

# STATE OF NEW YORK

9493

## IN SENATE

March 18, 2026

Introduced by Sen. LANZA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT in relation to directing the commissioner of transportation to conduct a statewide study and review of the tolling authorities' regulations and policies in relation to cashless tolling and tolls by mail collection (Part A); to amend the public authorities law, in relation to fees imposed by public authorities (Part B); to amend the public authorities law and the transportation law, in relation to the office of toll payer advocate (Part C); and to amend the public authorities law, in relation to the cashless tolling amnesty program; and to amend chapter 47 of the laws of 1931 relating to declaring the policy of the states of New York and New Jersey in regard to certain vehicular bridges and tunnels within the port of New York district, in relation to requiring certain public authorities to establish a cashless tolling amnesty program (Part D)

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

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as  
2 the "toll payer advocacy and relief act".  
3 § 2. Legislative findings and intent. Since the adoption of cashless  
4 tolling and tolls by mail collection in New York state, many drivers  
5 have been complaining of excessive fines and charges resulting in oner-  
6 ous debt. Oftentimes, penalties are applied before a driver is aware of  
7 a missed toll. Many drivers have complained of insufficient notifica-  
8 tion, poor communication with the toll collecting authorities, and lack  
9 of advocacy to dispute tolls and fines. This legislation is necessary to  
10 make improvements to the cashless tolling and tolls by mail collection  
11 systems that will provide relief to drivers from excessive fines, while  
12 providing them adequate time to pay the original amount of tolls owed,  
13 without penalty. If the owner formally challenges any fine, fee or  
14 administrative charge, all such charges that could otherwise be imposed  
15 post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst of such dispute.

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

LBD13679-02-5

1 § 3. This act enacts into law major components of legislation neces-  
2 sary to implement the "toll payer advocacy and relief act". Each compo-  
3 nent is wholly contained within a Part identified as Parts A through D.  
4 The effective date for each particular provision contained within such  
5 Part is set forth in the last section of such Part. Any provision in any  
6 section contained within a Part, including the effective date of the  
7 Part, which makes a reference to a section "of this act", when used in  
8 connection with that particular component, shall be deemed to mean and  
9 refer to the corresponding section of the Part in which it is found.  
10 Section five of this act sets forth the general effective date of this  
11 act.

12 PART A

13 Section 1. The commissioner of transportation, in consultation with  
14 the New York state bridge authority, thruway authority, triborough  
15 bridge and tunnel authority, metropolitan transportation authority, and  
16 port authority of New York and New Jersey, shall conduct a statewide  
17 study and review of the tolling authorities' regulations and policies in  
18 relation to cashless tolling and tolls by mail collection. Such study  
19 shall include, but not be limited to, the financial burden of excessive  
20 fines, fees or administrative charges for the late payment of a toll,  
21 communication problems between the authorities and vehicle owners in  
22 relation to tolls, the effectiveness of the office of toll payer advo-  
23 cate in relation to the duration and outcome of requests for assistance,  
24 and any unique concerns based on regional issues or out of state owners.

25 § 2. The commissioner of the department of transportation shall, on or  
26 before the thirty-first of December next succeeding the effective date  
27 of this act, submit a report of such study, including detailed recommen-  
28 dations and findings, to the governor, the temporary president of the  
29 senate, the speaker of the assembly, the minority leader of the senate,  
30 the minority leader of the assembly, and the chairs of the senate and  
31 assembly transportation and corporations, authorities and commissions  
32 committees and the ranking minority member of each such committees.

33 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

34 PART B

35 Section 1. Section 2855 of the public authorities law, as added by  
36 section 1 of part KK of chapter 59 of the laws of 2006, is amended to  
37 read as follows:

38 § 2855. Electronic method of payment; periodic charges. Notwithstand-  
39 ing the provisions of any law to the contrary, if any authority shall  
40 offer any electronic method of payment for tolls, fares, fees, rentals,  
41 or other charges, including but not limited to a system called E-ZPass,  
42 such authority shall not impose any periodic administrative or other  
43 charge for the privilege of using such electronic method of payment for  
44 such charges. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit any  
45 authority from making any charge for extra services requested by a hold-  
46 er of such electronic method of payment, any charge for lost or damaged  
47 equipment, or for defaults, such as charges for dishonored checks. The  
48 authority shall not enter any agreement with bondholders that would  
49 require the imposition of administrative or other periodic charges  
50 relating to electronic methods of payment prohibited by this section.  
51 No fine, fee or administrative charge for the late payment of a toll  
52 shall exceed ten per centum of the amount of such toll owed or be

1 accessed within one hundred eighty days from the date of the incurred  
2 toll. If the owner formally challenges any fine, fee or administrative  
3 charge, all such charges that could otherwise be imposed post-challenge  
4 shall be frozen in the midst of such dispute.

