



# The Delaware River and Bay Authority

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **DRBA Commission Approves New Toll Schedule at Delaware Memorial Bridge** *Tolls to Increase for All Classifications Effective March 1, 2019*

**New Castle, Del.** – Today, the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) Commission adopted a new toll schedule for the Delaware Memorial Bridge, increasing the rate for all classifications effective March 1, 2019. The new toll rate schedule is expected to generate about \$34 million in additional annual revenue that will fund the agency's \$440 million Capital Improvement Program. The board action, which is subject to the New Jersey and Delaware Governors' ten day review and consent period, took place at the bi-state agency's monthly meeting held in James Julian Boardroom at the DRBA Administrative Complex.

The new toll schedule sets the rate for passenger cars and small trucks at \$5.00 while commercial vehicles will pay \$2.00 more per axle. The agency's discount programs, commuter and frequent traveler, will also be adjusted for just the second time in more than 30 years. The last general toll increase took place on July 1, 2011. Approximately 36 million vehicles annually travel across the Twin Spans.

According to James N. Hogan, DRBA Chairman, the toll increase is essential to fund infrastructure improvements at the agency's crossing facilities - primarily at the Delaware Memorial Bridge. "Whether it's traveling home from a family visit, commuting to work or transporting goods to the marketplace, millions of people rely on the Delaware Memorial Bridge every day," Hogan said. "Civil and structural engineers inspect the Twin Spans on a regular basis and recommend projects, upgrades and improvements to maintain this vital transportation link. Over the next five years, the DRBA will need to make significant infrastructure investments at the bridge that are both expensive and necessary to ensure public safety and uninterrupted traffic flow."

"As public stewards of important regional transportation assets, we must continue to make necessary and prudent infrastructure investments in our network of transportation services that benefits the traveling public," said Vice Chairman Bill Lowe. "As a Commission, we're focused on maintaining and enhancing these vital transportation assets so future generations can enjoy them. It's a responsibility we take very seriously."

"The proposed toll structure protects cash reserves, debt coverage allowances, and credit ratings that together are the hallmarks of appropriate fiscal management," said Chief Financial Officer Victor A. Ferzetti. "The toll increase is not needed to fund the Authority's operating budget. All of the additional revenue will be used to fund an appropriate and essential Capital Improvement Program."

Earlier this month, the DRBA held public hearings in Delaware and New Jersey to inform stakeholders concerning the capital needs at the Authority’s crossing facilities; provide options to raise the toll rates at the Delaware Memorial Bridge; and solicit public comment. “The public process provided a valuable forum for the exchange of information and ideas,” said DRBA Executive Director Tom Cook. “The response and feedback from local citizens and bridge customers helped shape the decision-making process and some changes were made to the commuter and frequent user plans as a result.”

<b>Toll Rate Schedule</b>		
	Current Toll	New Toll
<b>Non-Commercial</b>		
Passenger Car, Small Truck	\$4.00	\$5.00
Passenger Car w/ 1 Axle Trailer	\$6.00	\$7.50
Passenger Car w/ 2 Axle Trailer	\$8.00	\$10.00
Passenger Car w/ 3 Axle Trailer	\$10.00	\$12.50
<b>Passenger Car Discount Traffic</b>		
Commuters (22 trips in 30 days)	\$1.00	\$1.25
Frequent Travelers	\$1.25	\$2.00
<b>Commercial Vehicles</b>		
2 Axle Vehicle	\$10.00	\$12.00
3 Axle Vehicle	\$15.00	\$21.00
4 Axle Vehicle	\$20.00	\$28.00
5 Axle Vehicle	\$25.00	\$35.00
6 Axle Vehicle	\$30.00	\$42.00

As a result of the public hearings, the Commission made three adjustments to the original toll rate proposal: a reduction in the two –axle commercial class rate, which includes most RVs and dual tire pick-up trucks, from \$7 an axle to \$6; a \$2.00 per trip frequent user fare instead of the proposed \$2.25; and a change in the number of trips required for the commuter rate. With this new proposal, the number of trips in a 30 day period for the commuter plan decreases from 25 to 22.

The Delaware Memorial Bridge, which spans the Delaware River and connects two of the most heavily trafficked highway corridors in the Northeast, is the bi-state agency’s critical tolling asset and generates 75% of its operating revenue and 100% of net revenues.

In late November, Moody’s Investor Service (Moody’s) reaffirmed the Authority’s credit rating of A1 with a stable outlook. Moody’s pointed out in its report that the toll rates on the Twin Spans are lower than at competing facilities and the DRBA has a history of implementing toll increases in a timely manner. The DRBA relies solely on the collection of Bridge tolls, fares and fees at the Ferry operations and concessions. The agency receives no financial support from either Delaware or New Jersey.

Earlier this year, Standard & Poor’s (S&P) reaffirmed its credit rating for the DRBA of A with a stable outlook

The following are some of the major capital projects planned at Delaware Memorial Bridge and Cape May – Lewes Ferry during the next several years: Bridge Paint Removal and Recoating (\$48.2); Suspension Rope Replacement (\$24.5 million); Bridge Steelwork Repairs (\$40.5 million); Pin and Link Rehabilitation on Both Structures of DMB (\$19.7 million); Ship Collision Protection System (\$45.2 million); Bridge Deck Repair (\$21.5 million); Transfer Bridge Repairs at the Cape May – Lewes Ferry (\$4.3 million); and Ferry Repowering Program (\$9.5 million).

**About the Delaware River and Bay Authority**

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages corporate and aviation properties through its economic development powers - two airports in New Jersey (Millville Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (New Castle Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit [www.drba.net](http://www.drba.net).