



SR 520 Bridge Toll Rate-Setting

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Why is Rate Setting Action Needed for SR 520?

- In December, the Office of the State Treasurer determined that the current toll rates on the SR 520 Bridge will not be sufficient to meet financial obligations beginning July 2025.
 - Projected net toll revenues must be certified by OST as meeting all financial obligations in each year of the forecast horizon.
- Primary factors resulting in lower net toll revenue projections:
 - Construction effects west of the bridge are suppressing demand, lowering forecasts thru FY 2031.
 - Projected bridge insurance premiums are \$83 M higher through FY 2031 and alternative solutions cannot be evaluated and implemented before the FY 2025 premium is due.
- Remaining ARPA funds help shore up net revenues only through end of FY 2024.
- Therefore, the **WSTC must adjust toll rates this summer**, in order to generate required net revenues.

SR 520 Toll Rates Options

- On March 5, the Tolling Subcommittee developed two recommended toll rate options for public input, for consideration by the full Commission.
 - **Option A:** uniform 10% increase (rounded to nearest \$0.05)
 - **Option B:** tailored increases averaging 10% overall (rounded to nearest \$0.05)
- On March 13, the full Commission advanced the recommended toll rate options for public input.
- The Commission hosted an online public input forum from April 17 – May 1 to gather feedback on the two toll rate options.
- The Washington Department of Transportation and the Office of the State Treasurer conducted additional financial analysis on the two toll rate options to verify preliminary assessments.

SR 520 Toll Rates Options

Weekday Rate Schedule

Existing Good To Go! Toll Rates

Option A Rate Proposal

Option B Rate Proposal

12-5 am	5-6 am	6-7 am	7-10 am	10-11 am	11 am-2 pm	2-3 pm	3-7 pm	7-8 pm	8-9 pm	9-11 pm	11 pm-12 am
\$1.25	\$2.50	\$3.80	\$4.50	\$3.80	\$3.25	\$3.80	\$4.50	\$3.80	\$3.25	\$2.50	\$1.25
\$1.40	\$2.75	\$4.20	\$4.95	\$4.20	\$3.60	\$4.20	\$4.95	\$4.20	\$3.60	\$2.75	\$1.40
\$1.35	\$2.75	\$3.95	\$4.90	\$3.95	\$3.95	\$3.95	\$4.90	\$3.95	\$3.95	\$2.75	\$1.35

Weekend Rate Schedule

Existing Good To Go! Toll Rates

Option A Rate Proposal

Option B Rate Proposal

11 pm-5 am	5-8 am	8-11 am	11 am-6 pm	6-9 pm	9-11 pm	11 pm-12 am
\$1.25	\$1.60	\$2.35	\$3.05	\$2.35	\$1.60	\$1.25
\$1.40	\$1.75	\$2.60	\$3.35	\$2.60	\$1.75	\$1.40
\$1.35	\$1.70	\$2.95	\$2.95	\$2.95	\$1.70	\$1.35

- All proposed toll rates are for 2-axle vehicles with *Good to Go!* pass
- The existing \$0.25 fee for *Good To Go!* plate customers and the \$2.00 toll increment for Pay By Mail customers would continue to apply
- The existing truck toll rate axle multipliers would continue to apply

