

**SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MAY 27, 2020**

This meeting was assisted by Thomas Bermingham of CIA-Client Instant Access, LLC serving as the Operator of the calls.

This Special Board of Commissioners Meeting of the South Jersey Transportation Authority was held on May 27, 2020 via teleconference, commencing at 1:32 p.m.

After calling the meeting to order Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti stated due to her chairing the meeting via teleconference, Vice Chair Milam would be signing the approved resolutions on her behalf.

Present

Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti
 Commissioner Jeffery A. April, Esq.
 Commissioner Bryan J. Bush
 Commissioner James J. McCullough
 Commissioner C. Robert McDevitt
 Vice Chairman Christopher M. Milam
 Commissioner Joseph Ripa
 Rudy Rodas, Esq., Governor’s Authorities Unit
 Stephen F. Dougherty, Executive Director (in person)
 Karen Davis, Director of Finance/CFO (in person)
 Louis Cappelli Jr., Esq. General Counsel
 Cynthia Blasberg, Board Secretary (in person)
 Debra Murphy, Alternate Board Secretary (in person)
 David Zappariello, Chief of Staff (in person)
 Paul Heck, Direct of Business Administration (in person)
 Joel T. Falk, Director of ITT (in person)
 Stephen Mazur, Director of Engineering/Chief Engineer
 Dominic D’Amico, Director of Transportation Services
 Tim Kroll, Director of Airport
 James Sullivan, Director of Operations
 Colleen Hackett, Administrative Services Manager

Absent

Commissioner Maurice B. Hill, Jr., DMD
 Commissioner Christina Fuentes, EDA

Statement of Public Notice

Notice of this Special Board Meeting has been advertised in the Press of Atlantic City, Camden Courier Post, the SJTA Website and with the Secretary of the State of New Jersey notifying that this meeting is being held remotely due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. as prescribed by law

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti called for a moment of silence to for all those who have been impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Roll Call

Commissioner	Present	Absent
Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti	X	
Commissioner Jeffery A. April, Esq.	X	
Commissioner Bryan J. Bush	X	
Commissioner Maurice B. Hill, Jr., DMD		X
Commissioner James J. McCullough	X	
Commissioner C. Robert McDevitt	X	
Vice Chairman Christopher M. Milam	X	
Commissioner Joseph Ripa	X	
Commissioner Christina Fuentes		X

109 members of the public called into this meeting at various times. Total participants were 130.

Approval of the Agenda

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti called for a motion to approve the May 27, 2020 agenda. Whereupon, a motion was made by Commissioner Bush and seconded by Vice Chairman Milam approving said agenda. Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti asked for questions on the motion. No questions were asked. A unanimous vote was taken adopting and approving the agenda. A copy of the agenda is attached hereto and made a permanent part of these official Authority minutes.

Public Response to Agenda Items

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti asked the public for responses to the agenda items and asked the Operator to patch through the first call. The Chair indicated that responses must be limited to five (5) minutes and anyone who is not speaking to please keep their phone on mute mode.

The Operator stated that the comment portion of the meeting has begun and asked that anyone wishing to comment at this time, please press star one on your telephone to enter the queue. Comments would be taken in turn and callers have five minutes to complete their comments. An alert will be provided with one-minute remaining, and a second alert will be provided with 15 seconds remaining.

The Public Response to agenda items is attached to these minutes.

Resolutions and Motions:

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti asked Mr. Dougherty to present the resolution. Mr. Dougherty presented Resolution number 2020-59.

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti called for a motion to approve the resolution. The motion as presented, was moved by Vice Chairman Milam and seconded by Commissioner Bush, approving said resolution.

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti asked if there is any discussion involving the Board Members on this resolution. Commissioner April noted that he wanted to make a few comments at this time. He further noted that he is the longest serving Commissioner in the Authority. He believes the Toll increase is absolutely necessary as he has been seeking a Toll increase for a number of years. The Expressway helps fund the Airport. Also, the Authority's budget for Capital Projects is at almost zero which means the Authority cannot perform any Capital work without this increase being approved. He referred to earlier comments about the fact that the public hearing on the Toll Increase was made during a time when people could not come because of the COVID-19 problem. The last time the SJTA had a major public hearing was when the Authority created a full interchange at exit 17. He was the only Commissioner who attended the hearing. There were no public comments made at the hearing, all comments were made by mail. If the Authority doesn't pass this increase, the SJTA cannot do Capital Improvements or fund the Airport, he urges the Board members to vote yes to this increase.

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti asked the Board members for further comments, no additional comments were made.

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti stated, "I'm just going to raise a couple points to close out the discussion before we vote. Throughout history we've witnessed the impact that public works projects have on stimulating a weakened economy. And not unlike a decade ago the South Jersey Transportation Authority's plan provides the important infrastructure projects to spur continued economic investment in New Jersey, and to create job opportunities, not only for our current construction sector, but for many who will look for career paths and for jobs that will not return as a result of COVID-19. The South Jersey Transportation Authority's capital plan provides many important projects. And in my association with the Authority over the past two and half years I have been most impressed with the way the SJTA serves the six counties under its jurisdiction. Not only does it provide important construction projects on routes to important places within the southern region of the state, but it does so much community work. And while we're maintaining a program such as Meals on Wheels, or shuttle services for job commutes, or visits to doctors, these are services that are not often seen by a transportation agency, and certainly overlooked at SJTA. And I commend them for that. And know that with this toll increase and the ability to invest more capital they'll be able to expand those programs. As for their involvement in any type of a transit operation they've been

successful in doing that for quite some time now with the transportation department that was formed probably close to 20 years ago. But that does a tremendous amount of work with its bus drivers in support of the community. This agency is probably one of the smallest but most comprehensive in New Jersey. I'm very proud of the work it does. The SJTA is partnering today with the DOT, with New Jersey Turnpike and New Jersey Transit to convert its light duty vehicle fleet to electric. We have until 2025 to convert 25 percent of our fleet to electric, but at the trajectory we're on these four agencies will likely hit 40 percent by 2020, and be in compliance with Executive Order 100, and S-2252.

So many have expressed concerns regarding widening the sections of the roadway. You know, widenings are difficult sometimes to accept, but they're important to create a safer more efficient environment. I believe that the projects that the South Jersey Transportation Authority lists will be presented to the community as they're developed as they always have been. These projects will be done responsibly and certainly respectfully of the environment. I am very proud of the work they do. I'm very proud of the staff and team that helped to put this together.”

Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti asked the Secretary to call the roll.

Roll Call

Commissioner	Motion	2nd	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Recused	Absent
Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti			X				
Commissioner Jeffery A. April, Esq.			X				
Commissioner Bryan J. Bush		X	X				
Commissioner Maurice B. Hill, Jr., DMD							X
Commissioner James J. McCullough				X			
Commissioner C. Robert McDevitt			X				
Vice Chairman Christopher M. Milam	X		X				
Commissioner Joseph Ripa			X				

RESOLUTION 2020-59 OF THE SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY AUTHORIZING A TOLL INCREASE ON THE ATLANTIC CITY EXPRESSWAY

Pursuant to Section 7(i) and Section 20 of the Act, the Authority may increase any existing toll, fare or other charge for the roadway over which it has control. The Authority previously adopted Resolution 2020-26 authorizing the holding of public hearings and the publication of public notices for a proposed toll adjustment in accordance with Section 20. The Authority published notice of the public hearings on the proposed toll increase in accordance with N.J.S.A. 27:25A-19 and -20, Executive Order No. 107, guidance issued by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, and A3850/S2294, P.L.2020, c.11 and held three virtual public hearings that could be viewed in all of the South Jersey counties that the Authority serves and which allowed for comments from the public. The Hearing Officer for all three (3) public hearings has submitted a report concerning the public input received at those hearings. The Commissioners of the Authority have reviewed the report and have and have determined that a toll increase is necessary along the Expressway. The Commissioners wish to adopt a new toll schedule for the Expressway which is attached hereto as Schedule “A”. Tolls will be annually indexed by the greater of the Consumer Price Index or 3%, but at an amount not to exceed 3%, each year beginning January 1, 2022.

General Comment

Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti asked the public for any general comments.

The Operator stated to the public “if you'd like to make a comment at this time please press star-one on your telephone keypad. And there are some individuals entering the cue now to make a comment, and once again it'll be star-one to make a comment at this time. Please note you will be taken in turn, your name will be announced, you'll have five minutes to complete your comment. And then an alert will be provided one-minute remaining, and with 15 seconds remaining.

General Comments from the public is attached to these minutes

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Gutierrez-Scaccetti called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Whereupon, the motion was made by Commissioner April and seconded by Commissioner Bush to adjourn the meeting. A unanimous voice vote was taken adjourning the meeting at 3:20 p.m.

Submitted by:

Cynthia A. Blasberg, Board Secretary

Note: No Executive Session was held during this meeting.

Operator: **The first comment is coming from Robert Lewandowski. Robert, your line is live, and your time has started.**

Robert Lewandowski: Thank you very much. My name is Rob Lewandowski, and I'm here representing New Jersey LECET. That's the labor-management arm of the Laborers' International Union of North America and its signatory contractors. Working together, we seek to encourage responsible economic development and infrastructure investment.

