

Toll Authority Continues to be Rogue Agency

When the Toll Authority launched their 5.5 billion expansion plan in 2004, it was sold to the public based on a reformed image of public accountability and a sleek IPASS system as the backbone to their funding plan. When significant IPASS problems were recently unveiled, the Toll Authority responded with dismissive arrogance and tried to frame the issue as “we don’t deal with toll cheats.” No one is debating that tolls should be paid when toll roads are used. The real issue is the Toll Authority’s unwillingness to address systemic flaws that have horrendous public policy implications.

People who have IPASS are being mistakenly told they owe hundreds of dollars of fines. People who did not pay tolls, but want to pay, are hit with a financial tsunami that is crippling: \$20 - \$70 fines for each violation with a two year statute of limitation combined with delayed notification for more than a year (if people even get notice) results in outrageously high fines. With no payment plan option, people are forced to put hundreds to literally thousands of dollars on their credit card or risk having their license suspended.

Why is it that the Toll Authority can operate in an unconscionable manner and without impunity, accountability, or responsiveness when firm evidence has been produced to document an ineffective and materially flawed policy while average citizens take the hit? Is this “reform”? This latest debacle perpetuates the Toll Authority’s historical image of being a scandal-plagued agency that is beyond reform.