



FEB 24 2011

Senate of Pennsylvania

DATE: February 23, 2011

TO: All Senators

FROM: Senators John Gordner **JRG**

SUBJECT: Proposed Legislation to Authorize the State Transportation Commission to Examine Possible Alternatives for the Future Operation and Maintenance of the Pennsylvania Turnpike

In the near future I intend to introduce legislation that will provide a mechanism for the review of possible options involving the future operation and maintenance of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

The current operation of the Turnpike has been the subject of increasing scrutiny from the public, the press, and the General Assembly due to various inefficiencies and alleged illegal or unethical conduct. In order to fully realize the potential value of the Turnpike it is time to examine the current structure of the Turnpike Commission and evaluate possible alternatives for the operation of this valuable state asset.

This legislation will authorize the bipartisan State Transportation Commission to study and explore options for the modernization of the Turnpike. The Transportation Commission is comprised of seven Republican and seven Democratic members, including the four caucus Transportation Committee Chairs along with the Secretary of Transportation who serves as the Chair of the Commission and the final member. As you will recall, former Governor Ed Rendell pursued a public-private partnership agreement for the operation of the Turnpike in 2008, but due in part to the closed door process by which the ultimate agreement was reached, it did not receive consideration by the General Assembly. By authorizing the bipartisan State Transportation Commission to review and study various options regarding the future of the Turnpike in an open and transparent process, it will ensure that the value of the Turnpike will be fully realized by the Commonwealth.

Upon the conclusion of the study, the State Transportation Commission will be authorized to vote on a plan for the future operation and maintenance of the Turnpike and will have the authority to implement its plan.

Please call Senator Gordner's office at 787-8928 if you are interested in cosponsoring this legislation.