I want to thank the SJTA for having the foresight to develop a comprehensive capital plan and the fortitude to attach a fair and equitable revenue stream to pay for it. Sometimes it's easier to turn a blind eye to emerging issues because of the challenges it presents to properly address them. We can ignore road conditions, the dearth of public transportation infrastructure in Southern New Jersey and how technology is changing how business is conducted.

But of course, ignoring the needs and passing on opportunities for improvement are not really a good thing, which is why I commend SJTA Board of Commissioners and staff for thinking ahead and both literally and figuratively keeping South Jersey moving forward.

In this COVID-19 world that we now live in, I also want to address a secondary benefit of this investment, and that's jobs. It's not just construction jobs or engineering jobs but jobs throughout the regional economy. Various academic studies show that every dollar invested in infrastructure yields a return of between \$1.50 and \$3. The Federal Highway Administration estimates every billion dollars in highway spending supports 13,000 jobs throughout the economy.

So this capital plan supports 6500 jobs in South Jersey. That's significant. The SGTA [sic] capital plan, it makes sense, because transportation infrastructure requires our constant attention to maintain and improve the system. With so many businesses and families struggling, we get the added benefit of stimulating the economy at a time when we desperately need stimulus.

I support the SJTA capital plan and toll increase and thank you for the opportunity to address you.

Operator: **Your next comment is coming Jason Freidman. Jason, your line is live, and your time has started now.**

Jason Freidman: Good afternoon, Madam Chair, Commissioners, and fellow listeners. I think the easiest thing to do at times is to point a finger, raise a question, or have a concern. Conversely, it's rarely easy to take the initiative or the lead. On behalf of the working families that are represented by the carpenters here in New Jersey, on behalf of myself, we thank you for your leadership on this capital plan. For sure it will ensure the prosperity of New Jersians for many years to come. That's all I have. Thank you.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Daniel Nevel. Daniel, your line is live, and your time will start now.**

Daniel Nevel: Thank you very much. My name is Dan Nevel. I'm representing the Construction Contractors Labor Employers of New Jersey. We are the contractors that represent most of the heavy highway unions out there. We strongly support this increase. This increase and plan are looking to make safety a priority, starting from phase one with

resurfacing and upgrading lighting throughout all the roads in the SJTA. So we support this. It's creating great-paying middle-class jobs throughout the state, and I'll be brief and say thank you to the board and all the commissioners, and hope you vote in favor of this plan. That ends my testimony.

Operator: The next comment is coming from Daniel Ortega. Daniel, your line is live, and your time has started now.

Daniel Ortega: Good afternoon. My name is Daniel Ortega. I am with ELEC 825. We represent the combined interests of more than 7200 hardworking men and women of the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 825; and more than 1000 signatory contractors, many of whom are small-business owners which employ them.

We applaud Governor Murphy and Commissioner [unintelligible 00:07:32] and the [Turnpike] Authority as a whole for their leadership and their foresight during these unprecedented times. We have the opportunity today to chart a course for the next decade. We can ignore the natural human reaction to COVID-19 virus and try to destroy our economy as some paid environmental lobbyists are suggesting; or we can build our way back.

While too often, the critical maintenance of roadway and bridge infrastructure is ignored, so is the expansion and planning for the future. Our paid environmental friends today will say that this is unnecessary. However, we believe that somehow New Jersey will be the global exception to human nature. In almost every country around the world, sales of new cars are up because the public is scared that [unintelligible 00:08:24] of mass transit and fear of further infection.

This will be the case in New Jersey if we do not move forward. During these past eight weeks, we have [seen] our reliance on delivery goods, and the supply-chain industry that gets those good to our homes safely, they saw a skyrocket. A recent international final-mile study shows how our state is in a [unintelligible 00:08:51] position to capitalize. In fact, our [turnpike] corridor is within one day drive of nearly 50 percent of the United States population.

In the fight rebuild [unintelligible 00:09:03] innovation economy, government has only two tools in their belt: incentive and infrastructure to encourage investments. That's all. We should be applauding this agency for making the difficult choice and the right choice. An agency that is entirely self-funded is moving forward with a \$24 billion capital project that will [get start] our statewide recovery, despite what the naysayers today will have you believe.

To fund that [unintelligible 00:09:34] toll adjustment, where 50 percent of the user fees of the Turnpike, and 25 percent on the Parkway, will be paid by for [sic] [out-of-state] drivers.

This is [unintelligible 00:09:45] good public policy and is much needed first step. Thank you, Commissioners, and again, thank you for your leadership.

Operator: The next comment is coming from David Pringle. David, your line is live, and your time begins now. Hello, David, please check to see if you line is live.

David Pringle: Can you hear me? Hello?

Operator: Yes, your line is live, David.

David Pringle: Great. Thank you. My name is David Pringle. I'm representing Clean Water Action. We have 100,000 members throughout New Jersey. I was on hold for over three hours on two separate lines this morning. I was confirmed in the queue, and you did not afford me the opportunity to comment, so I'm going to combine some comments today; but they are all relevant to the South Jersey Transportation Authority.

First, I'd like to thank Senate Majority Weinberg for her testimony this morning. She keeps hope alive, which is in dire need these days. I'd also like to give a special shout out to all the commenters against this plan, as well as those from this morning; support all those comments, the hours they've dedicated.

This is the fifth time in a month where individual citizens – not paid environmentalists, unpaid volunteers, citizens – are giving up their time and focus outward, whereas so far, everybody on this call and, I believe 17 of the 19 folks on the call this morning are paid themselves. They make more than we do; and unlike us, they will financially benefit from this contract, so they have an inherent financial conflict of interest.

That said, I just don't get it. There are so many desperately needed unfunded projects that create more jobs than are being proposed here today that don't do the damage that this and this morning's capital plan do. Despite repeated dozens of folks making dozens of requests to dozens of folks in the administration to talk about this, we've been met with deafening silence.

When there's not enough money to fund everything, why not work together to fund the projects we agree on rather than fight against each other on the projects we disagree on? There isn't enough money in this capital plan for New Jersey Transit. For one, there are question marks on your proposal for New Jersey Transit and other mass-transit projects while the road projects are a definite. Similarly, in this morning's proposal, there was not money for mass transit. It's for other programs and other parts of the aspects.

When you're proposing over \$20 billion of projects, and over \$16 billion of it is going to damaging highway expansion, that's not balanced. That's 32 years old a millionaire's tax. We still don't have enough PPE and so much more, and we can afford to waste \$16 billion, and there isn't nearly enough fix it first in this program.

So this isn't about toll hikes. This is about how we spend our money. So it is with very heavy heart that I comment today, because this is a double whammy. The fact that you noticed this on Memorial Day, this hearing, when you had a meeting last week, you knew you were doing this last week. Shame on you from [sic] hiding from the public. It's outrageous.

And we appreciate the strain you are under. There are too many unfunded projects, and understand you're having significant lost revenue; and it's never popular to raise tolls, like taxes. Your staff are in harm's way, and I'd like to give a special shout out to those on the front lines.

But that strain is nothing compared to the strain we all face from this pandemic, the public-health and the economic perspective of it. Folks are truly distrusting government and democracy too often, and we face a threat from climate emergency. Moving forward with this plan today in this fashion is making things worse, not better.

We support the toll hikes. However, your capital plan, without a major overhaul, funds the wrong projects at incredible cost. It undermines democracy and faith in government. It threatens public health and private property, and it hurts our economy recovery that we so desperately need right now. It contradicts the governor's own economic, climate,

energy, and COVID recovery plans. So you're doing bad things in his name if you move this forward today.

Operator: You have one-minute remaining.

David Pringle: They say a good definition of insanity is, you try something over and over again and expect and expect a different result. But we're not giving up. We're going to keep demanding you create more jobs. You protect the climate. You protect public health and reject this plan. I counted at least 20 different times in the last three months where we've reached out to try and engage you guys in conversations, and we're getting nothing.

On other issues, every cabinet agency – DEP, BPU, Office of Attorney General, the Governor's office, has had meaningful engagement with us. We don't always agree. It isn't always easy. There isn't always a lot of trust, especially in the beginning. But we're all better for it when it occurs, and most importantly New Jersey –

Operator: Fifteen seconds remaining.

David Pringle: Why aren't we doing that here? Let's do it. Suspend the vote. Work with us to make this plan better economically, environmentally, for public health, for COVID, for democracy and public trust in government. Give the public a break. Work with us. Thank you.

Operator: The next comment is coming from Jane Asselta. Jane, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

Jane Asselta: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Jane Asselta. I'm the vice president of the Southern New Jersey Development Council. I'm here today to speak in support of the SJTA's proposed toll increase to finance their 2020 capital improvement program.

As a business economic development organization, much of our mission is to provide access to good information for business leaders to make decisions that spur sustainable economic development and maintain businesses that lead to better jobs, higher wages, and tax revenues in Southern New Jersey. For the past several years, the SNJDC has hosted workshops and seminars on the need to invest in our regional infrastructure. These seminars featured policymakers and project developers with the goal of educating our membership of the benefits of investment in infrastructure and opportunities to increase access to the region.

In providing that content, and through collaboration with our membership, we were able to offer these comments in support for your consideration. Investments in our critical infrastructure stimulate the long-term growth and sustainability of our local and state economy, improve access to our region's assets, and promote business development.