5 § 2. Subdivision 5 of section 2985 of the public authorities law, as  
6 added by chapter 379 of the laws of 1992, is amended to read as follows:

7 5. An owner found liable for a violation of toll collection regu-  
8 lations pursuant to this section shall [~~for a first violation thereof~~]  
9 be liable for a monetary penalty not to exceed [~~fifty dollars or two~~  
10 ~~times~~] ten percent of the toll evaded [~~whichever is greater; for a~~  
11 ~~second violation thereof both within eighteen months be liable for a~~  
12 ~~monetary penalty not to exceed one hundred dollars or five times the~~  
13 ~~toll evaded whichever is greater; for a third or subsequent violation~~  
14 ~~thereof all within eighteen months be liable for a monetary penalty not~~  
15 ~~to exceed one hundred fifty dollars or ten times the toll evaded which-~~  
16 ~~ever is greater~~]. No fine, fee or administrative charge for the late  
17 payment of a toll shall be accessed within one hundred eighty days from  
18 the date of the incurred toll. If the owner formally challenges any  
19 fine, fee or administrative charge, all such charges that could other-  
20 wise be imposed post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst of such  
21 dispute.

22 § 3. Subdivisions 3, 4 and 5 of section 2985-a of the public authori-  
23 ties law, as added by section 2 of subpart B of part WW of chapter 56 of  
24 the laws of 2024, are amended to read as follows:

25 3. In the case of an owner who incurs an obligation to pay a toll for  
26 the first time in six months under the tolls by mail program at a cash-  
27 less tolling facility, a toll bill shall be sent within ten business  
28 days after the end of the initial billing cycle and of each subsequent  
29 billing cycle. In the case of all other owners incurring an obligation  
30 to pay a toll at a cashless tolling facility, a toll bill shall be sent  
31 at the end of the next billing cycle. Toll bills shall be sent to the  
32 owner by first class mail, and may additionally be sent by electronic  
33 means of communication upon the affirmative consent of the owner, by or  
34 on behalf of the public authority which operates such cashless tolling  
35 facility. The owner shall have [~~thirty~~] one hundred eighty days from the  
36 date of the toll bill to pay the incurred toll. The toll bill shall  
37 include: (i) the total amount of the incurred tolls due, (ii) the date  
38 by which payment of the incurred tolls is due, (iii) any administrative  
39 fees, (iv) the address for receipt of payment and methods of payment for  
40 the toll, (v) the procedure for contesting any toll and the contact  
41 information for the relevant toll payer advocate office and customer  
42 service center, (vi) information related to the failure to timely pay or  
43 respond to the notice of liability, in addition to the possibility that  
44 a judgment can be entered for repeat unpaid liabilities that could lead  
45 to a vehicle being towed or immobilized, (vii) a website address or  
46 hyperlink for the owner to access time-stamped photographs or footage of  
47 each toll incurred by electronic means, (viii) information related to  
48 the availability of the toll payer advocate to discuss payment options,  
49 and (ix) other information required by law or by the public authority.  
50 Each toll bill shall identify the date, time, location, license plate  
51 number, and jurisdiction of the license plate for each toll that has  
52 been incurred. Each toll bill shall include an image of the license  
53 plate of the vehicle being used or operated on the toll facility. If the  
54 owner fails to pay the initial toll bill within thirty days, a second  
55 toll bill shall be sent in the next billing cycle, which shall also  
56 indicate the [~~overdue~~] toll or tolls and any administrative [~~or late~~]

1 fees due. If the owner fails to pay within sixty days of the second  
2 toll bill, a third toll bill shall be sent in the next billing cycle,  
3 which shall also indicate the toll or tolls and any administrative fees  
4 due and shall notify the owner that administrative violation fees will  
5 be imposed if the owner fails to pay the toll bill within one hundred  
6 eighty days from the date of the incurred toll. No fine, fee or adminis-  
7 trative charge for the late payment of a toll shall exceed ten per  
8 centum of the amount of such toll owed or be accessed within one hundred  
9 eighty days from the date of the incurred toll. If the owner formally  
10 challenges any fine, fee or administrative charge, all such charges that  
11 could otherwise be imposed post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst  
12 of such dispute.

