

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 33

Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY GEIST, McCALL, BALDWIN, EACHUS, HARPER, MAHER AND
SURRA, JANUARY 26, 2005

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, FEBRUARY 8, 2005

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the responsibility of the Commonwealth to examine
2 the quality and efficiency of its State highway system; and
3 establishing a select committee to consider toll roads.

4 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has always been a world leader and has
5 had a rich history of success in toll financing, beginning as
6 early as 1794 with the Philadelphia to Lancaster Turnpike; and

7 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Turnpike was created as the first
8 all-weather superhighway in the nation in 1940; and

9 WHEREAS, State highways are an integral part of the economic
10 and social livelihoods of Pennsylvania's citizens, and this
11 functioning State highway system is only as good as the
12 components which comprise it; and

13 WHEREAS, The State highway infrastructure, if ignored, can
14 severely impact the economic and environmental well-being of
15 this Commonwealth and its various communities; and

16 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth should periodically study any and
17 all opportunities to improve the safety, maintenance and

1 efficiency of all modes and methods of public and/or private
2 transportation available to citizens and travelers in and about
3 this Commonwealth; and

4 WHEREAS, Funding of Pennsylvania's highway system from
5 Federal, State and local government is not expected to
6 adequately finance the expanding demands to preserve and grow
7 our massive transportation facilities; and

8 WHEREAS, Modern roadway design and construction techniques
9 provide significantly enhanced environmental protection and
10 control measures for adjoining natural and manmade environments;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, The construction of new and enhanced roadways as
13 toll facilities is a means of providing a critical
14 transportation facility when it is needed, rather than when or
15 if funding becomes available through conventional funding
16 mechanisms; and

17 WHEREAS, Toll facilities more directly link user cost with
18 user benefit and provide a dedicated source of revenue to be
19 directed toward project cost recovery; and

20 WHEREAS, Implementation of electronic toll collective
21 technology can minimize the disruption to motorists often
22 associated with toll collection activities; and

23 WHEREAS, Toll facility electronic toll collection systems
24 provide the basis for an advanced traveler information system,
25 intelligent transportation system implementation and
26 collaborative electronic payment systems incorporating agencies
27 and services beyond toll road applications; and

28 WHEREAS, Toll facilities have proven to provide greater
29 opportunities for enhanced highway safety and operational levels
30 of service, and the construction of user fee-based roadways

1 provides an equitable manner of distributing cost to both in-
2 State and out-of-State users; and

3 WHEREAS, Revenues collected from user fees can be used to
4 leverage conventional transportation financing mechanisms and
5 create innovative means of enhancing current revenue sources
6 without impacting anticipated authorization of funds; and

7 WHEREAS, Alternative transportation modes such as commuter
8 and intercity rail can benefit from highway toll revenues; and

9 WHEREAS, Specifically the Schuylkill Valley Metrorail
10 project, and other such projects in the Capital Region and
11 elsewhere in this Commonwealth, could be constructed and/or
12 operated from highway toll revenues; and

13 WHEREAS, Current Federal transportation authorization,
14 referred to as TEA-21, and likely subsequent versions encourage
15 the use of innovative finance methods, including tolls, to
16 address shortfalls of conventional revenue; and

17 WHEREAS, TEA-21 currently contains provisions for tolls to be
18 placed on existing highways through the use of pilot program
19 projects and value pricing alternatives; and

20 WHEREAS, Other states have identified the use of toll
21 roadways as a means of providing highway capacity at the time of
22 need rather than on a pay-as-you-go basis and have established
23 new state toll road agencies; and

24 WHEREAS, House Resolution No. 581 of 2004 established a
25 select committee on toll roads, which completed an interim
26 report with the recommendation that the committee continue its
27 work in the next session of the General Assembly; therefore be
28 it

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives, recognizing the
30 importance of maintaining safe highways and road conditions,

1 direct the Speaker to appoint a select committee on toll roads;
2 and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the committee be composed of four members of
4 the majority party and three members of the minority party and
5 shall include the chairman and minority chairman of the
6 Transportation Committee of the House of Representatives; and be
7 it further

8 RESOLVED, That the chairman of the Transportation Committee
9 serve as the select committee chairman; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the select committee at a minimum examine the
11 financing of transportation projects, the saving of public
12 funds, the safety and maintenance features and the economic
13 development opportunities at public/private transportation and
14 private tolling facilities and recommend alternatives to public
15 funding of highway, road and overland transportation facilities,
16 including commuter and intercity rail through highway tolls; and
17 be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the committee may hold hearings, take
19 testimony and make its investigations at such places as it deems
20 necessary and that each member of the committee have power to
21 administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses appearing before
22 the committee; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the
24 Transportation Committee to assist the select committee on toll
25 roads to the fullest extent possible; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That any and all necessary, appropriate and
27 reasonable expenses incurred by the select committee in carrying
28 out its responsibilities, including, but not limited to, per
29 diem and travel expenses incurred by members and staff,
30 stenographic charges and other incidental expenses and special

1 contracting and consulting services expenses, be paid from
2 appropriate accounts under the control of the Chief Clerk of the
3 House of Representatives; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the committee report to the House of
5 Representatives on its activities, findings and recommendations
6 within six months of ~~adoption of this resolution~~ APPOINTMENT OF <—
7 COMMITTEE MEMBERS BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
8 AND THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES and
9 issue interim reports to the House of Representatives as the
10 committee deems necessary.