We believe the proposed capital improvement program is consistent with SNJDC's mission to promote responsible economic development in South Jersey by recognizing that transportation infrastructure is the cornerstone to economic success across the region. The projects included in the capital program are multimodal in nature, will create jobs, and will strengthen South Jersey's economy for years to come.

The proposed capital improvements will reduce congestion, make it easier to move people and goods, help attract business to South Jersey, and make the region more [appealable] and visitors. The investments include safety and lighting improvements, resurfacing, widenings, ramp investments, conversion to an all-electronic tolling, and

the SJTA's participation in the South Jersey light-rail extension from Camden to Glassboro.

All of these projects are important investments into the region's infrastructure and future economic growth. Increasing air service to the Atlantic City region has been talked about for many years. The construction of a direct connector from the Expressway and the building of four new bridges will reduce travel frustration and increase the likelihood of additional usage and help grow the airport and reach new markets.

Atlantic City International Airport is a driver for the region's economy and contributes to increased tourism across the region. In addition to much needed maintenance and safety improvements, the capital improvement includes several interchange improvements, system expansion, and rail improvements. For example, the program includes a third lane widening of the western portion of the AC Expressway from Interchange 31 to Route 42. This project will provide much needed congestion relief during summer tourist season, whose heights we all hope we will soon see again.

Funds will also go towards the SJTA's participation extending the South Jersey light rail from Camden to Glassboro. That project will make mass transit more convenient to South Jersey residents by connecting to NJ Transit, Patco, Amtrak, and the River Line. It should be noted, the AC Expressway does not receive any funding from state Transportation Trust Fund or the federal government.

Tolls on the Atlantic City Expressway rank in the 23rd lowest out of 47 toll roads, and tolls were last increased in 2008. The proposed toll increase will increase the average trip about 57 cents. These facts further justify the need for increased revenue to support capital investments in infrastructure.

The SNJDC believes that the inclusion of an indexing mechanism, beginning in 2022, and capped at no more than three percent annually, is a prudent measure that will not only save time but will allow for a more stable revenue stream from which to better plan future capital improvements.

Lastly, as we begin to transition out of the COVID-19 crisis, putting South Jersey back to work will be critical. This capital program will provide good-paying construction jobs so vital to Southern New Jersey's economic recovery.

Operator: One-minute remaining.

Jane Asselta: A safe and reliable transportation system to move people and goods is paramount to providing the quality of life we expect and demand, but it does not come without a cost. Year after year, we watch our infrastructure age and deteriorate. Now is the time to put New Jersey's residents back to work. Why not build and fix our infrastructure while we're at it?

For these reasons, we support SJTA's proposed toll increase to finance their proposed capital improvement program. I'd like to thank the SJTA commissioners for the opportunity to participate in today's board meeting and to share the SNJDC's position on this important issue. Thank you again.

Operator: The next comment is from Mary Walsh. Mary, your line is live, and your time is beginning now.

Mary Walsh: I'm a cancer survivor. I've lived in New Jersey for almost half a century, and one of my cancers happened to be lung cancer, which is generated by pollution. So as I was

thinking about this capital plan – and I have to be honest; I’m not sure where the repair of infrastructure comes in, but I certainly believe that – it occurred to me that the COVID-19 snuck up on us, even though we had been warned that it was coming.

Somehow, we will get past it, but as we see, planning that was done in other countries helped them to deal with it in a less disastrous way than has happened here to our economy. The pending global-warming crisis falls into a similar category as the pandemic. We can still clean up after these various severe weather events that have been occurring such as Sandy but continuing to pour pollution into the air will only exacerbate these events.

In Houston, the people paved over the wetlands and put up infrastructure. When the rains came, there was no place for the rain to go except to flood the entire city. The pinelands not only absorb water, but they clean the air. We need to address this aspect of our communal existence and think outside the box.

So many possibilities exist, and why not here in New Jersey? Why must it always be business as usual; cars, cars, cars? The union workers will be employed whether they are building light rail or a new station for it at the Atlantic City Airport.

All nature is connected. If you destroy part of the pinelands, there will be adverse effect elsewhere. Saying people will want to drive cars because of the coronavirus is denying how mass transit can adapt. People want clean air. It’s no secret that air pollution causes lung cancer and other respiratory illnesses such as asthma.

Two hundred vehicles traveling 11 miles each together spew over four tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, not counting the other chemicals; so why would you suggest something that’s obviously not to the benefit of public health? We need mass transit, not the gas-powered cars. Contrary to what was stated earlier, the more roads there are, the more traffic.

Finally, it is incongruous to have a New Jersey energy masterplan that is ignored. I believe it is your responsibility to respect that plan. Thank you.

Operator: The next comment is coming from David Rible. David, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

David Rible: Thank you. I represent the Utility Contractors Industry Advancement Fund. I’m calling in to support the capital plan. Infrastructure is key to rebuilding our economy. It creates jobs, revitalizes businesses. It gives immediate influx of money into our economy, which is now, more than ever, vital for our state. It’s been clearly proven that transportation infrastructure projects will safely and effectively stimulate our economy and will boost our New Jersey commerce.

We hear so much about the economic impact and just the job increases it’s going to create, and the revenue for the state, is going to be astounding numbers. With that, we are in support of the capital plan. Commissioner, I appreciate your support, Commissioners of the South Jersey Transportation Authority. We support you, and we thank you for your leadership. Thank you.

Operator: The next comment is coming from Tom Forkin. Tom, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

Tom Forkin: Good afternoon. My name is Tom Forkin. I’m calling from Atlantic City on behalf of the Atlantic City Taxpayers Association. I’m urging all the board members to not support this measure, for obvious reasons.

We're in the middle of pandemic. We need things to stimulate our tourist economy. Our economy here in Atlantic City and points south, such as Ocean City, Cape May, Wildwood, are tourist driven. This toll increase is going to have a dramatic chilling effect on us trying to re-stimulate our economy once this virus passes. This is problematic on several levels.

I've heard some of the other contractors speak on the issue. They're in support of it for obvious reasons at their end, because they want to employ people. While that may be important, there is still revenue coming vis-à-vis the tolls. It's the effective means in which you spend the existing revenue stream that can be dedicated towards those projects. It's just a matter of budgeting, and it's a matter of effectively spending the revenue stream that already exists.

Increasing the tolls is going to drive what businesses are left after this pandemic out of business. I own a small business here in Atlantic City. I had people coming down from Philadelphia and other parts of Pennsylvania, and this is going to be highly problematic, obviously not just for my businesses but for the small restaurants and bars and the casinos here in Atlantic City.

So therefore, I'm respectfully requesting a no vote based on those reasons. The timing in this could not be worse. It really is going to have a devastating, long-lasting effect on the city of Atlantic City and on the taxpayers and residents here who own small businesses. We're already looking at unsustainable property taxes here in Atlantic City through the revaluation and the pilot program, which is equally problematic, because once those casinos start reporting lower numbers, the pilot program is going to allow them to pay less in taxes, making homeowners such as myself and other small-business owners that pay taxes – we're going to have to pay more taxes, dramatically more.

Raising the toll increase and having a chilling effect on the flow of tourists down the Atlantic City Expressway is devastating. Really, at this point, I'm begging you guys to vote no on this, because it's going to be a problem. Hopefully, you see it that way, because there's no other way, in my opinion, to see it. That's it. It's going to be the death knell.

When the Atlantic City Expressway was originally built, it was built to enhance the economy here in Atlantic City and Atlantic County and points south. This is going to be a death knell in moving out of this COVID virus. As a result, I'm urging you all to vote no on this issue. Thank you.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Steve Carrellas. Steve, your line is live, and your time will begin now.**

Steve Carrellas: Thank you very much. I'm Steve Carrellas. I head the state chapter of the National Motorists Association. We provided detailed comments as part of the written comment process, and I'd like to start out. I'm just disappointed that the public did not get a response to all the questions and comments that they submitted earlier, so anyone who called in in this last chance for comments could address those questions and make this a more productive process, versus the standard organizations doing all the related rhetoric. It would seem to make more sense.

We do understand from a historical perspective, not surprised that eventually there would be a toll increase; and we can see from the plan that we examined, some of it is justified. The problem is, what is the – it looks like we're getting something, but is it worth the price?

I think some of the commenters were correct in that a little more interaction with representatives of segments of the public should have been much more useful and made people feel like they were listened to, even if they didn't get exactly what they wanted. It would have been more beneficial. We have no problem with you holding off on this vote, if all your intent is to vote on the current proposal, and to do the process right.

Given prior details, I guess I'll just leave you with one thing. We suggested, as a first start to a plan, that you eliminate the light-rail projects from the capital plan and, as a starting point, reduce the proposed toll increases to 60 percent of what you're now proposing. That's a much better starting point to consider your plan and the money needed to support it.

We oppose the whole plan as it's currently stated. There's a chance to do something, it's not like you shouldn't be raising tolls. It's just, what is the appropriate amount, and for what work; and it really hasn't, unfortunately, been a debate, because it's been a very one-way process where you say what you want to do. We tell you what we think, and then you just go and do what you want to do anyway.

It looks, in a question today, the governor supports you, so you've got your cover to do what you want, but the legislature will catch up with both authorities in due course, given the way this process – and with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey having gotten out of their hole with regard to transparency and a little bit more responsiveness in what they're trying to do with the public, it will be turn for the South Jersey Transportation Authority and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority to get theirs.

