



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo: Concerns and questions regarding cashless tolling project must be addressed as project nears completion

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With the New York State Thruway Authority's cashless tolling project scheduled for completion and operation at the end of the year, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-C-I-Rome, today outlined several concerns that he had with the venture following phone calls from constituents and recent Thruway spokesperson media accounts.

The \$355 million cashless tolling project intends to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion

and allow for nonstop travel on the state's toll roads, bridges and tunnels. Existing toll plazas and barriers have been removed and overhead structures called gantries have been erected at interchanges and other locations along the state's Thruway system. The gantries support specialized equipment such as cameras and sensors that can read E-ZPass tags and capture license plate images. With this technology in place, motorists will no longer be required to stop to pay tolls because the sensors and cameras suspended over the highway will read each license plate and mail a toll bill to that vehicle's registered owner.

Some of the questions and concerns raised by Sen. Griffo include:

- The installation of so many gantries with cameras between several Thruway interchanges and exit and entry points. There are 52 interchanges on the Thruway but 70 gantries have been installed throughout the highway system. Why are so many gantries needed?
- The potential for the cameras and sensors to be used as speed control devices and to track the movement of motorists.
- Why are non-E-ZPass users being charged more than E-ZPass users?

Sen. Griffo has communicated these concerns and questions to the Thruway Authority.

“In the past, I have asked the Governor and Thruway Authority to explore the option of expanding automatic ‘open road tolling’ to some of the more heavily trafficked areas upstate because I understand the importance of having transportation infrastructure that can move people efficiently and effectively,” Sen. Griffo said. “While this most recent venture will help us to accomplish this objective, a number of legitimate concerns and questions have been raised about this project that I believe require a more thorough explanation. It is imperative

that we make sure that this and other projects function as intended, are not financial albatrosses for the state and do not cause unnecessary burdens and hardships for New York's residents and visitors."