

February 14, 2017

Mr. Steve Hancock
California Department of Transportation
Traffic Operations
1120 N Street, MS-36
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Proposal to Amend California Code of Regulations Title 21, Division 2, Chapter 16:
Compatibility Specifications for Automatic Vehicle Identification Equipment Used for Toll
Collection

Dear Mr. Hancock:

The E-ZPass Interagency Group would like to submit the following comments regarding the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: California Code of Regulations, Title 21, Public Works, Department of Transportation. The E-ZPass Group is an association of 38 toll operators in 16 states that oversees the E-ZPass® electronic toll collection program. E-ZPass enjoys tremendous brand recognition and high levels of customer satisfaction, and is the world leader in toll interoperability, with more than 33 million E-ZPass transponders in circulation and account holders in every state in the U.S.

The referenced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is lacking a recognition of the activities and decisions that are in progress toward the goal of satisfying the congressionally mandated national electronic tolling interoperability and the selection of a national protocol for in-vehicle toll transponders and associated roadside equipment. The E-ZPass Group and its members, along with the California toll operators and others throughout the U.S., have worked for six years through the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA) to identify three candidate tolling protocols to advance for testing and evaluation toward a selection of a national tolling protocol. Each protocol had to pass a conformance test of compliance with national requirements established with full industry input, including requirements for open protocol standards to ensure market competition and competitive pricing. The three protocols about to begin laboratory and field testing are the 6C protocol (used by Washington, Colorado, Georgia, Utah, Michigan, and Alabama), the Time-Division Multi-Plexing (TDM) protocol (used for the E-ZPass system within the Northeastern and Midwestern United States), and TransCore's 6B SeGo® protocol (used in Florida, Texas, and Oklahoma).

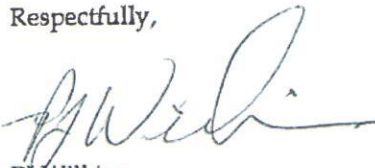
The timing of an announcement by the state of California on decision to commit to a new statewide tolling protocol is unfortunate given the national protocol testing about to commence. The toll industry has undertaken a very deliberative and requirements-based approach to ensure an objective and impartial evaluation and selection process for a national protocol by year-end. The E-ZPass Group stands behind this process as in the best interest of toll operators nationally in identifying a solution for national tolling interoperability that meets industry requirements, provides economic value, and preserves operational and consumer choices.

The background on the process employed begins with Congressional interest in nation-wide electronic tolling interoperability. On July 6, 2012, MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (PL 112-141), established new legislative language requiring all toll facilities on the Federal-aid highways to implement technologies or business practices that provide for the interoperability of electronic toll collection programs. Since 2010, the E-ZPass Group and its members have been working cooperatively with the IBTTA and its Interoperability Committee to formulate a process for achieving national toll interoperability through the selection of a national electronic toll collection protocol. The IBTTA National Interoperability (NIOP) effort has adopted a requirements-based process to guide decision-making. Toll operators from across the United States, including the California toll operators, participated in a process to identify their individual business, technical and data requirements toward the development a common set of national electronic tolling requirements, documented in the "National Interoperability Requirements Document." In addition, the IBTTA convened a team of technical, financial and legal experts from throughout the U.S. toll industry to establish the "Business Rules for Nationwide Interoperability," addressing requirements and practices for account establishment and maintenance, data interchange, financial reconciliation and settlement, dispute resolution, toll violations, testing, marketing and branding.

Since these milestones, there has been steady progress to get the industry to a point of national protocol testing. In March 2015, the IBTTA issued a Request for Proposals for Assessment and certification services supporting selection of the national interoperability protocol and established a Special Panel of national experts to review and evaluate candidate protocols for conformance to the requirements documentation. In July 2015, IBTTA committed up to \$250,000 to finance the first phase a multi-phased testing process and entered into contract with OmniAir's Certification Services (OCS) to serve as the manager of protocol testing. In December 2015, OCS reported that the 6C and TDM protocols cleared conformance testing, and efforts continued to include SeGo protocol, which passed conformance testing in September 2016. In September 2016, the FHWA approved and finalized a Notice of Funding Opportunity agreement with IBTTA to provide \$1.5 million in matching funds to support NIOP testing, with pledges from IBTTA member toll operators for matching funds.

With national protocol testing ready to commence, the action being considered by Caltrans to establish a new California-wide tolling protocol is ill timed. While the E-ZPass Group fully recognizes, respects, and supports the freedom of regional and local transportation operators to make decisions in the best interest of their respective states and transportation customers, we also stand firmly behind a process of national tolling interoperability that remains rooted in the toll industry's published requirements and an objective and impartial evaluation and protocol selection process. We hope the state of California and its toll operators will stand behind the national process throughout its upcoming deliberations on statewide tolling protocols.

Respectfully,



PJ Wilkins
Executive Director



Richard Somerville
Chairman



Mark F. Muriello
Vice Chairman