Thank you very much and stay safe.

Operator: The next comment is coming from Robert Gatsby. Robert, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

Robert Gatsby: My name is Bob Gatsby with the Sheet Metal Workers Local 19. I'm calling in to offer my support of the proposed toll increase with the planned projects outlined by the SJTA. You guys are providing good-paying jobs, especially in a time that we need it. I want to thank the board for helping get New Jersey back on track. Thank you.

Operator: The next comment is coming from [Cindy Williams]. Cindy, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

Cindy Williams: Good afternoon. I represent 3500 hardworking New Jersey residents and members of the Eastern Atlantic States Carpenters. We are expressing support for toll increases and the SGTA's [sic] capital plan. New Jersey is in desperate need of a real investment in replacing and repairing the infrastructure of our state. We've seen too many times across the country infrastructure fail and the need for reliable and safe transportation, and the need for transportation for all New Jersey residents.

A modest raise in tolls that are being proposed will help to make sure that we have projects moving forward, and it will help put hardworking men and women out there on the jobsites day to day. Forty percent of New Jersey bridges and roads are deemed deficient, and we need to do something about it.

The New Jersey and Eastern Atlantic States Carpenters are in full support of this, and we thank the commissioner and the board for your consideration. Thank you.

Operator: The next comment is coming from Jeff Brantley. Jeff, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

Jeff Brantley: Hi. I'm Jeff Brantley, a resident of the state. I do work in the industry, so I've seen firsthand how these projects benefit the state and the residents. So I am in support of it. I think the timing is actually good timing. We need a stimulus because of COVID. I think it's a good proactive approach to invest in South Jersey, so I am in support.

Operator: The next comment is coming from Sally DePamphilis. Sally, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

Sally DePamphilis: Hi, my name is Sally DePamphilis, and I'm calling from Somers Point. I am not in support of this plan, right now especially, when I actually have family members that are not working. I'm against this toll increase. I just think it's unfair at this time. We're all in a pause. We're all in a life pause, and I just think that everyone just has to give a little. You give a little; we give a little. I just think this is just really not the time to raise the tolls.

Every little bit helps. If somebody is going to work, they have to spend more money. Just taking your somewhere, they have to spend more money on the tolls. That's my opinion. I would hope that you would consider what I'm asking to please, not raise them. We don't have money for anything right now. People are afraid to spend any money, so I am not in support of this plan. Thank you very much for your time.

Operator: The next comment is coming from Jake Glassy. Jake, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

Jake Glassy: Thank you very much, Commissioner and madam chairman, to be heard at this time. As you may all know, I was the first chairman of the SJTA when it was formed several years ago. I served under two governors, a republican and a democrat. The whole time I was there, we tried to do our best on the Atlantic City Expressway, [bus parking] at the time, and the creation of the Atlantic City International Airport.

This was all done to try to get as many people that we could to discover and to come to South Jersey and enjoy the area and enjoy the casinos in Atlantic City. We are now in a desperate time, not only in New Jersey but in the whole country. I've heard the governor say, and it's been stated in the paper, the state is close to declaring bankruptcy.

And yet, your proposal, at the 12th hour, without the public having any input into it and knowing what this is all about, a proposal of a huge toll increase, that will now affect anybody that finally gets back on their feet. They want to go out, and they want to come to South Jersey. They want to come to the casinos, which will employ at that time thousands and thousands of people, not just a relative handful in comparison of construction workers. It'll also benefit the construction workers.

South Jersey Transportation Authority has a history of trying to work with the public and let them know what we're doing, but I feel that the public was blindsided by this proposal. Once this pandemic is over, and things are back to normal, is the time to consider a huge toll increase such as this. The people here that are not working and living on unemployment are the ones that are going to have to pay for this steep increase.

You will then be pushing people away. Businesspeople are now lowering their prices and trying to get the public to come to town. When the South Jersey Transportation was formed, we did everything possible to help people come to South Jersey. We now have people in line collecting bags of food to take home to eat. These same people need jobs, and they need to get back to work in all of South Jersey, not just on a few road projects.

I agree, a lot of these projects need to be done in time. I just think any one of you have to look at each other and say, isn't this the worst possible time in the history of this country and this state to add something to the working person's pocketbook and ask them to pay more. I think you are sending the people that want to come to South Jersey and use our roads and highways in the opposite direction.

Remember, they can always go other places, such as up in Pennsylvania, New York, down to Virginia and that area; and don't have to pay these tolls. We tried to keep everything low at the airport when we were formed, and we tried to keep our tolls and such on the Expressway to the minimum while providing great service.

Our employees always were proud of our road, thought it was the best road in the country. It's always been kept up. It's been clean. When it snows, it's one of the few routes you can use. We need these people to start coming back to Southern New Jersey. We need them to come to Atlantic City desperately. They've had to raise the taxes. We're all getting increases.

Here, a poor businessman – you just heard one say that they're trying to survive. They're lowering their prices while you guys want to raise prices. Now is not –

Operator: One-minute remaining.

Jake Glassy: – not the time. Okay, now is not the time to raise a toll increase. It's ridiculous to even consider it, and I urge the commission to please vote no, and don't [improve] something until there's more input and more time goes by. Thank you.

Operator: As a reminder, ladies and gentlemen, if you'd like to enter the queue at this time to make a public comment, press star-one on your telephone keypad. Once again, it'll be star-one to enter the queue to make a public comment.

The next comment is coming from Joe Fiordaliso. Joe, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

Joe Fiordaliso: Thank you. Madam chair and Commissioners, my name's Joe Fiordaliso. I'm president of the American Council of Engineering Companies in New Jersey, which is a business trade association for the consulting engineering profession. I speak in strong support of the proposed plan.

South Jersey Transportation Authority has substantial capital needs, and without additional investment, the repair, rehabilitation, and improvement of our infrastructure network can't proceed. The AC Expressway, Atlantic City International Airport, and other assets require an appropriate level of investment that is long overdue.

Bridge improvements, safety enhancements, important rail connections, are the significant features of this proposed plan. The promise of AET, all-electronic tolling, is exciting and something to be seized now. The Authority has a strong record of wisely investing revenues. The AC Expressway \$54 million capacity expansion, a comprehensive road resurfacing program, and a series of essential bridge improvements are just a few examples.

Based on current and future needs and the past performance of the Authority, this proposal is absolutely appropriate and warranted. The toll increases that are proposed are modest. They're in line with those proposed by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. Indexing will make sure that tolls keep pace with rising costs and eliminate the need for large increases in the future.

I'd like to commend Executive Director Steve [Dougherty], Chief Engineer [Steve Maser], and the professional staff at the Authority for doing a forensic analysis of the Authority's needs and for developing this proposal. Enactment of the plan is critical to the condition of the Authority's assets. It's critical to the ability of our residents to travel around the state.

It's certainly critical to the health of the region's economy, and for all those reasons, I respectfully urge you to pass the plan before you today. Thank you very much.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Kathleen Richards. Kathleen, your line is live, and your time will begin now. Kathleen, please check to see if your line is muted. Once again, it is now live. Please make your comment.**

Kathleen Richards: Okay. I think there needs to be more jobs in New Jersey, especially with special ed. It seems like all the students are being bunched together, and a lot of them can be successful. Some of them are mildly autistic, and there needs to be more one-on-one helping and mentoring as opposed to just having them all bunched into different classes.

We need to get public schools to be more accommodating to special ed students, maybe have some of the teachers go through some of the special ed training or have them think, okay, well, we have to tolerate this or make some allowances, because students don't understand that; work to make schools better at educating children, because those children are the next generation of people who have to work in society, or not work because the government can't keep paying money for people to stay home, especially if they have the potential to work.

So we need to improve those aspects. We need to make sure that IEPs are correct and accurate, and we need to work on doing whatever we can to improve our schools. I think Zoom is great during the COVID-19 pandemic, because it's less interaction in schools. But still, we need to be able to come together in person and do what we need to do, plus people do not need to be so critical of others.

So if we can work on these things, that would be great. I'm from [Conventions of] State in Scotch Plains New Jersey. So hopefully we can get our governor to let us have the power to change things so that we make proper decisions so that things go in the right direction. I like the thing about the roads that you keep saying. However, you know –

Male Voice: No, we don't.

Kathleen Richards: – we need to make sure there are no accidents on the road when paying tolls. Thank you for letting me speak.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Kevin Monaco. Kevin, your line is live, and your time will begin now.**

Kevin Monaco: Good afternoon. Thank you very much. My name is Kevin Monaco. I serve as the executive director of the New Jersey Asphalt Pavement Association. The New Jersey Asphalt Pavement Association represents 110 companies throughout New Jersey who manufacture and place asphalt pavement. Our membership represents 100 percent market share of asphalt production in the state.

Asphalt production makes significant contributions to our environment and our economy. Asphalt is the most recycled product in the United States, and our members here in New Jersey employ more than 7500 people in good-paying jobs with good benefits.

The proposal to increase tolls is fiscally prudent, will help to alleviate traffic congestion, will promote economic growth, will create jobs; and, most importantly, will improve safety and our overall quality of life. Having well-maintained and robust transportation network is critical to allow the flow of products and people. It's far more prudent and cost effective over the long term to raise fees modestly and pay for needed improvements rather than allow our system to deteriorate as we defer needed projects.

