

## **SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

### **STATEMENT TO**

### **SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE, No. 801**

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**DATED: OCTOBER 28, 1996**

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably a Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 801.

The substitute authorizes the State's three toll road authorities - the New Jersey Highway Authority, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority and the South Jersey Transportation Authority - to promulgate regulations for the collection of tolls and the enforcement of toll payments on highways upon which the authorities have implemented electronic toll collection technology. The electronic collection of tolls on highways and bridges is in the process of being implemented in this State and New York by the inauguration of the "E-Z-pass system." This system permits a driver to pass through existing toll barriers without stopping for the purpose of manually depositing currency, coins or tokens. This system will permit tolls to be paid automatically by means of automated electronic identification of a vehicle at a toll booth and the debiting of a vehicle account. This allows tolls to be paid automatically while vehicles are in motion, thereby improving traffic flow and reducing delays and lines.

This bill recognizes that a toll road authority may use state of the art technology to aid enforcement of toll collections. In addition, the bill permits the authorities to continue the use of visual observation and other method of vehicle identification to detect toll violators.

The bill makes the owner of a vehicle used in the violation jointly and severally liable with the operator for failure to pay a toll, with certain exceptions. The person liable will be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$50 but not more than \$200. The bill provides for the issuance of a written notice to the owner of a vehicle used in a violation requiring the payment of the tolls, and an administrative fee not to exceed \$25, prior to the issuance of a summons and complaint for failure to pay. The bill provides procedures to be followed for the issuance of a complaint and summon and for judicial enforcement for the payment of tolls, penalties and administrative fees.

Finally, the bill provides that the toll collection monitoring system records will not be public records and will be available only for the exclusive use of the authority or law enforcement officials for the purposes of toll collections.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This bill has not been certified as requiring a fiscal note since it will not have an impact on State expenditures or revenues.

The bill affects the toll collection efforts of the New Jersey Highway Authority, New Jersey Turnpike Authority and the South Jersey Transportation Authority.