

In-Person Testimony
Maryland Transportation Authority
July 12, 2021

Good afternoon. My name is Linda Rosendorf. I live in Rockville.

I am speaking today in opposition to the I-495/I-270 public private partnership, hereafter referred to as the “P3.” I will specifically be addressing the MDTA’s toll rate proposal.

There are numerous reasons that the proposed toll rate ranges are unacceptable but I would like to focus on two issues:

- 1) The toll rates proposed by MDTA are exorbitant.
- 2) These high-priced toll roads are inequitable.

Toll Rates

The tolls in the express lanes will deliberately be set high to guarantee profits for the toll company stakeholders. They will be much too high for average drivers on a daily basis. The 2021 toll rate for a passenger vehicle with an E-Z Pass could reach nearly \$4/mile, depending on the traffic conditions. That means the toll from the American Legion Bridge to I-370 could be over \$50 at peak times! The actual toll rates will be higher when the road is operating and will continue to escalate every year for the 50 years of the contract.

Social Justice Issues

This P3 plan turns public land over to private investors and is a profit-making venture for foreign companies and their shareholders. It favors wealthy commuters, while making congestion worse for people in the regular lanes.

Expensive toll roads are a regressive form of taxation in which middle and low-income drivers may spend a larger percentage of their income on tolls than high-income drivers. Maximum toll rates should be accessible to working class families.

In conclusion, this P3 is not an acceptable deal for Maryland and its taxpayers. Good government demands that full fiscal, environmental, and social impacts of this project be determined before locking into a long-term exclusive contract. No contract should be voted on, much less approved, until the environmental impact statement has been finalized. It is premature to develop toll rate ranges at this time.