Infrastructure investment now is more important than ever. Our transportation network is the base upon which all other economic activity is built. The New Jersey Asphalt Pavement Association fully supports this proposal and urges the approval of this important and necessary plan. Thank you very much.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Sam Donaldson. Sam, your line is live, and your time will begin now.**

Sam Donaldson: Thank you very much. I appreciate the opportunity to give my thoughts and opinions on the proposed action by the board.

First, I've just got to say, it was a pleasure to hear Jake Glassy's voice. I had the pleasure of working at South Jersey Transportation, many of those years while Jake Glassy was chairman of the board, so I hope he's doing well.

However, I must disagree with him on this point. I think while this plan, as I understand, was developed pre COVID crisis, in my opinion this is exactly what should be done in order to spur jobs that are so vitally needed in South Jersey right now. If money, if capital expenditure, did not generate jobs, we wouldn't see the federal government pouring so much money into projects, as we do right now.

Having said that, the SJTA hasn't had a toll increase in 12 years, if my memory is correct. I can tell you, during my 20 years of working at SJTA, I was there for two toll increases. After both of those toll increases, we did not see a reduction in visitor traffic on the Expressway, heading to Atlantic City or the shore towns. It just does not happen.

I can tell by looking at the capital program that SJTA has put out, they are doing work on facilities that are there from the beginnings of the Expressway, back in 1962, '63, '64; significantly old projects and facilities that need to be replaced. I applaud SJTA for the inclusion in their program for all-electronic tolling. When I was still there, we had begun the design for the implementation of all-electronic tolling.

Not until Commissioner Diane Scaccetti and Chris Milam, the Vice Chair, have they had the leadership to pull the trigger and get that done; a project that will increase safety, reduce CO2 emissions, and save operational money. What I think is most important in all of their program is the fact that some of this revenue generated from the toll increase will go to improve rail on the Atlantic City rail line and the proposed Glassboro-Camden line.

SJTA, in my opinion, is putting transportation choices and environmental benefits over business as usual, and potentially to their own detriment. If they are successful in improving both of those rail lines, which generally parallel to the Expressway, it will take cars off the Expressway and put them into light rail or heavy rail.

That is leadership, right there. That is not protecting what they have and making sure they protect their toll revenue. They are doing what they believe is in the best interests of New Jersey residents and the environment as a whole. So I applaud them for that.

I'll keep my comments to that. I will end with, thank you for your leadership, Commissioners and Chairwoman Diane Scaccetti; and strongly urge you to approve the resolution before you today. Thank you very much.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Zoe Baldwin. Zoe, your line is live, and your time will begin now.**

Zoe Baldwin: Hello. My name is Zoe Baldwin, and on behalf of the Utility & Transportation Contractors Association and our 1000 member firms, I'd like to express our strong support for the South Jersey Transportation Authority proposed toll increase.

Investment in infrastructure has a three-to-one return on investment, and it's critical that we continue this, investing in our system for the sake of our commutes and our economic recovery. The planned toll increases will help strengthen our state by reducing traffic, will create jobs and stimulate the construction and design industries.

Atlantic City is a major asset for our state, and the Authority's planned projects will make it easier to get to and from this bustling hub. Widening the Expressway will ease congestion for thousands of people who live, work, and play in the region; and the resurfacing projects will make sure everyone has as smooth trip.

While no one likes to pay more, it's been over a decade since the last toll increase, and it's clear to any driver that increased investment is now necessary. Advancing and improving our South Jersey transportation network is essential to support the continued economic growth throughout the region. We're also very much in support of the increases being indexed to inflation. It's a common-sense fiscal move that should be applied here.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify. This plan will put thousands of New Jerseyans to work and help commuters and commerce get around and through our state. On behalf of New Jersey's infrastructure builders, we urge you to move forward with the proposal. Thank you.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Todd Reitzel. Todd, your line is live, and your time begins now.**

Todd Reitzel: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Todd Reitzel. I am not a lobbyist, as many were on this call. I am an educated consumer. I really wanted to point out that the cost of tolls is similar to the cost of fuel. People will consume what they must, but they will avoid what they can. I appreciate greatly the condition of the Expressway, which is why I drive it every day. I spend over \$1000 annually on toll on the Atlantic City Expressway.

But many of us, if the tolls keep going up, will find ways to avoid the Expressway. The one caller spoke to decreasing congestion. I think it will increase congestion, especially on either side of the Egg Harbor toll. On one side, the exchange is Egg Harbor City. On the other side, the exchange is Hammonton. I think those towns are going to see increased traffic, because people will intentionally try to avoid that toll.

Like I said, I'm all for maintenance of roads and maintenance of existing structures, but I don't know if new projects are valuable in the new budget. Maintenance of the status quo might be best for this year. If you required to raise tolls, I would ask you, to give the true commuters a break, increase the discount plan of E-ZPass for those who use it literally every day, so it's not onerous on that population of the population. [sic] Thank you.

Operator: The next comment is coming from John Richmond. John, your line is live, and your time will begin now.

John Richmond: Thank you very much. I'm John Richmond. I'm the chair of [inaudible 0:55:06] New Jersey's environmental committee. Obviously, you're about to approve the capital plan that includes \$210 million for highway expansion. It's just as obvious that you have not taken into account the concerns that so many citizens have raised about widening the highways. You have not taken into account that it will increase carbon emissions exponentially.

You have not taken into account [inaudible 0:55:42] increase pollution when our air is really one of the worst in the country. You are not taking into account that this is really not a stimulus program or job-creation program, at least with respect to highway widening; when mass-transit fix it first projects will provide many more immediate jobs and more jobs in the long term.

So it's obvious to me that you're going to go forward with this, and it's also obvious that you're allowing politically connected groups to hijack state policy, to the complete and utter detriment of the health, welfare of the state's residents. The public, and ultimately the voters, will not forget what you are but to do today. They will not forget the hypocrisy of approving a plan that flies in the face of the state's energy masterplan and the governor's executive orders.

Likewise, your children and your grandchildren will not forget that you are on the wrong side of history, that you are not part of the climate change solution but a major part of the problem.

Thank you for your time.

Operator: The next comment is coming from [Sid Madison]. Sid, your line is live. Your time will begin now.

Sid Madison: Thank you. In light of the governor's clean energy and recovery policies, I suggest the following: Raise the bar of decision-making. Consider Mother Nature. Rules of Mother Nature cannot be changed. Mother Nature's rules must be followed, or we pay the price. Decisions are implemented by rule making, but outcomes are impacted by those rules and facts imposed by Mother Nature.

Thus, you should consider and give great weight to Mother Nature, i.e., raise the bar of decision-making. Here is an example: Mount St. Helen's. About 40 years ago this month, Mother Nature said, don't stay on Mount St. Helen's or else. People did, and they died. Consider the following quote. "We are the first generation to feel the effect of climate change, and the last generation who can do something about it." Global warming, climate change, follows the rules of Mother Nature.

Nineteen percent of the carbon dioxide which causes global warming, climate change, released today, will still be in the atmosphere in 1000 years, 1000 years. That is the reason, from the previous quote, we are the last generation who can do something about it. I repeat, 1000 years; that is the reason that we are the last generation who can do something about it.

Suggestions that you have been asked to consider will reduce carbon dioxide, reduce pollution, and are better for permanent jobs along the lines of the governor's plans. That is the reason you should raise the bar of decision-making, else we and our kids and our grandkids will pay the price.

Raise the bar of decision-making. Support the goals set by Governor Murphy. Thank you.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Jeff Tittel. Jeff, your line is live, and your time begins now.**

Jeff Tittel: Sure. Jeff Tittel, director, New Jersey Sierra Club. I just want to say, for someone who's been involved in transportation issues and planning for 50 years [inaudible 1:00:05] Route 78 going through the Watchung Reservation and cutting through my neighborhood in Newark, and dislocating thousands of people, we have not come a long way.

Fifty years later I still see the ghost of Robert Moses pushing policies to widen roads at the expense of the environment, promoting sprawl and over development, and still destroying neighborhoods. Here we are in the 21st century looking forward to a green future in dealing with the climate emergency that's in front of us. But instead we're speeding backwards to the 1950s, to the days of the gas-guzzler and the destruction of open space for highways. This plan is the wrong plan at the wrong time in the wrong place, and on top of it this morning the New Jersey Turnpike Authority approved another major widening.

Today this is the second half of a double header of the disruption of our environment, and the adding of more climate impacts to our state. You are not part of the solution. You are the problem, to take something from those periods back in the 1970s. This plan today does not do fix it first, it's pave it first. This does not help people get to work. This does not help our economy; it actually will hurt the economy. New Jersey has seen more damage from greenhouse gas impacts than virtually any other state. We're second in the nation in climate impacts and disruption. We have more than 4,000 units of houses that were built just in the last five years in areas down the shore that are going in harm's way. That will be impacted by climate change. We have today a plan that we're going to be widening this highway in the middle of the Pinelands, cutting through a wildlife management area.