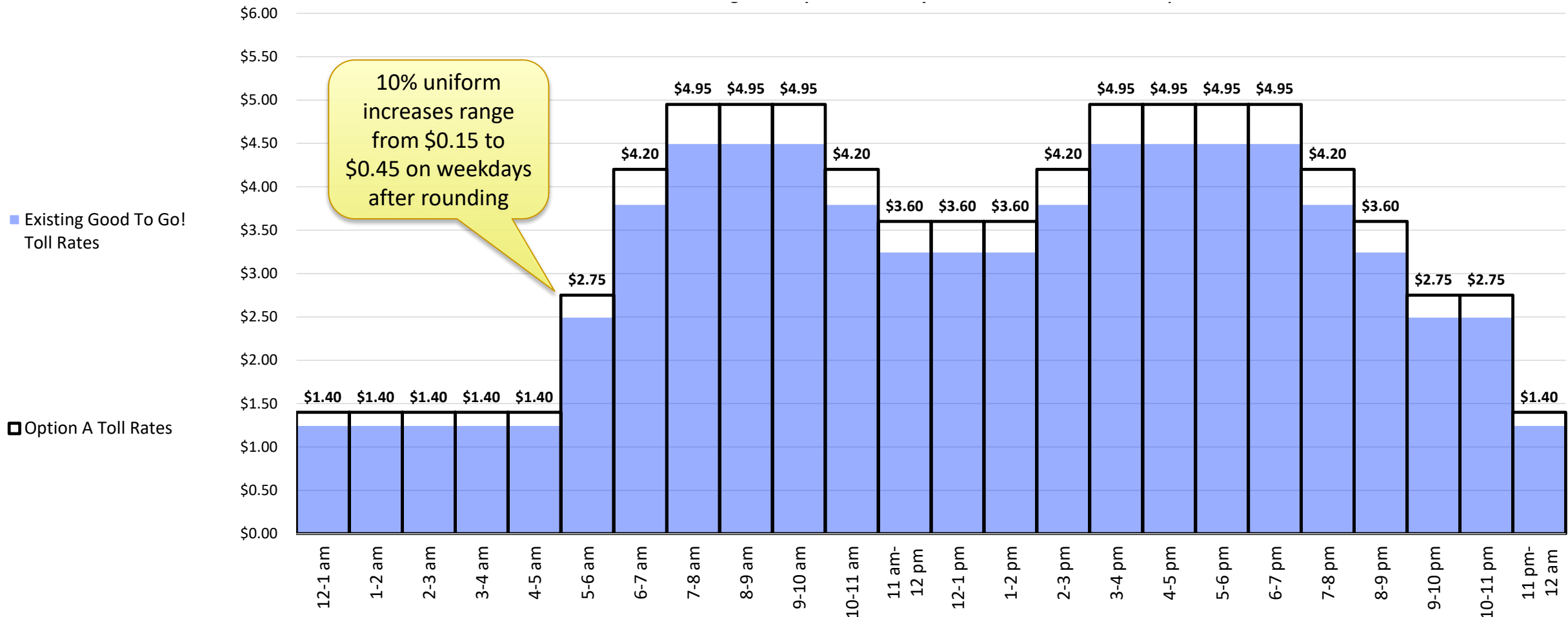
SR 520 Toll Rates: Option A

10% Uniform Increase + Nickel Rounding

- **Option A:** uniform 10% increase (rounded to nearest \$0.05)
- Under this approach, tolls would increase 10% across the board for all times of the day and days of the week, including weekends, rounded to the nearest nickel.
- The toll rate adjustment would range from an increase of \$0.15 to \$0.45, depending on the time of day / day of week.

