

Motion seeks to change toll lanes fee

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L.A. motorists have been learning the rules of the road for new ExpressLanes. Photo/San Gabriel Valley Tribune

As L.A. motorists adjust to the county's first [ExpressLanes](#), they've had to get up to speed on a new world of transponders, infrared enforcement cameras and pay-as-you-drive pricing.

Thousands of [fare evasion citations](#) already have gone out to drivers caught in the new lanes on the 110 Freeway—inadvertently or on purpose—without the required transponders. And although fines were waived during an introductory trial period, motorists face hefty penalties of \$154 or more for driving without a transponder—and \$401-plus for solo drivers who fudge the setting on their device to indicate they're carpooling and thus entitled to a free ride.

But it turns out that even motorists attempting to play by the rules by obtaining a transponder and paying required tolls have an additional price to pay—a \$3 monthly maintenance fee levied on occasional users who drive in the lanes fewer than four times a month.

That seems unfair to Supervisor and Metro Director Zev Yaroslavsky, who has introduced a [motion](#), to be considered at the Metro board's January meeting, that would eliminate the monthly fee.

Penalizing the occasional user by levying a fee discourages participation in the pilot program and sends the wrong message, Yaroslavsky said in the motion.

"This fee is unfair and discourages new users," the motion said. "We should treat all subscribers equally."

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