We're supposed to be protecting the Pinelands, not paving the Pinelands over, and that's what this plan does. It will increase traffic. It will increase sprawl. It will not help anyone get to work. People will be paying more to be stuck in traffic longer while breathing in more fumes. We're in the middle of a pandemic, and a pandemic that's been tied to air pollution, especially from small particulates that come from the automobile. People who live in those areas tend to have a higher incidence of getting coronavirus, and a worse impact, and a higher mortality rate. One of those places is Atlantic City, let's keep paving our roads and pushing more pollution so that we can put Atlantic City under water. And cause the people in Atlantic City and other places to continue to choke. Instead we should be investing in light rail, which part of this plan does, but we need to be doing a lot more, and a lot more expansiveness of it. We need to be investing in transit, not just fixing Atlantic City Rail Line, but maybe bringing the rail line back to Cape May.

We need to be putting that money into bus rapid transit and electric busses, so people can get in and out of Atlantic City in a better way, in a cleaner way. But instead this is a throwback, and so to us you did not listen. Hundreds of people commented against this plan and wanted more time, but this is a one-way project on a two-way highway. You did not listen to anyone. You just decided to go forward and puts this through, and I just wanted to respond to one thing about, you know, highways they say improves, you know, three to one. Well when you fund mass transit the payback is more than ten to one, not including an economic benefit. So then when you throw in the health benefits and secondary impacts of growth it's a twenty to one payback, not a three to one. And

that's not even true because of all the pollution and all the impacts that that's going to have, and water pollution, and air pollution and so on and so forth.

The Pinelands are a national reserve. They're a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and we're going to be widening highways in it. It makes absolutely no sense.

Operator: **One-minute remaining.**

Respondent: It makes absolutely no sense to be doing that at this time. Again you should be doing your job, you know, SJTA is not the South Jersey Traffic Agency, it's not about transportation. It's about the automobile, and someone earlier said about how you're doing it on the tolls, so people will be paying more to be stuck in traffic. And the reason you're doing it with tolls and not getting federal money, which would pay for two thirds of these projects is because you would violate the NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act, with this project because of the impacts to the Pinelands, the ground water, and to air pollution And so you have to fund it on our dime because this is a destruction of our environment while impacting our lungs and our wallet. And so we ask you to basically stop this plan, stop it now, otherwise the governor should veto the minutes. And if he doesn't then he's full of hot air, and you're full of hot air, thank you.

Operator: **Next comment is coming from Dwayne Philips. Dwayne, your line is live and your time will begin now.**

Dwayne Philips: Thank you, my name is Dwayne Philips, I'm a resident of Brigantine. I ask that you oppose this outrageous half billion-dollar expressway toll hike. Who benefits from the eye-popping half billion-dollar construction program proposed by the South Jersey Transportation Authority for the Atlantic City Expressway? Not commuters, the toll to Atlantic City will increase 67 percent from 75 cents to \$1.25. And for commuters who are going from May's Landing to Atlantic City they bopped from \$1.50 to 2.50. That's a lot of money. Visitors are going to see a toll increase of 42 percent, from \$3 to \$4.25 at the main toll plaza. Does the public benefit? No, in an economic recession there are already what, more than a million workers who are collecting unemployment benefits, the medical emergency, the casinos are shut, it damages almost everyone.

And the biggest chunk of this, \$200 million is for prep work, not building. No roads will be built, not rails, no trains, nothing, it's going towards a Camden-Glassboro Light Rail Line. Light rail is a trolley line, the cost to build it will be another \$2 billion. And now the expressway toll user is going to have pay that two billion, Chris Christie would call this a boondoggle. The public is being deceived and manipulated. This massive toll hike is only to pay for the \$200 million for a project that has no benefit to anyone who uses the expressway or the Atlantic City International Airport. No other public agency will pay for it. The rationale is that South Jersey Transit Authority is a regional authority and should benefit the region. That's true, but when the idea was developed, they were going to build two expressways, one to Atlantic City, one to Cape May. Only one was built at the beginning, and they had tolls to pay for it and for future improvements. Like Jake Glassy said, they tried to manage their money and manage it well.

The Cape May Expressway was built in pieces and became Route 55, but it has no tolls and it was paid for by only Jersey taxpayers, unfortunately never made it all the way to Cape May. Why shouldn't the drivers on Route 55 pay tolls for the 200 million trolley prep works since it will benefit them and their region, and it was part of the original plan for there to be tolls on the Cape May Expressway? Imagine how many jobs could be created if Route 55, the Cape May Expressways was extended all the way to Cape May. Transportation experts do not believe that the trolley line will work. They think what is needed is a high-speed line, like the PATCO Line from Philadelphia to

Lindenwold to bring economic development to the region. The slow speed trolley will force commuters to change trains in Camden to get to Philadelphia. That hurts disabled riders, because it makes it much more difficult for them. And commuters don't want to be bothered with having to change.

They like a train that goes all the way in. years of experience in New Jersey show that trolley car lines are massive money losers, never pay for themselves, and in the case of the Camden-Trenton River Line cost the state taxpayers more than \$7 for each one way trip. The only one that comes close to working is the [Hudson-Verdon] line, and even that line loses money on each trip. No one wants to pay for the trolley line. New Jersey transit budget has only \$2 million for it in its 2020 to 2025 capital spending plan. Delaware River Port Authority does not want to pay for it, the federal government has showed no interest in funding it. What we really need is to get people together and build a high-speed line that runs from Glassboro to Camden. That would make more sense, it would serve the region much better. Building a trolley car line is just going to be a toy, nobody is really going to use it. And the evidence is that the current system of funding improvements from existing tolls, which we have used for many years is working.

Operator: One-minute remaining.

Dwayne Phillips: The 40 million upgrades in cash toll system is not needed as more than 20 percent of visitors do not have Easy Pass and it will lay off all the toll takers. The \$60 million new exit to the airport is unnecessary at this time and would create huge traffic problems for airport visitors and workers during construction. The 200 million for trolley prep work is wasted money as nothing will actually be built. The mysterious millions for unknown upgrades to the Atlantic City Rail Line were just thrown in to make it look good. But the users of the Atlantic City Expressway are asked to come up with \$200 million just for prep work on a project that will never be built unless their future tolls are raised to play the \$2 billion plus cost since no one else will pay. Is that fair? Or should the users of Route 55 pay tolls for this project as originally intended when the South Jersey Transit [unintelligible 01:09:59] -

Operator: Fifteen seconds remaining.

Dwayne Phillips: - was established. The board should vote against this toll hike proposal. It will damage the economy of South Jersey at a time when we cannot afford more costs. The process has been forced upon us during a medical emergency. We have not been able to fully discuss it. We do not have any idea of how the \$200 million trolley monies are even going to be spent. But we will have to pay for it, now and every year when tolls go up again. That is wrong.

Operator: Your five minutes have expired.

Dwayne Phillips: A lot of people have complained about the procedure that's -

Operator: And the next comment is coming from Joyce Rudin. Joyce, your line is live, and your time begins now.

Joyce Rudin: Yes, hi, good afternoon. My name is Joyce Rudin, and I am the chair of the coalition to save South Mountain Reservation in Essex County. We are a coalition of over 21 organizations, including the Sierra Club, and many others, large NJ-11, Essex Rising. And we have formed to save two acres of land inside of the South Mountain Reservation. What you are proposing to do is far worse. I'd like to first of all ask if any of the commissioners have actually visited the Pinelands National Reserve and understand that Congress created the Pinelands National Reservation through an act in 1978. And it is the first national reserve in the United States, it is approximately 1.1

million acres, and spans the portions of seven counties. The reserve occupies 22 percent of New Jersey's land area and is the largest body over open space on the mid-Atlantic seaboard between Richmond and Boston. This is a national treasure, and it should be treated as a national treasure.

Once you destroy this it is forever lost. Many people who have been speaking today have said when we go back to normal, after this COVID climate crisis, or this COVID illness, pandemic that there will be no going back to normal. Our lives have forever changed, just like they did after 9-11. And the only way that we can move forward is to recognize that even when things get a little bit better, and there will still be a tremendous climate crisis. And what you are doing is exacerbating the climate crisis by taking down more trees, adding more asphalt, paving the road to be wider than it needs to be to carry the traffic, which it has. Instead of opening up opportunities for mass transit, which would bring the people who do not have cars down to the areas that so need commerce.

You need to hit the brakes on this destructive course that you are on. This is a plan that is being rushed through at a time when people are personally suffering a great deal due to COVID-19. And there has not been enough public discussion, and what public discussion there has been, I'm getting the feeling from listening to this call that the board is not listening to. You are supposed to be following executive orders that are put forth by Governor Murphy. The Executive Order 100 states that he will establish a greenhouse monitoring and reporting program to all significant sources of statewide greenhouse gas emissions. Has there been any report that studies the impact of greenhouse gas emissions that will be created by widening this road? That is all I have to say right now, thank you so much. And I urge all of you to vote against this.

Operator: **And the next comment is coming from Ross [Carlino]. Ross your line is live, and your time will begin now.**

Ross Carlino: Hello, my name is Ross Carlino, I'm a salesman traveling most of South Jersey. I use not only the parkway but the expressway almost every day of my life. And I just want to express my regret that you are proposing a toll increase of this magnitude. Because right now everybody in South Jersey is suffering. I know numerous of people who are out of work, a lot of people are casino workers. Some people have not even gotten their unemployment, you should be working on that more than working on this. This was a blindside act that you guys did to try to rush this through when the public didn't have any access to it. I only got this from the Atlantic City Press blurbs that were in my local feed from the paper.

