

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 33

Session of  
2005

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

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, JANUARY 26, 2005

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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  
18 efficiency of all modes and methods of public and/or private

1 transportation available to citizens and travelers in and about  
2 this Commonwealth; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 WHEREAS, Toll facilities have proven to provide greater  
28 opportunities for enhanced highway safety and operational levels  
29 of service, and the construction of user fee-based roadways  
30 provides an equitable manner of distributing cost to both in-

1 State and out-of-State users; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

28 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives, recognizing the  
29 importance of maintaining safe highways and road conditions,  
30 direct the Speaker to appoint a select committee on toll roads;

1 and be it further

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 appropriate accounts under the control of the Chief Clerk of the  
2 House of Representatives; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That the committee report to the House of  
4 Representatives on its activities, findings and recommendations  
5 within six months of adoption of this resolution and issue  
6 interim reports to the House of Representatives as the committee  
7 deems necessary.