

Sample letter to U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters:

Mary E. Peters, Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Peters:

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission is seeking federal approval to add tolls to Interstate 80. I am writing you to ask you to reject this request.

The decision to toll Interstate 80 was made in haste by a slim majority, without a single public hearing or any other opportunity for those most affected by this change to comment.

Interstate 80 is part of the Federal Highway System, already paid for with federal funds and intended to be a free system of transportation to help promote interstate commerce. Adding tolls to Interstate 80 will make both of Pennsylvania's major east-west highways toll roads, diminishing its competitiveness in the national and global marketplaces. It also will divert heavy traffic from the interstate highway to secondary roadways, accelerating wear, increasing local maintenance costs and decreasing safety.

The trucking industry already pays dearly to travel on our nation's roadways through fuels taxes, license plates and other fees. Tolling Interstate 80 will only add to this burden. The fortunate ones will simply pass those costs along to consumers. The unfortunate ones will be unable to do so, and will be put out of business altogether.

In light of all this, it is no surprise that a 2005 study performed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation recommended the Commonwealth not pursue adding tolls to Interstate 80

Because none of the stakeholders were given an opportunity to comment on how detrimental the addition of tolls would be their operations, and because the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation itself concluded tolling Interstate 80 was a bad idea, I ask you to reject the Turnpike Commission's request.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention.