza.

As the voice of Maine's trucking industry, the Maine Motor Transport Association (MMTA) is first and foremost a safety organization. I am sure we all can agree that safety on all of Maine's roads is essential for all motorists.


Sight lines are especially important to truckers because their profession requires them to scan the horizon in front of them to allow them time to react to traffic changes. This is particularly important when operating in adverse weather conditions and in the summer months when congestion is heavy due to increased tourism to our great state. Trucks and cars alike benefit from the forewarning that can be afforded by a straight stretch of road leading up to a toll plaza. The current barrier plaza is in an especially bad location for trucks and causes them to brake on a curve near Exit 7. The proposed new plaza at Mile 8.8 is on a straight stretch of I-95 at the top of a hill and has none of these drawbacks.

Further, the new highway speed ORT lanes will mean the vast majority of truckers will no longer have to slow down or stop to pay tolls electronically. In addition to increased safety, this has many other benefits including reduced braking, noise, wear and tear, fuel consumption and emissions. The proposed Open Road Tolling plaza also retains roadside cash collection at staffed toll booths safely located in separated lanes to the right. That will help assure that all truckers – including those from out-of-state or Canada – continue to pay for the use of this road.

Truck drivers are professionals who care about safely and efficiently moving Maine's economy. We think the MTA's proposed plaza is an opportunity to improve both safety and efficiency.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our perspective on this very important issue.

Sincerely,



Brian Parke
President and CEO

RECEIVED DEP-SHS
2017 MAY -9 A 9:51