

Washington, DC - This afternoon, Congressmen Charles Gonzalez (TX-20) and Ciro Rodriguez (TX-23) introduced a bipartisan, bicameral piece of legislation that would prohibit tolling along existing federal highways. The bill, introduced in the House with Congressmen John Peterson (PA-5 and Phil English (PA-3), is the companion bill to Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson's measure introduced in the Senate. The legislation was introduced after it was reported last week that the Texas Department of Transportation was seeking federal legislation that would permit the state to "buy back" existing highways and convert them into toll roads.

Congressmen Gonzalez and Rodriguez issued the following statements on the legislation:

"The American public should never be charged to use interstate highways that were built with their own tax revenues. As it stands, toll roads create an unnecessary fiscal burden on citizens and the idea is one that I fundamentally oppose. This legislation will provide an important safeguard against this practice by ensuring that drivers are never tolled for using roads that were built with federal funds," said Congressman Charles Gonzalez.

"Our tax dollars already paid to build these roads once and now TxDOT wants to tax Texans to convert existing roads to toll roads - taxing us over and over again to use these roads everyday," said Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez. "Their plan to re-tax Texas drivers is just plain wrong and we want to stop this from happening not only in Texas but across the nation."

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