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January 22nd, 2026

Senator Timothy Nangle, Senate Chair
Representative Lydia Crafts, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Transportation
Maine State Legislature
100 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0100

Re: MTA Response to Committee Request on LD 164

Dear Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Honored Members of the Committee:

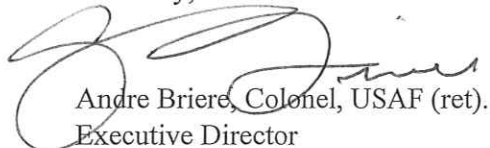
I am writing to convey the response of the MTA to the committee's request of June 12th, 2025 that the MTA study the feasibility of exempting certain emergency vehicles from tolls. This request arose from a public hearing on LD 164 – "An Act to Exempt Authorized Emergency Vehicles from Tolls When Operating in an Official Capacity." A copy of the committees' request is attached for your reference.

The MTA has for many years allowed free passage on the turnpike to emergency vehicles in the process of responding to an emergency. When I convened a group to look at this issue this summer we discovered that this practice has been fairly informally administered in the past and has not been publicized in a consistent or widespread manner. We determined that for the sake of transparency and consistency a concise policy that reflected existing practice should be created and made available.

This policy, which was developed this fall and shared with the Authority's governing board at its December meeting, is attached. We believe it benefits the MTA by formalizing existing practice, benefits first responders by making it easier for them to access this opportunity, and will not significantly increase costs to the MTA over its current practice.

On behalf of the MTA, I thank the committee for their work on this issue, and my staff and I am ready to answer any further questions you may have on the subject.

Sincerely,



Andre Briere, Colonel, USAF (ret).
Executive Director

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**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

June 12, 2025

Executive Director Andre Briere
Maine Turnpike Authority
2360 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04102

Dear Director Briere:

On April 10, 2025, the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation considered LD 164, "An Act to Exempt Authorized Emergency Vehicles from Tolls When Operating in an Official Capacity." This bill proposed to prohibit the Maine Turnpike Authority from charging or collecting tolls on an authorized emergency vehicle that is using the turnpike to respond to an emergency, for nonemergency medical transportation or to travel to a repair facility that specializes in maintenance and repair for authorized emergency vehicles.

In response to some of the Maine Turnpike Authority's concerns raised at the public hearing, the sponsor provided an amendment to the bill during the work session. The proposed sponsor's amendment directed the Maine Turnpike Authority to conduct an analysis to determine the feasibility and cost of exempting certain emergency vehicles from tolls. However, the committee did not feel legislation was the best tool for looking into this issue, and in a unanimous vote, the committee decided to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LD 164.

During the consideration of LD 164, the committee determined this information remains valuable for determining whether an exemption for certain emergency vehicles may be feasible in the state which may help inform the committee's decision making in a future legislative session. Therefore, the committee requests the Maine Turnpike Authority to determine the feasibility and cost of exempting certain emergency vehicles from tolls and requests the authority submit its findings to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation by January 30, 2026.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy Nangle".

Timothy Nangle
Senate Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lydia V. Crafts".

Lydia V. Crafts
House Chair

cc: Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation; Representative Mathew McIntyre; Director Andre Briere; Erin Courtney



2026

Maine Turnpike Authority

Policy on Tolling of Emergency Vehicles

Purpose

It is the MTA's policy to allow free passage to Emergency Vehicles performing Emergency Services on the Maine Turnpike, provided that those Emergency Vehicles comply with this policy.

I. Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply.

A. "Corridor Agency" means:

1. The Maine State Police troop regularly assigned to patrol the Maine Turnpike
2. An entity that provides Emergency Services to a county or municipality through which the turnpike runs, or to a licensed health care facility in a county through which the turnpike runs.

B. "Non Corridor Agency" means any other department or agency that provides Emergency Services in Maine.

C. "Emergency Services" means travelling to or returning from a fire, request for time sensitive medical services, a law enforcement call, a hazardous or toxic materials spill, transport of a patient from one medical facility to another, or any other situation to which a fire department, emergency medical services provider or law enforcement officer has been dispatched.

D. "Emergency Vehicle" means an Ambulance, as that term is defined in 29-A MRSA § 2054, a fire department vehicle or a vehicle owned by a law enforcement agency.



II. Procedures

A. Electronic Toll Collection: Both Corridor Agencies and Non-Corridor Agencies are encouraged to apply for an E-Z Pass account with the MTA to enable faster processing of toll free trips under this policy.

B. Corridor Agencies that apply for an MTA E-Z Pass account with the MTA will be issued non-revenue transponders which will allow toll free travel on the Maine Turnpike. Corridor Agencies will only be allowed to use these transponders in Emergency Vehicles while providing Emergency Services. Corridor Agencies that perform Emergency Services without the use of a non-revenue transponder will be eligible to apply for reimbursement in the same manner as a Non-Corridor Agency.

C. Non-Corridor Agencies must pay to use the Maine Turnpike, whether or not they are providing Emergency Services, but may apply for reimbursement for trips on which they were performing Emergency Services with Emergency Vehicles. Applications for reimbursement must include a copy of receipts of the applicant's E-Z Pass account statement that detail the trip or trips for which reimbursement is being requested, and a description of the Emergency Service being provided. Reimbursements will be issued by MTA check or refunded to the applicant's E-Z Pass account balance.

D. Agencies receiving free passage under this policy will keep accurate records of trips that are made with non-revenue transponders or for which they are reimbursed. These records will indicate the date, times and destinations of those trips, and document their emergency nature. These records will be preserved for a period of at least two years after a trip is made, and will be made available to the MTA on request. No agency will bill a third party for any trip which is made with a non-revenue transponder or which is reimbursed under this policy.

III. Compliance and Audit

A. Compliance: The MTA reserves the right to specify requirements and procedures for reimbursement requests, including, but not limited to, the format, timing, and manner of submission of reimbursement requests.

B. Audit: The MTA reserves the right to review records of toll-free travel or reimbursements and to request supplemental documentation in order to verify that reimbursements to an agency or toll free travel of an agency have been in compliance with this policy.



C. Denials and Suspension/ Termination of Privileges

1. The MTA may deny requests for reimbursement that are not in compliance with this policy or other MTA procedures, which do not include adequate documentation, or which the MTA otherwise reasonably believes are not in compliance with this policy.
2. The MTA may suspend or terminate the free travel privileges of any agency that does not consistently comply with the requirements of this policy and procedures under it, including but not limited to failure to comply with section II(D), or that the MTA has reasonable reason to believe has failed to consistently comply with this policy.
3. Denials, suspensions and terminations under this subsection are final agency action and not subject to appeal within the MTA.

Approved:


Andre Briere, Executive Director

1/23/2024
Date

Approved as to Form:


Jonathan Arey, Staff Attorney

1/22/20
Date

