



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17101-1900

OFFICE OF  
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

March 30, 2007

Mr. John Mascio, Chief Clerk  
Allegheny County Council  
Courthouse  
436 Grant Street, Room 119  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Mascio:

Thank you for your email dated March 13, 2007, regarding the lifting of the 2+ person occupancy requirement for vehicles using the HOV lanes due to the transit service reductions proposed by the Port Authority of Allegheny County. I asked District Executive H. Dan Cessna, P.E., of Engineering District 11-0 to review this information since he is responsible for our roads in Allegheny County.

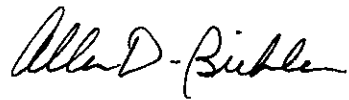
The District reviewed the bill passed by the Allegheny County Council on March 6, 2007, and offers an alternative solution. High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes by nature are designed to reduce congestion and air pollution by reducing the number of Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) on our roadways by encouraging ridesharing, car and van pooling, transit usage, etc. Although the Port Authority may reduce service to the northern tier of the County, this does not necessarily mean that those who at one time utilized transit for their daily commute would have to resort to driving their own vehicles. There are several other options that could and should be explored before requesting to change the HOV lanes to use single occupancy vehicles. I would recommend working with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) since they have several programs that could be successfully used to provide options for commuters. More information about these programs can be found on their website at [www.spcregion.org](http://www.spcregion.org) and [www.commuteinfo.org](http://www.commuteinfo.org).

By taking this approach, we can work together to come up with some workable solutions to help offset the reduction in transit service that may occur. By doing so, we will also preserve the intended use of the HOV lanes by encouraging ridesharing options that will continue to reduce congestion and air pollution along the I-279, Parkway North corridor.

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Your interest in our transportation system in Allegheny County is appreciated. If you have any further questions or require additional information regarding this matter, please contact our District Executive in Engineering District 11-0, Mr. H. Daniel Cessna, P.E. at (412) 429-5001.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Allen D. Biehler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "A" and "B".

Allen D. Biehler, P.E.  
Secretary of Transportation