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Governor Hogan Announces All-Electronic Tolling Now Permanent at All MDTA Facilities Statewide

Drivers Urged to Sign Up For E-ZPass, Pay Lowest Tolls

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Governor Larry Hogan today announced that full-time all-electronic (cashless) tolling is now permanent across Maryland, including at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Highway (I-95), Fort McHenry Tunnel (I-95), Baltimore Harbor Tunnel (I-895), and Nice/Middleton Bridge (US 301). With all-electronic tolling, drivers do not stop to pay tolls. Instead, tolls are collected through *E-ZPass* and video tolling. The system provides convenience for motorists, less engine idling for better fuel efficiency and reduced emissions, decreased congestion, and increased safety.

"In addition to historic toll relief and record-breaking progress on critical infrastructure updates, permanent all-electronic tolling is the latest step we have taken to save motorists time and money," said Governor Hogan. "By combining innovation, safety, and savings, this truly is a win-win for the state government and for everyone who travels in our great state."

The Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) implemented temporary all-electronic tolling statewide in March as part of its COVID-19 response, and made all-electronic tolling permanent at the Bay Bridge in May with the installation of a new tolling gantry. Other MDTA facilities, including the Intercounty Connector (ICC)/MD 200, I-95 Express Toll Lanes in Baltimore, and the Key (I-695) and Hatem (US 40) bridges, already operate under all-electronic tolling.

"During the COVID-19 emergency, all-electronic tolling has been an operational success and has helped us protect our toll collection employees and the traveling public," said MDTA Executive Director Jim Ports. "With this system now permanent, stopping to pay tolls in Maryland is a part of history."

Under all-electronic tolling, motorists who previously paid with cash at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Highway, Fort McHenry Tunnel, Baltimore Harbor Tunnel, and the Nice/Middleton Bridge are currently assessed via video tolling at the cash rate. That temporary practice began in response to Maryland's COVID-19 state of emergency, and standard video toll rates will be restored at a date yet to be determined.

Motorists are urged to join the nearly 1.4 million drivers who pay the lowest tolls

participating Giant Food and Weis Markets. The transponder comes with $25 in prepaid tolls for immediate use, then users can sign up online for *E-ZPass* service. A full list of retail locations is available at ezpassmd.com/en/onthego/locations.shtml.

Drivers will soon also have the option to register their vehicle for a new Pay-By-Plate method that allows tolls to be automatically billed to credit cards at the same rate as cash toll rates for all facilities, except the Intercounty Connector and I-95

Express Toll Lanes (ETL). For the ICC and ETL, customers using Pay-By-Plate will still save at least 20% on their tolls compared to the video toll rate. Pay-By-Plate benefits infrequent toll customers as well as those who do not have an *E-ZPass* account.

Since 2017, the MDTA has undertaken major training and career development initiatives to support permanent toll collection employees as they transition into other positions. These employees are currently assisting the MDTA in new ways, including as screeners at MDTA building entry points.

The MDTA *E-ZPass* Customer Service Centers located at toll facilities are operating at limited capacity during the COVID-19 state of emergency. To learn more about MDTA measures to assist customers during the COVID-19 emergency, go to mdta.maryland.gov/covid-19-response.

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