

RESOLUTION 2020 – 179

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BARNEGAT, COUNTY OF OCEAN,
STATE OF NEW JERSEY, ASKING RECONSIDERATION OF ANY PLAN THAT
INCREASES TOLLS ON THE GARDEN STATE PARKWAY AND THE NEW JERSEY
TURNPIKE**

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority has proposed toll hikes affecting the Garden State Parkway and New Jersey Turnpike; and

WHEREAS, Ocean County continues to see its population grow along with that comes the need to move people to and from jobs, medical appointments, and recreational activities just to name a few destinations; and

WHEREAS, our citizens heavily rely on the Garden State Parkway running through Ocean County, our residents will be among the hardest hit by any proposed toll increases; and

WHEREAS, the Garden State Parkway serves as the main artery for our motorists who need to access jobs, be it north or south and any proposed toll hike would have a negative effect as it increases the cost of a daily commute; and

WHEREAS, the state of New Jersey has not given Ocean County's motorists any traveling options; and

WHEREAS, Route 9, the other north-south artery has not changed since it was first constructed in the 1920's remaining one lane in each travel direction throughout the course of the county while in the meantime our population has grown to almost 600,000 people; and

WHEREAS, Ocean County has been continually informed by state transportation officials that dualization of Route 9 will probably never occur; and

WHEREAS, it's important to highlight that these routes are for more than just leisurely travel but are designated evacuation routes during times of emergencies; and

WHEREAS, Ocean County, as tourism destination sees its year-round population nearly double, which could result in a million or more people having to use these roads to leave the area during a natural disaster; and

WHEREAS, in the last few decades, the state has made improvements to the Garden State Parkway, constructing new interchanges and upgrading existing ones, but those improvements did not come to us simply because we needed them. It helped substantially to have representation on the former Highway Authority and Ocean County providing the initial funding to obtain the design and permitting of many of these projects; and

WHEREAS, Ocean County continues its urging of the state to provide improved rail service to Monmouth and Ocean Counties; and

WHEREAS, Ocean County Motorists, based on volume, already pour millions of dollars into the parkway through the toll system; and

WHEREAS, Ocean County residents will feel the financial burden of this action over and over again, not just on the road but in our stores and as consumers when prices go up in order to meet the demands on a shipping industry that is also paying more to bring us goods and services; and

WHEREAS, the increase in tolls also will negatively affect the state's multibillion-dollar tourism industry, which is a leading economic engine in Ocean County, providing more than \$4.7 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, local roads, already over-burdened by traffic will grow even more congested as drivers attempt to avoid the Garden State Parkway.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by Barnegat Township, in the County of Ocean State of New Jersey that it hereby urges Governor Murphy to fill the existing vacancy on the New Jersey Turnpike Authority Board of Commissioners with a resident of Ocean County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Barnegat Township Committee urges Governor Murphy and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority to reconsider any plan that increases tolls on the Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this township encourages all of our elected officials to join the efforts to stop any recommended toll increase. Certified copies of this resolution shall be made available to Governor Murphy, all Ocean County Mayors, the 9th, 10th, 12th and 30th State Legislative Offices, and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.

CERTIFICATION

I, Michele A. Rivers Municipal Clerk of the Township of Barnegat, County of Ocean, State of New Jersey do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Barnegat at their regular meeting held on the 5th day of May 2020, in the Municipal Complex, 900 West Bay Avenue, Barnegat, New Jersey.

Michele A. Rivers, RMC
Municipal Clerk