

Letter to the Editor  
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Ms. Terry Pastika  
630-833-4080

### **Toll Authority Oversight**

ELMHURST- Tollway riders generate almost \$1 million a day for the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, and have already paid for the existing 274 miles of tollroads three times over, but that is not enough! By the end of 2004, the Toll Authority will lack revenue for basic repairs of existing tollroads, yet they seek to build expensive extensions of Route 53 and Interstate 355 through Lake and Will Counties, a majority of which will be paid out of the pockets of toll users in DuPage and Cook Counties. Toll Authority Chairman Art Philip states that toll increases to 75 cents or \$1 are necessary to rebuild existing roads and extensions. The problem is that nobody gets a vote. The Toll Authority can raise toll prices without approval of the General Assembly; they merely need Governor Ryan's approval to borrow money for expansion, which at this time does not appear to be a problem.

Citizens can flex their civic muscles and begin to take control of the out-of-control Toll Authority spending. Call Governor Ryan and tell him to say no to toll increases. Call or visit your state representative and ask him or her to introduce a bill that gives the General Assembly oversight of the Toll Authority's budget and authority to issue new bonds. Attend Toll Authority Operation Meetings and make public comments against toll hikes and in favor of a user-pays system, a fiscally responsible system where drivers on the extension would be able to cover a majority of the cost instead of burdening drivers who already give and give.

Ms. Terry Pastika  
238 N. York Rd., Elmhurst  
Executive Director  
Citizen Advocacy Center