



## Governor Signs bills Expanding Tolling in WV, Sets Date for Constitutional Amendment



West Virginians will be asked to go to the polls on Oct. 7 to vote on a constitutional amendment allowing the state to go after billions of dollars in road construction bonds, Gov. Jim Justice confirmed.

"Of everything that has been done in this state ... this is the biggest," Justice said of his road construction plan. "This will absolutely save our state.

"The revenue will be unbelievable from this," Justice said, adding that the massive road building program will put thousands of people to work and provide an opportunity for West Virginia natives who have left the state to come home, and induce others to move to the Mountain State.

The vote on the constitutional amendment is required before the state can commit funding to the roads bonds as part of a \$3 billion road construction and repair program Justice has been pushing since before the regular session of the state Legislature began in February. Justice announced the date of the special election during a ceremony to sign Senate Bill 1003 on Tuesday, June 27.

Together with Senate Bill 1006, which raises wholesale fuel taxes, increases sales taxes on motor vehicles and allows for increasing DMV fees, Senate Bill 1003 is designed to pay for what Justice called the largest roads program in state history. Justice said the most the state has ever spent on roads before was about \$500 million.

Senate Bill 1003, which gives the state Parkways Authority the power to raise tolls on the West Virginia Turnpike and apply tolls to other roads in the state, is a key funding component that would help pay off the construction bonds. The bill also allows for an \$8 EZ Pass that would allow state residents to drive the Turnpike or other future toll roads for free.

While he said it was up to the voters of the state whether or not to go along with the roads bonds, Justice said he couldn't imagine state residents voting against roads and jobs. "In my mind, it's an absolute given that it will pass," he said.

But, he warned, "If it fails, this state is history." Justice said state budget projections are based on the assumption that the bonds are approved by voters and create the expected jobs and revenue.

Excerpt: [https://www.theet.com/statejournal/governor-signs-bill-expanding-tolling-in-wv-sets-date-for/article\\_f24396d7-7ef7-5b81-ae2b-c49b5d16fe08.html](https://www.theet.com/statejournal/governor-signs-bill-expanding-tolling-in-wv-sets-date-for/article_f24396d7-7ef7-5b81-ae2b-c49b5d16fe08.html)



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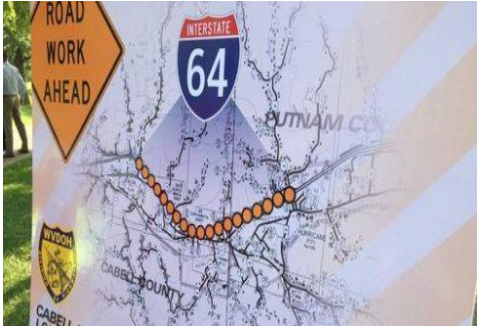
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## I-64 Rehab Project to Be Financed Through Garvee Bonds



**HURRICANE, W.Va.** — A six-mile stretch of Interstate 64 from Hurricane to Milton will be totally rebuilt as part of the state’s new road construction program, what the governor’s office is calling Jim’s Promise Program.

Gov. Jim Justice and state Transportation Secretary Tom Smith announced the project Thursday morning at a news conference along Interstate 64 at the Hurricane Rest Area.

Smith said the project will be more than repaving.

“We’ll be starting from the ground up,” Smith said.

The anticipated \$15 million project will be financed through GARVEE bonds and create about 300 jobs.

“This is absolutely what we need. We need immediate jobs, immediate change, immediate hope and immediate revenue,” Justice said.

Smith told contractors earlier this week they can expect \$230 million in GARVEE bonds to be sold in October and by early next year \$130 million in additional bonds, linked to continue Turnpike tolls, would go to market.

Other road projects that Justice will be announcing in the days ahead will be paid for with money from a \$130 million tax and fee increase that include increases in DMV fees, a reworking of the wholesale tax on gasoline and a hike in the tax on purchasing vehicles.

There are more projects ahead, Justice said.

“This is just the beginning. It’s just the tip of the iceberg as to all the greatness that can come,” Justice said.

Residents will be asked to approve a road bond amendment in a vote scheduled for Oct. 7. The Justice administration says the money from the tax and fee increases will then be used to pay off bonds approaching \$2 billion for road and bridge projects.

<http://wvmetronews.com/2017/07/20/i-64-rehab-project-to-be-financed-through-garvee-bonds/>

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