SR 520 Toll Rates: Option A

10% Uniform Increase + Nickel Rounding | Weekdays

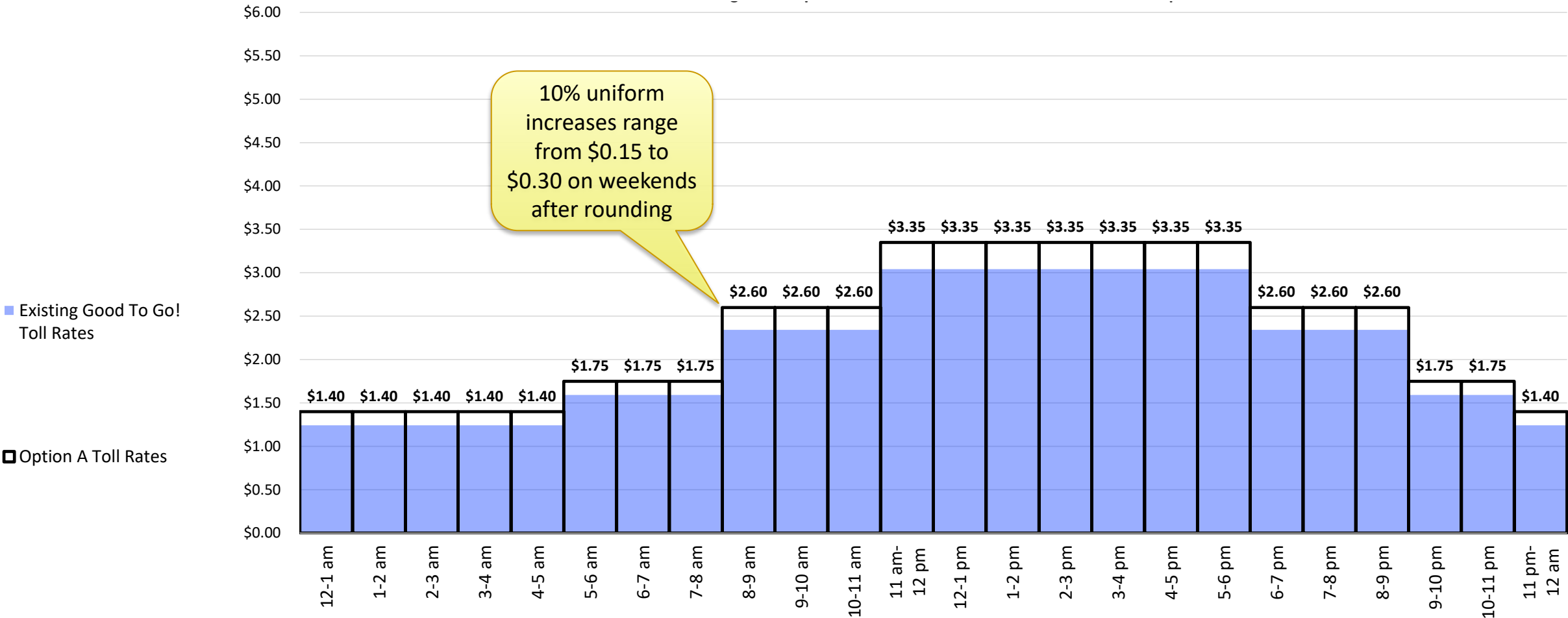


All toll rates are for 2-axle vehicles with Good to Go! pass

SR 520 Toll Rates: Option A

10% Uniform Increase + Nickel Rounding | Weekends

10% uniform increases range from \$0.15 to \$0.30 on weekends after rounding



All toll rates are for 2-axle vehicles with Good to Go! pass

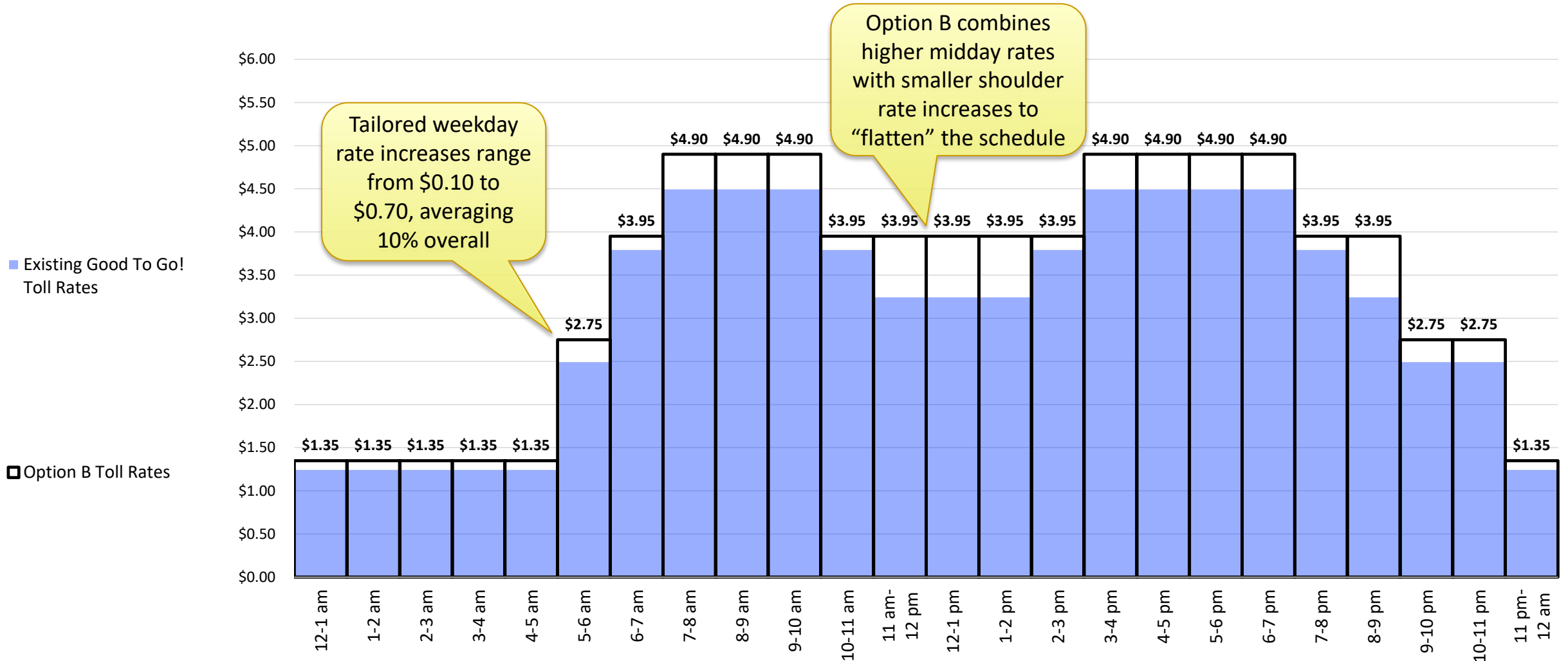
SR 520 Toll Rates: Option B

~10% Tailored Increase + Nickel Rounding

- **Option B:** tailored increases averaging 10% overall (rounded to nearest \$0.05)
- Under this approach, tolls would increase by an average of 10% for the entire week, rounded to the nearest nickel.
- There would also be fewer rate variations throughout the week, resulting in six different prices instead of the existing eight.
- The toll rate adjustment would range from a decrease of \$0.10 to an increase of \$0.70, depending on the time of day / day of week.

