

Ernie Brame, Chairman of the No Tolls I-95 Coalition in North Carolina, submitted this letter to the editor to the Fayetteville Observer in response to a Sept. 27 editorial ["If not tolls, how do we fix, expand I-95?"](#) The rebuttal was submitted but has not yet been published.

Dear Editor,

As Chairman of the No Tolls I-95 Coalition, I find it interesting that your Editorial Staff continues to toss your readership under the NCDOT bus by suggesting that tolling I-95 is a viable solution to the state's transportation budget woes.

The coalition acknowledges that I-95 is in need of upkeep and expansion, as are all of North Carolina's interstates and road systems in general. What we fail to understand is why you continue to single out your readership to absorb a double tax that no other residents of North Carolina living along existing interstates have to deal with.

The counties and communities along I-95 already suffer from some of the state's highest unemployment and poverty rates. They also pay the sixth-highest current state motor fuels tax in the country. On top of that, you advocate a toll for I-95? New industries already have opted out of considering I-95 counties simply because of the threat of tolling.

We would suggest that federal and state lawmakers take seriously as you suggest the challenge of dealing with a crumbling infrastructure. But don't do it by picking winners and losers. Do it by coming up with a plan that treats all of North Carolina fairly.

We are certain that there are readers who do appreciate your advocacy of their interest. Those would be your readers in counties along other existing interstates who will continue to breeze along at the "speed of free" while I-95 & Cumberland County prepares for the "speed of fee."

Ernie Brame, Chairman

No Tolls I-95 Coalition