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Protest Against Connecticut Tolls Attracts 100 on Saturday in Downtown Stamford

Author : David Gurliacci

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About 100 people against proposals for tolls in Connecticut rallied with protest signs on Saturday in front of Stamford Government Center at Washington and Tresser boulevards.

— [This article](#) previously was published by *GreenwichFreePress.com*.

At times the honking horns were deafening as passionate anti-toll protesters with ‘No to Tolls’ signs and handmade posters waved to cars and trucks.

Patrick Sasser, a founder of [NoTollsCT](#), who runs a small excavating business and owns two dump trucks with his brothers, said he was pleased with the turnout, which numbered over 100.

“It’s cold out and people are out here anyway,” Sasser said.

Sasser said he fears negative effects of tolls on small businesses like his if tolls are introduced. In his remarks to the crowd, Sasser said a movement is growing throughout the state.

“We’ve become more organized. We have the attention of our lawmakers, and the governor. They’re finally listening to us and they hear us, because of people like you getting on the website and signing petitions,” Sasser said.

Sasser said State Sen. Alexandra Bergstein was quoted in the *Hartford Courant* saying, “I know the majority of my constituency in my district favor tolls. They are sophisticated, intelligent and understand the cost of not having tolls,” Sasser said. “I want to thank all of you unintelligent, unsophisticated people like me.”

“We’re deplorable!” someone in the crowd shouted.

Bergstein represents the 36th state Senate district, which covers all of Greenwich and parts of northern Stamford and western New Canaan.

“Alex is going around and talking to people and speaks to the media and says everyone she talks to wants tolls,” Sasser continued. “But I just heard 2,000 cars go by honking their horns supporting what we’re doing.”

Among the crowd was Republican Bob Stefanowski who lost his race for governor against Ned Lamont last November, and Toni Boucher, a former state senator who lost her seat to Democratic newcomer Will Haskell.

“Thirty-eight days,” Stefanowski said. “It only took our new governor 38 days to break his most fundamental promise of the entire election. How many times did he say he was only going to tax tractor trailers? How many times did he say we only need to raise \$200 million of revenue from tolls? Now he wants to raise \$800 million by taxing and tolling every car on the highway.”

Stefanowski said that on Twitter, “One of the liberal columnists up in Hartford tweeted, ‘Bob it’s time for you to just go away.’ But I’m not going away.”

Also present were elected officials including State Reps. Livvy Floren and Fred Camillo of Greenwich, who was out on the center median on Washington Street with a No Tolls sign and pieces of yellow tape spelling out “no tolls” on the back of his coat.

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Camillo noted the size of the crowd. “It’s not unsophisticated and unintelligent to be against tolls. But rather it is sophisticated and intelligent to address the fact that we spend \$100,000 per mile on administrative costs on transportation issues in Connecticut. The national number is \$9,600. It’s 9-1/2 times the national average. Wouldn’t you fix that problem first?”

Camillo said that tolls won’t just impact residents in their travels; the businesses impacted will pass the cost of their tolls on to customers.

Robert Katchco, a small business owner in Stamford, said, “Studies show that families will pay on average \$1,500 per year because of these tolls. So far I haven’t heard anything about cuts from the limousine liberals. Senator Bergstein [made] the comment that tolls will bring businesses to Connecticut. I’m not really sure how that works.”

“As a small business, they’re just crushing us,” Katchco continued. “They keep putting us in the vise and soon they’ll keep squeezing till there’s nobody left in Connecticut. Amazon won’t come here. We’re number 49 of the worse states to do business.”

At the end of the rally, Sasser asked the crowd to continue the effort and in particular to sign the petition on the NoTollsCT website, so that he could deliver boxes and boxes of signatures to Hartford.