13 4. In the case of an owner who does not pay a toll incurred under the  
14 tolls by mail program on a cashless facility at the place and time and  
15 in the manner established for collection of such toll in the [~~second~~  
16 ~~third~~ toll bill, a notice of violation shall be sent notifying the owner  
17 that the toll is unpaid and administrative violation fees are being  
18 imposed. The notice of violation shall be sent to the owner by first  
19 class mail, and may additionally be sent by electronic means of communi-  
20 cation upon the affirmative consent of the owner, by or on behalf of the  
21 public authority which operates such cashless tolling facility. The  
22 notice of violation shall include: (i) the total amount of unpaid tolls  
23 and administrative violation fees due, (ii) the date by which payment of  
24 the tolls and administrative violation fees is due, (iii) the address  
25 for receipt of payment and methods of payment for the toll, (iv) the  
26 procedure for contesting any toll and the contact information for the  
27 relevant toll payer advocate office and customer service center, (v)  
28 information related to the failure to timely pay or respond to the  
29 notice of liability, in addition to the possibility that a judgment can  
30 be entered for repeat unpaid liabilities that could lead to a vehicle  
31 being towed or immobilized, (vi) a website address or hyperlink for the  
32 owner to access time-stamped photographs or footage of each toll  
33 incurred by electronic means, (vii) information related to the avail-  
34 ability of the toll payer advocate to discuss payment options, and  
35 (viii) other information required by law or by the public authority.  
36 Each notice of violation shall identify the date, time, location,  
37 license plate number, and jurisdiction of the license plate for each  
38 unpaid toll that has been incurred.

39 5. Any fee or administrative violation fee that is assessed on a  
40 notice of violation pursuant to subdivision four of this section shall  
41 be dismissed if the notice of violation was not sent within ninety days  
42 of the [~~second toll bill~~] alleged violation, provided that any toll or  
43 tolls incurred remain due and payable and provided further that such  
44 dismissal shall not apply in the event that exceptional circumstances,  
45 including but not limited to technological failures, have delayed the  
46 timely mailing of the notice of violation and the public authority has  
47 posted notice of such circumstances prominently on its website within a  
48 reasonable time of becoming aware of such circumstances, which shall be  
49 adequate record of such circumstances.

50 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however,  
51 section three of this act shall take effect upon the enactment into law  
52 by the state of New Jersey of legislation having an identical effect  
53 with this act, but if the state of New Jersey shall have already enacted  
54 such legislation, this act shall take effect immediately; provided that  
55 the state of New Jersey shall notify the legislative bill drafting  
56 commission upon the occurrence of the enactment of the legislation

1 provided for in section one of this act in order that the commission may  
2 maintain an accurate and timely effective data base of the official text  
3 of the laws of the state of New York in furtherance of effectuating the  
4 provisions of section 44 of the legislative law and section 70-b of the  
5 public officers law. Any rights or remedies granted to an individual  
6 pursuant to this act prior to the expiration and repeal of this act  
7 shall not be affected by such expiration.

8

## PART C

9 Section 1. Subdivision 13 of section 2985-a of the public authorities  
10 law, as added by section 2 of subpart B of part WW of chapter 56 of the  
11 laws of 2024, is amended to read as follows:

12 13. Every public authority that operates a cashless tolling facility  
13 shall establish an office of such authority's toll payer advocate,  
14 designed to further assist owners who remain unsatisfied after first  
15 attempting resolution in writing of their concern with, and receiving  
16 written determination from, such authority's customer service center.  
17 The office of the toll payer advocate shall also endeavor to identify  
18 any systemic issues and recommend reasonable improvements regarding the  
19 use of and process involved with the payment of tolls under the tolls by  
20 mail program at cashless tolling facilities to the public authority.  
21 The office of toll payer advocate shall respond to every request for  
22 assistance by an owner within forty-eight hours of such request. The  
23 office of toll payer advocate shall settle any request for assistance by  
24 an owner within sixty days of such request. If the owner formally chal-  
25 lenges any fine, fee or administrative charge, all such charges that  
26 could otherwise be imposed post-challenge shall be frozen in the midst  
27 of such dispute. The state department of transportation must maintain a  
28 central website with the contact information for each authority's rele-  
29 vant toll payer advocate office and customer service center including  
30 phone numbers, email addresses and a website address or hyperlink for  
31 each authority's toll payer advocate help request form.

32 § 2. Section 138 of the transportation law is amended by adding a new  
33 subdivision 11 to read as follows:

34 11. In consultation and cooperation with the New York state thruway  
35 authority, the New York state bridge authority, the metropolitan trans-  
36 portation authority, and the port authority of New York and New Jersey,  
37 maintain a central website with the contact information for each author-  
38 ity's relevant toll payer advocate office and customer service center  
39 including phone numbers, email addresses and a website address or hyper-  
40 link for each authority's toll payer advocate help request form. Such  
41 website must also include information, a website address or hyper link  
42 for each public authority's online registration system for owners to  
43 choose to receive an electronic means of communication alert that a toll  
44 has been incurred under the tolls by mail program at a cashless tolling  
45 facility.

