



Dear Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Associated Builders and Contractors of Rhode Island (ABC RI), I write to express our opposition to S 2541 that impose tolls on commercial vehicles as a primary funding mechanism for transportation infrastructure.

While we strongly support investment in Rhode Island's roads and bridges, tolling commercial vehicles places a disproportionate financial burden on the construction industry and the broader business community that depends on it. Contractors rely heavily on the daily movement of trucks, equipment, and materials across the state. The imposition of tolls on these vehicles significantly increases the cost of doing business and, ultimately, the cost of construction.

These increased costs do not remain isolated within the industry—they are passed along to project owners, public agencies, and taxpayers. As a result, tolling can lead to higher costs for public infrastructure projects, reduced purchasing power for state and municipal budgets, and fewer projects being completed overall.

In addition, tolling creates operational inefficiencies for contractors. Increased transportation costs can impact project scheduling, material delivery, and overall logistics, particularly for firms working across multiple job sites. For small and mid-sized contractors, these added expenses can be especially challenging and may limit their ability to compete effectively.

There are also broader economic concerns. Targeting commercial vehicles for tolling places Rhode Island at a competitive disadvantage compared to neighboring states. Businesses may look to shift operations, sourcing, or project activity across state lines to avoid these added costs, ultimately impacting local economic growth and job creation.

ABC RI believes that infrastructure investment should be supported through fair, broad-based, and sustainable funding mechanisms that does not disproportionately impact one sector of the economy. The commercial construction industry is a key driver of economic development in Rhode Island, and policies that increase costs and reduce competitiveness undermine that role.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to oppose policies that rely on tolling commercial vehicles and instead pursue funding solutions that are equitable, transparent, and supportive of economic growth.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Lopes, MBA  
President/CEO  
Associated Builders and Contractors of Rhode Island