



Monday, July 25, 2011

Kasich visits Toledo, promotes turnpike lease plan

Governor John Kasich was in Toledo Monday, talking up his plan to lease the Ohio Turnpike, and with the support of Mayor Bell.

The governor says Ohio has to get creative when it comes to funding transportation projects, but some opponents say the lease plan doesn't make sense.

The Ohio Turnpike is 241 miles of road stretching from Indiana to Pennsylvania. It's a nice asset to have, but the governor sees an opportunity to lease the turnpike for billions of dollars.

"If we have the resources, there's a lot of good things we can do with it," he says.

Things like widening I-75, finishing the 475/75 interchange, and even dredging Toledo's harbor.

The governor wants to negotiate a 40-year lease that still leaves Ohio owning the turnpike. The state would also get a percentage of the tolls collected.

Tolls currently generate \$242 million a year, or \$9 billion over 40 years, but Ohio pays for salaries and road work with that money.

The governor's idea would generate about \$3 billion over the same time, plus a percentage of the toll collection. And the operator would pay salaries and maintenance, instead of the state.

Read more here: <http://abclocal.go.com/wtv/story?section=news/local&id=8270818>

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