

KENDALL GAZETTE

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Letter to the Editor

Letters to the Editor
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Reader says county should roll back new highway tolls

To the Editor:

Thank you for the recent article on Open Road Tolling. I live in West Kendall and the distaste and feeling of personal violation is palpable.

The Miami Dade Expressway Authority (www.mdxort.com) has promoted ORT like it's a rock concert and Christmas all rolled up in one. Well, it's not. It is, in fact, a sad day for Kendall and West Kendall residents.

Highways 874 and 878 always have been primarily commuter roads. They offered a free alternative to back-street congestion and a way to hook into the Palmetto Expressway (at Bird Road) or a way to get to South Miami in less than an hour. If you live in West Kendall and want to go north or downtown, getting to Bird Road or S. Dixie Highway in South Miami is like the "trip before the trip." Now there are three tolls in approximately three miles to get to S. Dixie. Each toll is 25 cents with a Sunpass and 40 cents without one, thus adding an extra \$30 to \$48 to the monthly work commute. This amounts to a tax, not a toll.

One argument the authority makes is that of fair-

ness. They claim that currently only 45 percent of the people pay tolls, but now with ORT, everyone will pay the tolls. Maybe that other 55 percent of the people just don't want to pay tolls, so they simply avoid the expressway system.

Launching the new ORT program in mid-July when many "power" residents are away on vacation was very clever. The big beautiful signs and upbeat music in the television commercial are sure signs that if this were a good thing they would not have to sell it so hard.

It ain't easy on a good day in West Kendall, but it's home. The sense of being powerless and violated that I hear on the streets is anguishing. Our quality of life is taking a big hit here.

Perhaps this will be the last straw and finally push Kendall and West Kendall into following the lead of our friends in Pinecrest and Palmetto Bay and form new municipalities.

If Walmart can roll back prices, perhaps we can roll back these tolls.

Miller Myers
West Kendall