46 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however,  
47 section one of this act shall take effect upon the enactment into law by  
48 the state of New Jersey of legislation having an identical effect with  
49 this act, but if the state of New Jersey shall have already enacted such  
50 legislation, this act shall take effect immediately; provided that the  
51 state of New Jersey shall notify the legislative bill drafting commis-  
52 sion upon the occurrence of the enactment of the legislation provided  
53 for in section one of this act in order that the commission may maintain  
54 an accurate and timely effective data base of the official text of the

1 laws of the state of New York in furtherance of effectuating the  
2 provisions of section 44 of the legislative law and section 70-b of the  
3 public officers law. Any rights or remedies granted to an individual  
4 pursuant to this act prior to the expiration and repeal of this act  
5 shall not be affected by such expiration.

6

## PART D

7 Section 1. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new  
8 section 386-c to read as follows:

9 § 386-c. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any  
10 other provisions of this title or any other law, the authority shall  
11 provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other  
12 entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of  
13 any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority prior to the  
14 effective date of this section.

15 2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or  
16 other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use  
17 of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority to pay such  
18 tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related  
19 to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one  
20 hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

21 3. The authority shall conspicuously post on its website information  
22 on such amnesty program.

23 § 2. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section  
24 538-a to read as follows:

25 § 538-a. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any  
26 other provisions of this title or any other law, the authority shall  
27 provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other  
28 entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of  
29 any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority prior to the  
30 effective date of this section.

31 2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or  
32 other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use  
33 of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority to pay such  
34 tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related  
35 to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one  
36 hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

37 3. The authority shall conspicuously post on its website information  
38 on such amnesty program.

39 § 3. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section  
40 553-1 to read as follows:

41 § 553-1. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any  
42 other provisions of this title or any other law, the authority shall  
43 provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other  
44 entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of  
45 any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority prior to the  
46 effective date of this section.

47 2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or  
48 other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use  
49 of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority to pay such  
50 tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related  
51 to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one  
52 hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

53 3. The authority shall conspicuously post on its website information  
54 on such amnesty program.

1 § 4. Chapter 47 of the laws of 1931 relating to declaring the policy  
2 of the states of New York and New Jersey in regard to certain vehicular  
3 bridges and tunnels within the port of New York district, is amended by  
4 adding a new section 4B to read as follows:

5 § 4B. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any other  
6 provisions of this act or any other law, the port authority shall  
7 provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other  
8 entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of  
9 any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by such authority prior to the  
10 effective date of this section.

11 2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or  
12 other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use  
13 of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the port authority to pay  
14 such tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties  
15 related to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within  
16 one hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

17 3. The port authority shall conspicuously post on its website informa-  
18 tion on such amnesty program.

19 § 5. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section  
20 1279-m to read as follows:

21 § 1279-m. Cashless tolling amnesty program. 1. Notwithstanding any  
22 other provisions of this title or any other law, the authority shall  
23 provide an amnesty program for any person, firm, corporation, or other  
24 entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use of  
25 any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority prior to the  
26 effective date of this section.

27 2. Such amnesty program shall allow any person, firm, corporation, or  
28 other entity charged with the payment of a cashless toll fee for the use  
29 of any highway, bridge or tunnel operated by the authority to pay such  
30 tolls in full and to have any toll violation fees and penalties related  
31 to such paid tolls waived; provided such payment is made within one  
32 hundred eighty days from the effective date of this section.

33 3. The authority shall conspicuously post on its website information  
34 on such amnesty program.

35 § 6. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however,  
36 section four of this act shall take effect upon the enactment into law  
37 by the state of New Jersey of legislation having an identical effect  
38 with this act, but if the state of New Jersey shall have already enacted  
39 such legislation, this act shall take effect immediately; provided that  
40 the state of New Jersey shall notify the legislative bill drafting  
41 commission upon the occurrence of the enactment of the legislation  
42 provided for in section one of this act in order that the commission may  
43 maintain an accurate and timely effective data base of the official text  
44 of the laws of the state of New York in furtherance of effectuating the  
45 provisions of section 44 of the legislative law and section 70-b of the  
46 public officers law. Any rights or remedies granted to an individual  
47 pursuant to this act prior to the expiration and repeal of this act  
48 shall not be affected by such expiration.

49 § 4. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivi-  
50 sion, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of  
51 competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect,  
52 impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in  
53 its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section  
54 or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judg-  
55 ment shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of

1 the legislature that this act would have been enacted even if such  
2 invalid provisions had not been included herein.  
3 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, that  
4 the applicable effective date of Parts A through D of this act shall be  
5 as specifically set forth in the last section of such Parts.