



FACT SHEET

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FOR RELEASE: Immediately

COMPTROLLER DINAPOLI'S OVERSIGHT OF THRUWAY AUTHORITY

State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli has made oversight of the New York State Thruway Authority and the New York State Canal Corporation a priority since taking office in 2007.

Because of the impact the State Thruway has on New York's families and businesses, DiNapoli's auditors have reviewed potential toll increases, gas prices at travel plazas, uncollected E-ZPass tolls and bookkeeping practices.

2007

[Vehicle Acquisition, Use and Disposition \(2006-S-119\)](#) – The Thruway Authority inappropriately assigned vehicles to Board members and 205 vehicles were provided to employees who were not required to maintain vehicle usage logs to record whether their use was personal or business-related. Auditors also found the Authority did not comply with certain requirements for the procurement and use of its vehicles.

[Compliance With Freedom of Information Law Requirements \(2006-S-107\)](#) – Thruway Authority officials were significantly late in providing a determination on access to requested records, according to auditors. During the review period, officials did not respond within the required time frame to 37 percent of public FOIL requests.

2008

[Proposed Toll Increases \(Report 2008-S-6\)](#) – Comptroller DiNapoli called on Thruway Authority officials to cancel proposed toll increases after auditors identified a number of financial concerns. The review of the Authority's finances revealed officials significantly under-estimated federal funding, did not implement aggressive cost-cutting measures, failed to collect millions of dollars in unpaid tolls and E-ZPass fees, wasted millions of dollars through the Canal Corporation, and implemented several non-essential capital projects.

[Uncollected E-ZPass Tolls and Fees \(2006-S-101\)](#) – From January 2000 through December 2005, motorists failed to pay the Thruway Authority nearly \$4.5 million in E-ZPass tolls. These motorists also failed to pay about \$22.9 million in administrative fees that were billed in connection with the unpaid tolls. Auditors recommended the Authority implement a number of steps to improve its ability to collect unpaid tolls and fees.

[Accuracy of Employee Retirement Reporting \(Report 2008-S-57\)](#) – Auditors examined personnel files at the New York State Thruway Authority and the New York State Canal Corporation to ensure employees, and not independent contractors, were being properly enrolled in the state Employees’ Retirement System (ERS). The audit also reviewed Thruway records to ensure earnings and days worked were accurately reported to the ERS for each enrolled employee.

[Eligibility for Health Insurance Coverage \(Report 2008-S-50\)](#) – An OSC audit found the Thruway Authority was inappropriately paying health insurance premiums for its uncompensated Board members. The report noted health insurance premiums totaling \$51,667 were paid for four current uncompensated Board members and one former uncompensated Board member.

[Status of the Board-Approved Capital Plan for 2005-2011 \(2008-S-48\)](#) – The Thruway Authority’s Capital Plan for 2005-2011 did not identify priority projects or specify whether projects are on time or on budget, according to auditors. In addition, the plan would likely cost significantly more than the \$2.7 billion projected and take much longer to complete.

[Gas Prices at Thruway Travel Plazas \(2008-S-159\)](#) – Auditors found fuel prices at several travel plazas exceeded approved prices, and thus overcharged motorists for gas. The amounts that customers were overcharged ranged from two cents to 26 cents a gallon.

2009

[Debt Issuance Costs and Services \(Follow up report 2008-F-22\)](#) – A follow up review found additional improvements were needed to ensure Thruway Authority officials adhere to proper policies and procedures for obtaining underwriting and other necessary services, and that the Authority receive these services at the most reasonable cost.

2010

[Travel Plaza Revenues and Capital Improvements \(2008-S-103\)](#) – Auditors found the Thruway Authority was not assessing the contractual penalties for late rent payments, even though some of the concessionaires were sometimes late with their payments and two fuel concessionaires were chronically late.

[Accuracy of Employee Retirement Reporting \(Follow up report 2010-F-18\)](#) – This follow up review was conducted to ensure officials with the Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation properly implemented recommendations made in a 2008 audit involving employee enrollment in the state retirement system.

[Gas Prices at Thruway Travel Plazas \(Follow Up report 2010-F-24\)](#) – Auditors noted that improved oversight is still needed to ensure the public is not overcharged for gas at Thruway travel plazas.

[Management of Overtime Costs \(2010-S-10\)](#) – Thruway Authority officials were effectively managing and monitoring employee overtime. The Authority has issued policies and guidelines to limit overtime, negotiated changes to employee contracts, issued cost containment directives, and monitored reports of overtime usage. Auditors noted, however, additional opportunities to reduce overtime may be available.

2012

Uncollected E-ZPass Tolls and Fees (2012-F-2) – Follow up report found the Thruway Authority still needed to make several improvements to collect unpaid E-ZPass tolls and fees. As of March 31, 2012, the Authority submitted approximately \$18 million in outstanding debt to its collection agency.

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