I only saw the phone number today to call in, and listening to all these people, a lot of people are correct. There are people that have agendas, because the agendas are, they are lobbying for their groups. And their groups are like basically builders' groups, and I understand those people are out of work too. But it's affecting more people in South Jersey that are out of work by not having people come to Atlantic City. We're all following the governor's order by staying at home, and I was staying at home because I've been furloughed for almost eight weeks. And I was brought back to work because I'm one of the essential businesses to be brought back to work.

And by seeing this toll increase it's going to affect my pocketbook as well as all the other pocketbooks of people that live in South Jersey because there is no other roads to travel in South Jersey. One of the other gentlemen said that everybody is going to go different road routes when this goes up. That's going to be a fact, I'm going to do the same thing. I just traveled on Route 55 today, I heard the other gentlemen say about Route 55. Route 55, they're repaving again, and the roads do need to be fixed. I understand that, we are in a crisis in South Jersey as far as a lot of disrepair. But rather than considering a toll magnitude of this magnitude why don't you just put a small toll

into effect to do general maintenance, to get the roads into good shape until this pandemic is over. And then bring this back to a public hearing that you cannot blindsides the people, and follow, like I'm listening to the Sierra people, and I do agree with a lot of that stuff.

But we do have to live, we do have to work, we do have to use the roadways. But maybe take some of those things into consideration at the same time, and as far as the light rail, I disagree with the light rail. The expressway right now I don't think has to be widening at this point. I think it just has to be repaired, you might want to put more shoulders into it because yesterday I was involved in a situation where there was an accident. And two lanes near the entrance to the expressway in the West Jersey side, any of us couldn't get through. Everybody had to bottleneck into one lane so that any of us could get through. So maybe just put a widening project just to make an emergency lane wider so ambulances can get through to take care of the accident victims. But right now I strongly urge the commissioners to vote against this project. I think it's unnecessary at this time, in this place in this economy. Here again I think you blindsided the public. And we're going to remember this when it comes time to go to the polls. Thank you very much for your time.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Chrise Coleman, Chris your line is live and your time begins now.**

Chrise Coleman: Good afternoon, my name is Chris Coleman, I'm a business agent for Laborers Local 172, I represent over 3,500 heavy highway construction workers in Southern New Jersey. I'm calling today to offer my support for the South Jersey Transportation Authority's Capital Plan and Toll Increase Proposal. The SJTA's \$500 million capital plan, which will begin in 2021 will provide upgrades and improvements for 11 different projects. The toll increase will help pay for these projects. With our unemployment rate at 15 percent this would be the perfect time to get people back to work. We need these jobs, on behalf of Laborers Local 172, I strongly support this program. Thank you.

Operator: **And the next comment is coming from Tony Iannucci. Tony your line is live and your time will begin now. Tony please check to see if your line is muted, it is open from this side, once again your line is now open Tony and your time has begun.**

Tony Iannucci: Sorry about that. I'm a member of the Sheet Metal Workers Union. I travel the highway every day, and for 40 cents it's worth it. I mean if it's going to ease congestion and putting up the rail lines, it's crazy not to do it. And especially if everyone keeps using that excuse for the COVID, we got members out of work. But there is a lot of people out of work that could go to work. So I encourage the board to say yes, and do it. That's all I got to say. Have a great day. Thank you.

Operator: **And the next comment is coming from Brian Blum. Brian your line is live, and your time will begin now.**

Brian Blum: How is everybody today? My name is Brian Blum with the Sheet Metal Workers Local 19, I'm calling to offer my support of the proposed toll increase. With the planned project outlined by the SJTA there would be many people put back to work in a time that we need people working. Thank you to for the board helping get New Jersey back on track. Thank you.

Operator: **And there are no further participants in the cue in to make comment at this time.**

Public Response to General Comments May 27, 2020, Special Board Meeting

David Pringle: Thank you, this will be just brief, I'm getting several emails and texts for folks that wanted to testify and were in the cue but were not recognized. So I ask that you give some more time to give them a chance to get on the record, even if it is after the fact. And I'm sure there may be some folks that gave up, but I will reach out to them to tell them to call in right now.

Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti: Tom, you have it recorded how many people have called in and gotten in the cue, correct?

Operator: Yes, we do have that information, and the cue was clear at the time when it was closed for public comment.

David Pringle: I was on hold for three hours this morning in the cue on two different lines and was never recognized.

Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti: Mr. Pringle, we're checking those records now with the provider. Tom was also the operator this morning.

Operator: And Dave, do you have further comment at this time?

David Pringle: No.

Operator: And the next comment is coming from -

Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti: Tom, is there anyone else in the cue.

Operator: There are, yes, there is. The next comment is coming from Doug OMalley, Doug your line is now live and your time starts now.

Doug OMalley: Thank you. So I was one of the individuals who was waiting in line to testify. And obviously I appreciate the opportunity to provide my comment event after this vote. I wanted to start off by citing the famous Jack Nicholson movie, "Chinatown," where at the very end of the movie the line, "Forget it, Jake, it's Chinatown" is uttered. The whole point is that the fix is in, and sadly we've just seen a vote in a process, which does not benefit SJTA. I obviously wanted to take this time to thank Commissioner McCullough for his vote in opposition. And I wanted to address some of the concerns we've seen, and I'll try to keep my comments relatively brief. But there is a lot to go over here.

Our biggest concern, and again as director of Environment New Jersey we represent more than 20,000 dues paying citizen members. Our biggest concern is the capital plan does not appear to be adjusted one bit despite the public opposition. And despite the pandemic, and this is also a huge concern. Because New Jersey Transit is in a world of hurt, and in the capital plan there are direct citations for funding for the ACC Rail Line as well as the proposed Glassboro-Camden Light Rail. But there is really no details in the capital plan. We have, you know, beyond kind of the concern on the flimsiness of the capital plan is the simple reality that this plan does not respond to the numerous comments that were delivered. This plan does not have an environmental impact statement that's associated with it.

This plan ultimately, you know, is being pushed through in a meeting that was just scheduled, you know, over the holiday. We heard a lot of people commented and saying I just heard about it this morning, and ultimately this plan has 14 pages for \$500

million capital improvements. Some are obviously, you know, much needed, but there is not a lot of detail in here. And we heard from former chairman, Jake Glassy, I also wanted to note that there has been opposition to the timing of this plan and the plan itself from Senator Chris Brown, Assemblyman Vince Mazzeo, and I again I highlighted the oppositional vote of Commissioner McCullough. But Commissioner McCullough has brought up concerns on the timing, and the process, and literally just what are the dollars that are going to be spent for each part of this capital plan.

There is not a lot of details in the plan. There isn't a lot of details after the plan has now been approved. This really is a huge issue that's being rushed through when it shouldn't be. And I just want to highlight some of the concerns that the plan really does not address that need to be addressed. First off, let me just say that the plan says nothing about climate impacts from increased air pollution. You know, a commissioner referenced S-2252, and the work to electrify the expressway's fleet. But that does not, you know, just because the fleet is being electrified does not mean that SJTA should not focus on the carbon impacts of expanding highways along the expressway. So that is a huge issue, not only because of carbon but also because of air quality, both Camden and Gloucester Counties received big fat Fs for ozone alerts according to American Lung Association in their latest data, the Air Report.

That's to say nothing of the Harvard School of Public Health COVID study that links air pollution with the spread of the virus. I also just wanted to come back to the fact that there is no focus on environmental impact statement. You know, we have not only a widening of the expressway, but also a good chunk of money, \$60 million dedicated towards widening the roadways towards the airport. You know, these are environmentally sensitive areas. They will cause irreversible harm to wetlands and stream and damage the Pinelands ecosystem. There is no acknowledgement of that in the capital plan. There I also no acknowledgement that there is a need for the expansion, and I think that's one of the kinds of the fatal parts of this plan is that it's not based on a lot. There is not a lot of detail in here, and our concern is that even the good parts of the plan -

Operator: One-minute remaining.

Doug OMalley: Understood, I'll wrap it up in a minute, even the good parts of the plan that are focusing on public transit aren't providing those details. Is it up to \$200 million that's going to go up for the Glassboro Light Rail study? In the plan it says to be determined. We know that the Atlantic City Rail Line has suffered. It was shut down by New Jersey Transit. We know that New Jersey Transit is underfunded right now. Those details need to be filled in. so this plan is obviously approved, that doesn't mean that it will go forward. We would urge Governor Murphy to veto the minutes for this meeting because this plan does not comply with the governor's energy master plan, it does not comply with his climate goals, it does not comply with the vision for a transportation future. And we've heard from multiple elected officials to slow down and -

Operator: Fifteen seconds remaining.

Doug OMalley: - not move forward. So we're obviously disappointed on the actions with SJTA and are going to encourage the governor to veto these minutes. Thank you.

Operator: And the next comment is coming from Dan Alexander, Dan your line is live and your time will begin now.

Dan Alexander: I just had a question, and I apologize if this is not the appropriate forum, but when does this toll hike take effect?

Operator: There is one additional comment now coming from Luke Gordon, and once again if anybody would like to make a comment at this time you can press star one on your telephone keypad. Luke Gordon is now live; your time has begun Luke.

Luke Gordon: Hello, can you hear me?

