STOP THE TOLLS ON 405

AN ACT Relating to tolls; amending RCW 47.56.880 and 47.56.403; adding a new section to chapter 47.56 RCW; and creating new sections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

POLICIES AND PURPOSES

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The tolling experiment on Interstate 405 and State Route 167 has been an abysmal failure. If politicians won’t end this debacle, the people will do it themselves.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 47.56 RCW to read as follows:

The authority to impose tolls on high occupancy toll lanes and express toll lanes is removed and repealed.

Sec. 3. RCW 47.56.880 and 2011 c 369 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The ((imposition of)) authority to impose tolls for express toll lanes on Interstate 405 between the junctions with Interstate 5 on the north end and NE 6th Street in the city of Bellevue on the south end ((is authorized)) is removed and repealed on the effective date of this act as required by section 2 of this act, Interstate 405 is designated an eligible toll facility, and toll revenue generated in the corridor must only be expended as allowed under RCW 47.56.820.

(2) Tolls for the express toll lanes must be set as follows:

(a) The schedule of toll rates must be set by the tolling authority pursuant to RCW 47.56.850. Toll rates may vary in amount by time of day, level of traffic congestion within the highway facility, or other criteria, as the tolling authority deems appropriate.

(b) In those locations with two express toll lanes in each
direction, the toll rate must be the same in both lanes.

(c) Toll charges may not be assessed on transit buses and vanpools.

(d) The department shall establish performance standards for travel time, speed, and reliability for the express toll lanes project. The department must automatically adjust the toll rate within the schedule established by the tolling authority, using dynamic tolling, to ensure that average vehicle speeds in the lanes remain above forty-five miles per hour at least ninety percent of the time during peak hours.

(e) The tolling authority shall periodically review the toll rates against traffic performance of all lanes to determine if the toll rates are effectively maintaining travel time, speed, and reliability on the highway facilities.

(3) The department may construct and operate express toll lanes on Interstate 405 between the city of Bellevue on the south end and Interstate 5 on the north end. Operation of the express toll lanes may not commence until the department has completed capacity improvements necessary to provide a two-lane system from NE 6th Street in the city of Bellevue to state route number 522 and the conversion of the existing high occupancy vehicle lane to an express toll lane between state route number 522 and the city of Lynnwood. Construction of the capacity improvements described in this subsection, including items that enable implementation of express toll lanes such as conduit and other underground features, must begin as soon as practicable. However, any contract term regarding tolling equipment, such as gantries, barriers, or cameras, for Interstate 405 may not take effect unless specific appropriation authority is provided in 2012 stating that funding is provided solely for tolling equipment on Interstate 405. The department shall work with local jurisdictions to minimize and monitor impacts to local streets and, after consultation with local jurisdictions, recommend mitigation measures to the legislature in those locations where it is appropriate.

(4) The department shall monitor the express toll lanes project
and shall annually report to the transportation commission and the legislature on the impacts from the project on the following performance measures:

(a) Whether the express toll lanes maintain speeds of forty-five miles per hour at least ninety percent of the time during peak periods;

(b) Whether the average traffic speed changed in the general purpose lanes;

(c) Whether transit ridership changed;

(d) Whether the actual use of the express toll lanes is consistent with the projected use;

(e) Whether the express toll lanes generated sufficient revenue to pay for all Interstate 405 express toll lane-related operating costs;

(f) Whether travel times and volumes have increased or decreased on adjacent local streets and state highways; and

(g) Whether the actual gross revenues are consistent with projected gross revenues as identified in the fiscal note for Engrossed House Bill No. 1382 distributed by the office of financial management on March 15, 2011.

(5) ((If after two years of operation of the express toll lanes on Interstate 405 performance measures listed in subsection (4)(a) and (e) of this section are not being met, t)) The authority to impose tolls on the express toll lanes project ((must be terminated as soon as practicable)) is removed and repealed on the effective date of this act as required by section 2 of this act.

(6) The department, in consultation with the transportation commission, shall consider making operational changes necessary to fix any unintended consequences of implementing the express toll lanes project.

(7) A violation of the lane restrictions applicable to the express toll lanes established under this section is a traffic infraction.
Sec. 4. RCW 47.56.403 and 2015 1st sp.s. c 10 s 705 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department may provide for the establishment, construction, and operation of a pilot project of high occupancy toll lanes on state route 167 high occupancy vehicle lanes within King county. The department may issue, buy, and redeem bonds, and deposit and expend them; secure and remit financial and other assistance in the construction of high occupancy toll lanes, carry insurance, and handle any other matters pertaining to the high occupancy toll lane pilot project.

(2) Tolls for high occupancy toll lanes will be established as follows:

(a) The schedule of toll charges for high occupancy toll lanes must be established by the transportation commission and collected in a manner determined by the commission.

(b) Toll charges shall not be assessed on transit buses and vanpool vehicles owned or operated by any public agency.

(c) The department shall establish performance standards for the state route 167 high occupancy toll lane pilot project. The department must automatically adjust the toll charge, using dynamic tolling, to ensure that toll-paying single-occupant vehicle users are only permitted to enter the lane to the extent that average vehicle speeds in the lane remain above forty-five miles per hour at least ninety percent of the time during peak hours. The toll charge may vary in amount by time of day, level of traffic congestion within the highway facility, vehicle occupancy, or other criteria, as the commission may deem appropriate. The commission may also vary toll charges for single-occupant inherently low-emission vehicles such as those powered by electric batteries, natural gas, propane, or other clean burning fuels.

(d) The commission shall periodically review the toll charges to determine if the toll charges are effectively maintaining travel time, speed, and reliability on the highway facilities.

(3) The department shall monitor the state route 167 high occupancy toll lane pilot project and shall annually report to the
transportation commission and the legislature on operations and findings. At a minimum, the department shall provide facility use data and review the impacts on:

(a) Freeway efficiency and safety;
(b) Effectiveness for transit;
(c) Person and vehicle movements by mode;
(d) Ability to finance improvements and transportation services through tolls; and
(e) The impacts on all highway users. The department shall analyze aggregate use data and conduct, as needed, separate surveys to assess usage of the facility in relation to geographic, socioeconomic, and demographic information within the corridor in order to ascertain actual and perceived questions of equitable use of the facility.

(4) The department shall modify the pilot project to address identified safety issues and mitigate negative impacts to high occupancy vehicle lane users.

(5) Authorization to impose high occupancy vehicle tolls for the state route 167 high occupancy toll pilot project ((expires if either of the following two conditions apply:)

(a) If no contracts have been let by the department to begin construction of the toll facilities associated with this pilot project within four years of July 24, 2005; or

(b) If high occupancy vehicle tolls are being collected on June 30, 2017)) is removed and repealed on the effective date of this act as required by section 2 of this act.

(6) The department of transportation shall adopt rules that allow automatic vehicle identification transponders used for electronic toll collection to be compatible with other electronic payment devices or transponders from the Washington state ferry system, other public transportation systems, or other toll collection systems to the extent that technology permits.

(7) The conversion of a single existing high occupancy vehicle lane to a high occupancy toll lane as proposed for SR-167 must be taken as the exception for this pilot project.
(8) A violation of the lane restrictions applicable to the high occupancy toll lanes established under this section is a traffic infraction.

(9) Procurement activity associated with this pilot project shall be open and competitive in accordance with *chapter 39.29 RCW.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. The provisions of this act are to be liberally construed to effectuate the intent, policies, and purposes of this act.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. This act is known and may be cited as “Stop the Tolls on 405.”

--- END ---