

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 103

BY REPRESENTATIVE CONNICK

COMMENDATIONS: Commends the Stop the Tolls organization for their efforts in educating the public on the need to eliminate the tolls on the Crescent City Connection Bridge

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend the Stop the Tolls organization for their efforts in educating the public about  
3 the need to eliminate the tolls on the Crescent City Connection Bridge.

4 WHEREAS, the Crescent City Connection Bridge has provided a vital transportation  
5 link over the Mississippi River between the east and west banks of the parishes of Jefferson  
6 and Orleans; and

7 WHEREAS, in 1989, tolls were authorized by statute to be collected for passage over  
8 the second span of the Crescent City Connection Bridge; and

9 WHEREAS, the statutory authority to collect these tolls was set to expire several  
10 times only to ultimately be extended until December 31, 2012; and

11 WHEREAS, prior to the December 31, 2012, expiration of tolls on the Crescent City  
12 Connection Bridge, a ground swell of opposition to another extension resulted in a  
13 concerned group of citizens creating the organization Stop the Tolls; and

14 WHEREAS, with little to no commercial backing, Jefferson Parish residents Michael  
15 Teachworth and Patrick Hand, III, instrumental players in the Stop the Tolls, set out to  
16 educate the New Orleans metropolitan area on the history of the Crescent City Connection  
17 Bridge and the tolls; and

18 WHEREAS, while the efforts of Stop the Tolls and many others prevented an  
19 outright extension of the tolls, Act No. 865 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature

1 of Louisiana called for an election to be held to determine whether or not tolls would be  
2 extended on the Crescent City Connection Bridge; and

3 WHEREAS, pursuant to Act No. 865 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature  
4 of Louisiana, the governor called an election in the parishes of Jefferson, Orleans, and  
5 Plaquemines to determine whether tolls would be collected, beginning January 1, 2013, and  
6 ending on December 31, 2033, on the Crescent City Connection Bridge at the rate provided  
7 by law; and

8 WHEREAS, despite the Herculean efforts of Stop the Tolls, the final election results  
9 showed that the proposition passed by a narrow margin and that tolls would continue to be  
10 collected on the Crescent City Connection Bridge until the year 2033; and

11 WHEREAS, in December of 2012, "Michael J. Teachworth v. Bobby Jindal, in his  
12 official capacity as Governor of Louisiana, and Tom Schedler, in his official capacity as the  
13 Louisiana Secretary of State" was filed by attorney Patrick Hand, III; and

14 WHEREAS, the petition sought, among other things, to contest the results of the  
15 election held on November 6, 2012, to obtain declaratory relief nullifying the vote certified  
16 by the Secretary of State which extended the tolls on the bridge, and to obtain any other  
17 relief allowed under the law; and

18 WHEREAS, a trial on the merits was held on March 4, 2013, and the trial concluded  
19 on March 5, 2013, with the Honorable William A. Morvant declaring the election on  
20 November 6, 2012, void, only insofar as the results of the Greater New Orleans Crescent  
21 City Connection Toll Proposition; and

22 WHEREAS, the Honorable William A. Morvant ordered that a new election be held  
23 on May 4, 2013, in the parishes of Jefferson, Orleans, and Plaquemines to determine whether  
24 or not tolls would be renewed and/or extended as proposed in Act No. 865 of the 2012  
25 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana; and

26 WHEREAS, never wavering, Stop the Tolls engaged in a grassroots campaign to put  
27 an end to what the organization touted as an unfair tax on the citizens of the west bank; and

28 WHEREAS, Stop the Tolls used social media, traditional media routes, town hall  
29 style meetings, and old-fashioned word of mouth to convince the voters of the parishes of

1 Jefferson, Orleans, and Plaquemines that they were offered another chance to end the tolls;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, on March 4, 2013, the voters of the parishes of Jefferson, Orleans, and  
4 Plaquemines came out in force to finally put an end to the tolls; and

5 WHEREAS, on May 8, 2013, election officials in Jefferson, Orleans, and  
6 Plaquemines parishes certified that seventy-seven percent of the voters in those parishes cast  
7 "no" votes on the Crescent City Connection Bridge election proposition; and

8 WHEREAS, as a result of the vote ending tolls on the Crescent City Connection  
9 Bridge, the Department of Transportation and Development began the process to  
10 decommission the toll plaza the evening of Wednesday, May 8, 2013; and

11 WHEREAS, the May 4, 2013, election results and the decommissioning of the toll  
12 plaza would not have been possible without the passion and hard work of the members of  
13 the Stop the Tolls organization; and

14 WHEREAS, Stop the Tolls is the perfect example of how the will of the people can  
15 still ultimately prevail in the face of incredibly unfavorable odds and that favorable results  
16 can still be obtained when citizens band together.

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the  
18 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Stop the Tolls organization for their  
19 efforts in educating the people of Jefferson, Orleans, and Plaquemines parishes on the need  
20 to end the tolls on the Crescent City Connection Bridge and their May 4, 2013, election  
21 victory.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted  
23 to Michael Teachworth and Patrick Hand, III, of the Stop the Tolls organization.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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Connick

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