Operator: Yes, your line is live.

Luke Gordon: OK, I'm Luke Gordon, I represent the Sheet Metal Workers Local 19, I just wanted to say a couple things about the people blaming a toll increase and a road widening on COVID-19, which is absolutely ridiculous. That has nothing to do with it. We all know the Atlantic City businesses were hurting far before COVID came. They have their own issues to deal with, and for somebody to say that a 30 to 40 cent toll hike is huge and massive is absolutely ridiculous. If gas prices go up, you don't park your car and never drive your car. So if people want to go somewhere they're going to go, regardless if it's a gas increase, a gas prices increase, it doesn't really matter. To sit back and point fingers at pollution is absolutely ridiculous when we're one of the highest densely populated states in the nation. Our pollution problems go far more in depth than a road widening or a toll increase. That's all I have to say right now, thank you.

Operator: And we have a comment from John Hines, John your line is live and your time has started now.

John Hines: Thank you very much. I also was someone that was trying to speak earlier before the vote, and for whatever reason I was not registered. But nevertheless, I am hopeful that the commissioners have not inadvertently written the obituary for the authority. And I say that because within the business community there has been strong rumors that at some point in time the SJTA would be taken over by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. Essentially by passing this toll increase and the subsequent indexing of tolls, which I'm surprised that nobody has actually referenced, you have guaranteed a substantial financial reserve. Just because these monies have now been appropriated there is no guarantee that up to the \$200 million could go towards the Glassboro River line.

Let's just say for instance they only needed 50 million from this, where does the other 150 million go? Also keep in mind that the original capital plan was unveiled at a conference that I attended in October, and only the first nine points up till the airport ramp was revealed at the time. There was no inclusion of upgrades to the Atlantic City Line or the Glassboro Line. Now this very same conference the CEO of the DRPA, who was the lead agency on the Glassboro Line revealed their plans and their capital projects. And indicated that they were in such a strong financial position there was no need to raise tolls on their roadways until at least 2025. So the first question I would have posed to people is why is it necessary for us to have to pay an increase if the DRPA was not willing to pass an increase along to their drivers in order to fund this project?

I think there was compromise in this project. I'm not sure that all these expenditures were necessary, and even as it relates to the Atlantic City Line. There are parts of that, that have not been discussed at all. That line does need mobile tracking, there needs to be more consideration taken into account concerning the air cargo facilities that could potentially take place at the airport. And again, I know for a fact that these discussions had not taken place prior to this, or they were essentially held at arm's length. Various other agencies and entities that should have been included in the conversation were purposely not included in the conversation. And that in itself strikes a chord as to why we cannot get progress to happen in Southern New Jersey.

Once again here is another example of an entity that was its own island, had its own best interest in mind, was not concerned with what was important to the community as a whole, did not take the appropriate means to take those considerations into place. And now we're saddled with this toll increase. I don't begrudge any of the improvements, items one through nine on that roadway. I'd be the first to tell you if not for the expressway I'm not sure that Atlantic City would ever have existed, or the opportunity to have casinos would ever have taken place. But the prudent spending of money is absolutely critical at this juncture. We really do not know where this country is going to go after this pandemic, and we may find ourselves saddled with expenses that we're going to regret in the future. Thank you very much.

Operator: **And the next comment is coming from Steve Carrellas. Steve your line is live, and your time will begin now.**

Steve Carrellas: Yes, thank you. I'm just coming back to ask the chair; cause I think that's who answered a previous question to repeat the effective date of the toll increase would be. It got clipped in the response.

Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti: September 13th, 2020.

Steve Carrellas: OK, that's not the same as the turnpike then, thank you.

Operator: **And the next comment is coming from Owen Keating. Owen your line is live and your time begins now.**

Owen Keating: Thank you, I'll be brief. I'm just sorry that this came to us, a yes vote should have been a no vote. I'm very unhappy with the union member who said it's only going to be a 30 or 40 cent increase, when in fact it's three dollars to four and a quarter on the Egg Harbor City Line, Federal Toll Plaza, and 50 cents on the other ones, which is basically a dollar each way, and the other one is going to be 2.50, excuse me, round trip. Anyway, as far as the money spent, I don't think people here have the money. Nine to ten people have been affected by this virus, maybe the other fella wasn't affected by it, but there are a lot of people that have been and nearly 11,000 have died in New Jersey. Many have lost their jobs, they've lost their health insurance, and it's going to lead to more foreclosures. So we don't need this increase, especially when it's for a light rail line, half of it almost, 200 million out of 500 million for a light rail line that is going to be a money pit.

And that's just the introductory costs, it's like the one gentleman said, two billion dollars. Not to mention all the delays in traffic and everything in regard to building it, the same with the road widening. It's going to be a lot of disruptions going to and from wherever you're going because of road widening that isn't necessary. Atlantic City is not going to rebound greatly with New York City soon to have casinos, and other places having casinos. So we don't need the widening. And anyone who goes to Atlantic City airport knows there is no problem getting there to begin with. It's very easy to get there, never had a problem. And so that's a, what was it 60 million for that is not needed, not to mention the disruption to traffic trying to build those four bridges or whatever it is. The only thing I agree with is maybe the 40 million to build an all-electronic tolling system. But as far as jobs, the jobs should really go for the deficient bridges all throughout New Jersey. So they have plenty of deficient bridges to put people to work on, all of this stuff here is not necessary. And thank you for your time.

Operator: **And the next comment is coming from Kate Delany, Kate your line is live and your time will start now.**

Kate Delany: Hi, thank you, I have been on the call for over an hour and a half, so some of the comments that I want to make are no longer maybe relevant. But I'm a resident of

Collingswood, and I'm the president of the South Jersey Progressive Dems. I'm calling in today, I was calling to ask you to suspend today's vote on an expensive capital plan that continues to invest public funds in environmental degradation rather than looking for a more renewable future. The governor's energy master plan and the scientific community acknowledges that we must immediately and dramatically reduce greenhouse gases from vehicle use. So then why are we investing \$150 million to widen the Atlantic City Expressway? This is not what South Jersey needs. South Jersey needs more mass transit. South Jersey needs clean air. South Jersey needs to protect its natural resources, such as the Pinelands, which could be compromised by this capital plan.

South Jersey and all of New Jersey needs clean energy. Highway widenings do not reduce traffic congestion, but only create and induce demand for more cars. Mass transit helps fight climate change and creates jobs. I urge you to consider alternatives better for the health and well-being of South Jersey and for the planet. Thank you.

Operator: **The next comment is coming from Ross Carlino, Ross your line is live and your time will begin now.**

Ross Carlino: Hello, I'm Ross Carlino from Somers Point, New Jersey. I called earlier and expressed my how would you say condolences or something for the vote. But anyway, I didn't hear the comment about when the toll increase was because we got cut off again. But I didn't hear that comment, but I did hear a bunch of people say it's only a 35 or 30 cent increase, which is not the case. I just want the commissioners to tell the public who is still listening what the increase is for the major toll barrier, how much that increase is, what the Somers Point Plaza increase is, what the Hammonton increase is, and what the [Grovers City] increase is, so we know exactly how much the toll is going up. That's all I want to know, thank you.

Operator: **Once again ladies and gentlemen if you would like to enter the cue to make a comment, you'll press star-one on your telephone at this time, once again it'll be star-one to enter the cue to make a comment. And we do have a comment from David Pringle, David your line is live and your time will begin now.**

David Pringle: Yes, just two very brief ones, [Laura Asward], her phone number is, I lost it here, I will find it and give it to you. She was trying to comment and was also disconnected but could not call back in, and I'd also like to speak to the labor representative who misrepresented our position on COVID. The science is very clear that where there is more air pollution COVID is more deadly. Harvard has done an excellent study documenting that as have several others, it is clear that these projects will lead to increased air pollution because we're increasing capacity, which means more cars on the road. And there will not be enough electric vehicles fast enough to offset that. So this project in effect will be making more people sick from cardiac disease, emphysema, respiratory disease, and cancer, and make COVID worse.

Operator: **And there is a comment from Luke Gordon. Luke your line is live and your time will begin now. Luke your line is live and your time has begun. Luke please check to see if your line is muted, once again you are live in the comments.**

Luke Gordon: Yes, there is it, here I am. So that was slightly ridiculous that people are actually calling in, whether it's a 30 cent, or a 40 cent, or a dollar. If you're going to stop using the road just don't use the road. There is many other ways to get anywhere in New Jersey. And once again with the pollution, if this project takes place or this roadway gets done, this toll increase goes up, there is no way that the pollution in New Jersey is going to be affected by this and is going to get any worse than it already is. We're one of the most densely populated states in the nation. Pollution is one of our things, whether we're building another road, making a road bigger, whatever. It doesn't make any difference,

and to sit here and say that there is going to be more corona cases because of a road being widening or expansion of anything is absolutely absurd.

I can't even understand these peoples' reasoning behind it. They're just using it as an excuse to get on the phone here, and comment, and blame everything on COVID. It's absolutely insane, and that's the last comment I'm going to have. And if somebody calls in and comments again, I'm not commenting back because I said what I needed to say. We need to put New Jersey-ians back to work and get them off unemployment. That's the big thing, thank you for your time.

Operator: **And there are no further comments at this time. There is no one remaining in the cue.**