STATE OF NEW YORK

4363

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 3, 2021

Introduced by Sens. TEDISCO, BORRELLO -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the public authorities law, in relation to directing the New York state thruway authority to develop and implement a toll discount program waiving additional costs for tolls related to travel on the New York state thruway for certain individuals who do not maintain an E-ZPass account

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "thruway toll equality act".

§ 2. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section 378-b to read as follows:

§ 378-b. E-ZPass discount program. 1. Notwithstanding any law, rule or regulation to the contrary, the authority shall establish and implement a discount plan waiving any costs, including fees, penalties and surcharges, beyond the amount of actual tolls incurred during travel on the New York state thruway system for qualified residents who do not have an E-ZPass account or transponder and who receive a toll bill by mail. Qualified residents shall pay an amount for tolls not greater than the amount paid by individuals who maintain an E-ZPass account, in good standing, linked to a bank account or credit card.

2. As used in this section, a "qualified resident" means an individual who:

(a) is a full-time resident of the state;

(b) receives benefits pursuant to the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) or the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children (WIC) or who receives vouchers pursuant to Section 8 of the Housing Act of 1937;

(c) owns or rents a vehicle utilized for travel on the state thruway system; and

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(d) does not maintain an E-ZPass account or have an E-ZPass transponder.

3. (a) The authority shall not generate a bill or other demand for payment for tolls incurred by qualified residents until the earlier of (i) the toll amount due reaches a threshold of thirty dollars, or (ii) a period of one year.

(b) If a bill for tolls is not paid within one hundred twenty days, fees and charges may be assessed as determined by the authority.

4. (a) The provisions of this section shall apply only to persons who do not otherwise qualify for an E-ZPass discount program.

(b) The provisions of this section shall not apply to any E-ZPass charges incurred for any travel originating in or terminating in any other state.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made on or before such date.