

Testimony at Toll Rate Hearing, July 12, 2021

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These tolls are just plain too high. The maximum toll from the G W Parkway to Shady Grove starts at \$50 when the highway opens, and it keeps going up. It hits \$141 – that’s right, \$141 – by the time Transurban’s contract runs out. And these numbers go up even higher with inflation.

But these sky-high tolls aren't enough for Transurban. Its demands are revealed in a November letter that MDTA waited months to release and then buried in fine print on its website. In that letter, the profit-hungry company told the state what it really wants. The tolls need to go up even faster than the Hogan administration proposes.

Why does Transurban say the tolls need to be so high? It’s the "growth of congestion" after the new lanes open.

In other words, Governor Hogan can't keep his promise of "congestion relief." Transurban knows that the traffic jams in the free lanes will get worse and worse. Drivers will have to sit and suffer, or cough up the exorbitant tolls needed to hit the company's profit targets.

This is what you get when you turn our highways over to a company that, in its own country, gets called “an untouchable, blood-sucking monopoly.” That’s from Joe Aston in the Australian Financial Review – hardly a left-wing paper.

This proposal is a betrayal of the public interest. These tolls and the contract behind it must be rejected.