

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

April 26, 2012

Mr. David Samson  
Chairman  
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey  
225 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10003

Dear Mr. Samson:

As you know, on December 2, 2012, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is planning to further increase tolls above their current record levels—to \$13 for cash payers and \$10.25 for E-ZPass users. In light of significant concerns surrounding the toll hikes and a recent audit of the Port Authority, we urge you to suspend the scheduled December 2012 toll hike and all subsequent increases until an external audit finds that the Port Authority has addressed all deficiencies.

As a result of toll hikes approved by the Port Authority last year, tolls already have risen to unprecedented levels, and they are scheduled for more large increases over the next several years. In September 2011, cash tolls increased 50 percent—from \$8 to \$12—and E-ZPass users began being charged with a \$9.50 toll during peak periods. Every year until 2015, commuters will get hit with an additional toll hike. The first of these increases is just months away, when tolls will increase to \$13 with cash and \$10.25 with E-ZPass during peak periods in December 2012. Under your schedule, in 2015 peak hour commuters will be paying \$15 with cash and \$12.50 with E-ZPass, and trucks will be paying more than \$90.

As part of the agreement to raise tolls, Governors Christie and Cuomo required an external audit of the Port Authority; however, future toll hikes were not dependent on the Port Authority addressing any of the deficiencies identified in the audit. The first phase of the audit released in February called the Port Authority, “a challenged and dysfunctional organization” and criticized a lack of consistent leadership, cost controls, and transparent and effective oversight within the Authority. The audit also identified numerous recommendations for the Authority, and more are likely to be made when the second phase of the audit is released in June. While the Port Authority has addressed some of the concerns, none of the planned toll hikes are dependent on the Authority fully addressing all of the recommendations.

To show that the Port Authority is truly committed to change and making the best use of toll payer funds, the planned toll hikes should be suspended until an external audit determines that the audit recommendations have been addressed. We are not alone in this request; state and local officials in New Jersey have recommended that the Port Authority delay the hikes while reforms are underway. Additionally, the audit should address whether the planned level of toll hikes is still necessary in light of any new reforms.

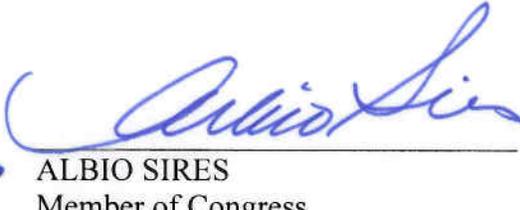
Furthermore, revenues from the first round of toll increases appear to have exceeded expectations, raising additional questions about whether the planned level of future toll increases is necessary. According to press reports, from October 2011 to March 2012, the Port Authority raked in more than \$600 million in toll revenue, a 31 percent increase over the same time period last year. These numbers are likely to grow as tolls rise, with commuters paying the price.

At a recent hearing, a Port Authority executive recognized the need for changes at the agency, but could not commit the Board to suspending the tolls until and unless such changes have been made; therefore, we urge you and the rest of the Commissioners to protect commuters by taking this prudent and necessary step.

Sincerely,



FRANK R. LAUTENBERG  
United States Senator



ALBIO SIRES  
Member of Congress



STEVEN R. ROTHMAN  
Member of Congress



BILL PASCRELL, JR.  
Member of Congress