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14 July 2017

Submission to Senate Economics References Committee Inquiry into the operations of existing and proposed toll roads in Australia

I welcome the opportunity to make this submission, particularly to address issues relating to the second of the Inquiry's terms of reference: *the interaction of commercial considerations of private toll road operators with federal and state transport and infrastructure policy*.

Urban transport policy and its implications for travel behaviour and for economic, social and environmental objectives is one of my key research interests. My work in this field over more and 25 years was recognised by the *Australian Council of Learned Academies* in 2015 through their invitation for me to lead the preparation of a major background report that underpinned their landmark publication: *Delivering Sustainable Urban Mobility* (acola.org.au/wp/8-delivering-sustainable-urban-mobility/)

I have grave concerns about the extent to which the capital resources of toll-road operators are being mobilised in ways which will severely limit both the effectiveness of measures to contain urban travel that are central to metropolitan land-use plans such as the Victorian State Government's *Plan Melbourne*, and the ability of all tiers of government to collectively provide the necessary infrastructure and services for public and active travel that are essential for Australia's rapidly growing cities.

I refer the Committee to the recent reports from the City of Melbourne in this regard. (<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/committees-meetings/meeting-archive/MeetingAgendaItemAttachments/785/14045/AGENDA%20ITEM%206.5.pdf>)

I would appreciate the opportunity to present more details on these questions directly to the Committee during its hearings in Melbourne. I will be able to present findings of a very recent research project that draws attention to the scale of transport demand that the western suburbs of Melbourne will face in the next 20 years, and the relationship between this demand and transport infrastructure investment decisions that are being influenced by commercial considerations of private toll-road operators.

Yours sincerely,

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