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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4708

July 3, 2013

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I am writing regarding the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) expressed interest in tolling Interstate 90 (I-90) between Seattle and Bellevue under authority provided by the Federal Highway Administration's Value Pricing Pilot Program (VPPP).

I-90 is a major Interstate that supports international trade and creates and sustains hundreds of thousands of jobs in Washington State and other states that ship products via Washington ports. Communities within my district depend on the transport of such products along the I-90 corridor, as well as employment opportunities in Bellevue and Seattle and business from recreational visitors to the Mountains to Sound Greenway. As your department reviews WSDOT's application, I ask that you thoroughly consider the importance of trade to the region, the impact I-90 tolling would have on the shipment of goods and services, and the requirement under VPPP to test innovative strategies to mitigate congestion.

In regard to congestion mitigation, significant concerns have been raised over whether WSDOT's proposal meets VPPP requirements under current law. Under VPPP authority, tolling of Interstate highways is generally prohibited except for projects that test innovative ways to alleviate congestion. Taking this into consideration, there is concern that WSDOT's primary purpose for tolling I-90 is to pay for SR-520, a separate state highway bridge. As you review WSDOT's application, I request that you ensure the project meets VPPP requirements for congestion mitigation and that tolling of I-90 would not be a misuse of VPPP authority.

As gas tax revenues decline, states across the country are looking for new ways to fund transportation. Therefore, authorizing the I-90 proposal under the VPPP program has the potential to set an influential precedent for other states looking to toll Interstate highways to fund their transportation needs. Given the significant impacts of this proposal, I respectfully request that you carefully evaluate WSDOT's application to toll I-90 in order to ensure the project meets the VPPP requirements and is a lawful use of VPPP authority. I look forward to your response, and thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D. Reichert". The signature is stylized and fluid.

DAVE REICHERT
Member of Congress