Truckers and Toll Use: Case Study of Texas SH 130

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Abstract:

Truck use of tolled highways and the potential provision of truck-only toll lanes are stymied by the current difficulty in calculating both the costs and benefits facing truckers contemplating toll road use. Clearly aggregate per-mile benefits must exceed the per-mile toll fees if trucks are to regularly use a tolled highway. Truck-ers are rational and toll authorities should use current vehicle operating cost information to set fees. Evidence suggests that many toll highways in Texas are priced to attract auto use, leaving trucks on the public highways and contributing to higher congestion levels. An example of such a toll facility is SH-130, which has recorded mixed success in its effort to relieve congestion in Austin. SH-130 is servicing an acceptable amount of auto-mobiles but has failed to attract trucks, even when fees were set at zero. CT-Vcost, a comprehensive vehicle operating cost toolkit developed for transportation planners, was used to compare alternative routes to deter-mine the roadways that capture both total route cost and travel time for truckers.