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House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 9, 2011

TO: All House Members

FROM: Representative Robert W. Godshall, Chairman
House Consumer Affairs Committee

SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship of Transportation Legislation

In the very near future I will introduce legislation proposing to terminate the lease agreement between the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, related to the Turnpike Commission's lease of Interstate 80, as authorized by Act 44 of 2007.

Under the 50-year lease agreement authorized under current statute, the Turnpike Commission is obligated to pay PennDOT \$450 million a year for each fiscal year until the fiscal year 2057-58. This obligation remains even though the projected revenue from the proposed tolling of Interstate 80 has never materialized. The Federal Highway Administration rejected Pennsylvania's application to toll Interstate 80 in April of 2010.

Because of the rejection of that tolling proposal, I contend that the Turnpike Commission's obligations under the lease agreement are unsustainable. Moreover, those obligations place an unfair burden, in the form of rising Turnpike toll rates, on those motorists who regularly use the Turnpike – particularly constituents who are in close proximity to the turnpike. For many residents of the southeast region, the Turnpike is a commuter route that they travel daily. I believe those residents should not have to disproportionately subsidize transportation improvements throughout Pennsylvania.

I would encourage you to support my legislation, as well as the overall concept of revisiting Act 44 to formulate a more equitable solution to Pennsylvania's transportation infrastructure needs. If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please contact Jane Hugendubler in my Harrisburg office at 783-6428 or jhugendu@pahousegop.com.

RWG:GG:jh
RWG:cospon Act 44 repeal