



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo votes to pass bill establishing the "The Payer Protection Act" to address cashless tolling problems faced by motorists

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. March 22, 2018

| ISSUE: **CASHLESS TOLLING, MTA, TOLLS, ADDABBO**

As cashless tolling becomes more commonplace in Queens and elsewhere throughout New York State, NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. has joined with his Senate colleagues in passing legislation (S.7344) that would improve the toll billing process for motorists while making it easier for consumers to dispute errors and excessive fees.

“Cashless tolling has many benefits, including reduced traffic congestion and decreased air pollution from idling cars,” said Addabbo. “However, many drivers are experiencing late or missing toll statements that can lead to high fees and vehicle registration suspensions, or are receiving bills that are simply inaccurate. There are significant glitches in the existing cashless tolling system, and we need to get them fixed.”

Under cashless tolling, which is in effect on many bridges, roads and tunnels in Queens and around the state, drivers with EZPass continue to have their tolls automatically deducted from their accounts and receive statements for their trips. Drivers without EZPass, however, have a photograph taken of their license plates when they pass through the facilities, and a bill is later mailed to them at the postal address on file with the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles. Sometimes bills arrive late, or not at all, which can leave consumers unwittingly facing large fines for non-payment, as well as motor vehicle registration suspensions. The

Senator mentioned that he had his constituents in mind when voting for the bill, since his office has addressed a number of complaints from throughout his district, such as his Rockaway constituency.

“The bill I am supporting creates a Toll Payers’ Bill of Rights, which includes the option of receiving cashless tolling statements via text message or e-mail within a shorter and more specific time frame,” said Addabbo, noting that paper toll statements generally go out to drivers within 30-45 days of the trip. “This would be a quicker and more efficient way of alerting drivers to tolls they need to pay back to the state. It would also save New York taxpayers money on postage and administration, create improved electronic billing records, and help to alleviate continued confusion about cashless tolling fees.”

The legislation also requires that prominent signage be placed at cashless tolling facilities to inform drivers of potential fees, establishes a process to dispute fees, and waives late fees when mailed statements are not received in a timely manner. In addition, all bills sent to motorists must include the date and time of the trip, location of the cashless facility, the license plate number, and the motor vehicle registration number of the vehicle incurring the toll charge. In situations where non-payment or late payment of fees will lead to suspended registrations, motorists must be notified by certified mail 30 days prior to the suspension. Certified mail is also required when the cashless tolling fee charged to a specific registration reaches \$1,000.

“I hope the Assembly will soon follow suit and approve this legislation to improve the operation of the cashless tolling system,” said Addabbo, noting that the bill will also enable drivers to purchase EZPass at all rest stops along the NYS Thruway. “If we do it right, we can improve our air quality, ease traffic jams, and make sure the state is better able to collect tolls it is owed without making it a costly bureaucratic nightmare for motorists.”

In the Assembly, the bill is under review by the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2017-S7344

- Introduced

- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Enacts the "toll payer protection act"

January 08, 2018

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **David Carlucci**

Do you support this bill?