

“No Toll Roads” Rally at Arizona State Capital



(*Note New Date Wednesday 2-27-13)



NO TOLL ROADS IN AZ

FREE ROADS FOR FREE PEOPLE

The Arizona Automobile Hobbyist Council or AAHC will be hosting a “No Toll Roads In AZ” rally at the AZ State Capitol on Wednesday, February 27th 2013 from 10am to 2pm.

This Rally is to bring people from all over Arizona together to show our elected officials that the driving public does not want ANY toll roads in our state. We already pay 18 cents per gallon AZ gas tax, (plus a Federal gas tax of 18.4 cents more,) all meant for AZ highway use along with AZ. H.U.R.F. money from other sources. So despite what lawmakers are now saying, there was always plenty of money coming in to maintain our AZ highways and build new roads.

The AZ State Legislature needs to leave our States highway tax money alone. Just in the last year they took \$1.4 Billion of our States highway tax money to balance their budget causing both Standard & Poor and Moody’s to downgrade ADOT’s credit-rating thus raising AZ’s road construction costs. Now lawmaker’s are complaining that there isn’t enough money available to maintain or build roads saying we’ll need toll roads to make up for the shortage they created.

Who do they think their jiving here anyway? Because in reality, tolls are just another tax collected from those whose highway tax dollars built these roads in the first place. Double taxation allowed by our elected representation, it’s time to loudly say “No New Taxes”.

All concerned citizens are invited to attend the AAHC rally planning meetings on the 2nd Wed. of the month at the **Martin Auto Museum** (I-17 & Bell). We welcome everyone from the motorcycle rights groups, the transportation industry, civic groups or anyone concerned about our government officials adding huge new taxes to our economy through these tolling schemes.

So stand-up Arizona! It's united we drive and divided were taxed at the pump AND tolled on the road. Arizona’s citizens need to stand together and firmly tell our Lawmakers that **Arizona's motorists are not mobile revenue sources.**

Be sure to check out the AAHC website for rally updates and try to attend our rally planning meetings held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7pm as well as attend the AAHC general meetings at various Valley locations on the 1st Tuesday of the month which also begin at 7pm.

Thank You For Your Support

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Proof ADOT is Planning Toll Roads for Arizona

For anyone who still isn't completely convinced that our Arizona State Government is rapidly gearing up for the switch to toll roads wherever possible need only read the below minutes quoted directly and in its entirety from the 10-19-12 ADOT State Transportation Board Meeting, Agenda Item 9.

*Please note that I've underlined text & used **bold** type below for emphasis only and the *asterisk's denote; **(note's in italic's indicate my clarification of detail's FYI).*

For example; **(The below text is quoted directly and in its entirety from Agenda Item 9 on page 20 of the 168 page ADOT minutes report at: http://www.azdot.gov/board/agendas/PDF_2012/111612_agenda.pdf)*

ADOT State Transportation Board Meeting Minutes 10-19-12 in Springerville Az.

"Floyd **(Floyd P. Roehrich)* provided an update that before the passage of the recent surface transportation bill, **(MAP-21)* federal law was quite prohibitive about tolling on federal aid highways. The exceptions were narrow and had to be approved by the Federal Highway Administration. **(or FHWA)*

High Occupancy Toll or HOT lanes were easier, but still limited. Most tolling options were allowed only through pilot programs for Value Pricing and Express Lanes, similar to HOT lanes and two tolling pilot programs for interstates.

One of these pilot programs, the Interstate System Reconstruction and Rehabilitation and Pilot Program, is the one we **(ADOT)* tried, unsuccessfully, to use for I-15. **(To convert I-15 into a toll road in its 29 mile Arizona section.)*

The recently enacted "MAP-21" **(which is Federal Surface Transportation Legislation signed into law on 7-6-12 called "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century" or MAP-21)* **is much friendlier to tolls, public private partnerships, and HOT lanes.** There are many newly expanded tolling rights **(or opportunities)* for the interstate system. Newly constructed lanes, bridges, and tunnels on the interstate system can now be tolled.

Lanes that can clearly be tolled under the new law no longer require FHWA approval, or any kind of FHWA agreement. There is still some confusion about tolling the reconstruction of existing interstate facilities. The new law is silent on the issue and federal and state officials are trying to get better guidance. We are guessing that **(tolling)* reconstruction without the addition of new capacity will still not be allowed on the interstate system.

There is a central principle that comes through in the new law. There cannot be a reduction of free, non-HOV lane capacity on federal aid highways and the interstate system. New interstate construction can be tolled. New capacity can be tolled in most, but not all, instances. Existing capacity cannot be tolled. **(yef)*

As you know, we **(ADOT)* were successful in getting our P3 **(public private partnerships)* law updated during the 2012 legislative session **(see HB2491)*. We were successful in getting the rebate provision taken out

****(rebating truck tolls paid), and we were granted authority to enforce tolls **(by suspending drivers licenses & vehicle registration & impounding vehicles for 4 unpaid tolls) as well as implement them **(setting tolls & rate's)*.****

But the definition of a toll facility remained as it was in 2009. It is any new highway, roadway, lane, bridge or tunnel. **Again, new capacity could be tolled, but existing capacity cannot. The same principle applies to HOT lanes.**

An existing HOV **(high occupancy vehicle or car-pool vehicle)* lane can be converted to a HOT **(high occupancy toll)* lane and tolled, but the number of general purpose lanes **(free lanes)* cannot be reduced.

Not all legal projects are financially viable. **ADOT is currently in the middle of a procurement process to hire a program Traffic and Revenue firm.** **(To help ADOT create even more toll roads.)* These firms specialize in determining the financial viability of possible P3 and tolled projects. They use sophisticated modeling to help determine whether a potential project hits the right mix of traffic demand and the amount of the toll to charge.

A project that cannot hit the sweet spot combination of adequate traffic at a high enough toll will not bring in enough revenue to make the project worthwhile. Several projects around the country have fallen short on revenue projections. One, the SR-125 in San Diego, even went into bankruptcy. **(With its losses covered by taxpayers.)*

Even projects that appear to be financially viable also have to be politically and publicly acceptable. Tolling US-93 or any other project would need to be studied in some detail to determine its legal, financial, and public viability. **A preliminary look indicates that **(tolling the existing) US-93 may not be permitted under state or federal law until **(some) new capacity has been added to the highway.**** The long distances, multiple access points, and variable traffic counts may not make it ideal from a financial viability standpoint, although it has not yet been vetted. It has also not been tested in terms of public acceptance either." **(End of Agenda Item 9.)*

So now you know beyond a shadow of a doubt what we are facing here, only informed and active citizens can stop or change this growing transition to toll roads in Arizona. That is why the upcoming **"No Toll Roads in Arizona Rally"** on February 27th 2013 from 10am to 2pm at the Arizona State Capital in Phoenix may be your only chance to participate in democracy and firmly tell our lawmakers that **Arizona's motorists are not mobile revenue sources.**

Please copy and pass this flyer around to everyone you know who drives a vehicle in Arizona and I hope to see you at any of our 2nd Wednesday of the month 7pm No Toll Roads in Arizona Rally meeting's at the Martin Auto Museum on the I-17 east-side frontage road just north of Bell Road.

I also hope to see you at our Arizona State Capital on February 27th **because it's united we drive and divided (by apathy) we're taxed at the pump AND tolled on the road.**

-Bill Gilmore, AAHC Legislative Liaison, 602-230-7111, e-mail to AzCarCrazy@aol.com.