SR 520 Toll Rates: Option B

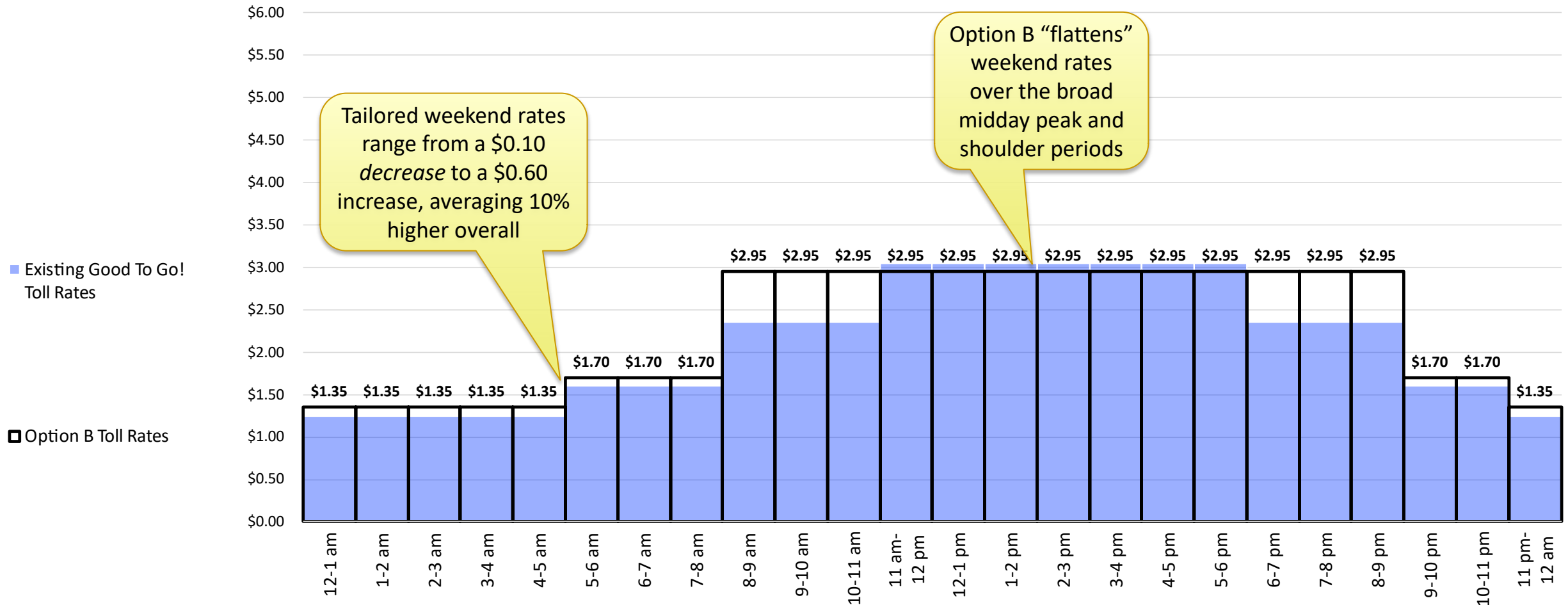
~10% Tailored Increase + Nickel Rounding | Weekdays



All toll rates are for 2-axle vehicles with Good to Go! pass

SR 520 Toll Rates: Option B

~10% Tailored Increase + Nickel Rounding | Weekends



All toll rates are for 2-axle vehicles with Good to Go! pass

WSTC 2024 SR 520 Online Public Input Forum

Open from April 17, 2024 - May 1, 2024

- Over 22,500 people engaged
 - ❑ 83% completion rate, with nearly 20,000 providing input on the two rate options

- Questions included
 - ❑ Level of support / opposition on the two options under consideration
 - ❑ Frequency of use, including day of week and time of day
 - ❑ Primary trip purpose
 - ❑ Payment method
 - ❑ Household income and size
 - ❑ Demographic information in compliance with Title VI requirements
 - ❑ Location/zip code information

Key Respondent Metrics - Usage

Frequency of Use

- **11%** daily users
- **23%** weekly users
- **26%** monthly users
- **30%** a few times a year
- **10%** use the SR 520 Bridge once a year or less

Day of the week*

- **52%** Monday
- **61.5%** Tuesday
- **63%** Wednesday
- **62%** Thursday
- **57%** Friday
- **48.5%** Saturday
- **38%** Sunday

Time of day*

- **8.5%** early morning
- **27%** morning peak
- **38%** midday
- **42%** afternoon peak
- **29%** evening/night
- **5%** overnight
- **28%** varies

Primary Trip Purpose

- **40%** social or recreation
- **21%** commuting
- **13%** work or business activity (other than commuting)
- **9%** medical appointments
- **8%** shopping or errands
- **9.5%** other

* Only respondents who use the facility on a daily or weekly basis were asked which days of the week and times of the day they most often use the SR 520 Bridge. Respondents were also allowed to make multiple selections to these questions.

Key Respondent Metrics - Demographics

Household Income

13,259 respondents provided HH income information. Of these:

- **6%** under \$35,000
- **17%** \$35,000-\$75,000
- **35%** \$75,000-\$150,000
- **41%** over \$150,000

- **13%** with a HH income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level

Race and Ethnicity

13,378 respondents provided information on their racial background. Of these:

- **71%** identified as white only
- **29%** people of color*

In addition, **934** identified as Latino, Latina, Latinx or of Hispanic origin

Place of Residence

13,086 respondents provided valid zip code information. Of these:

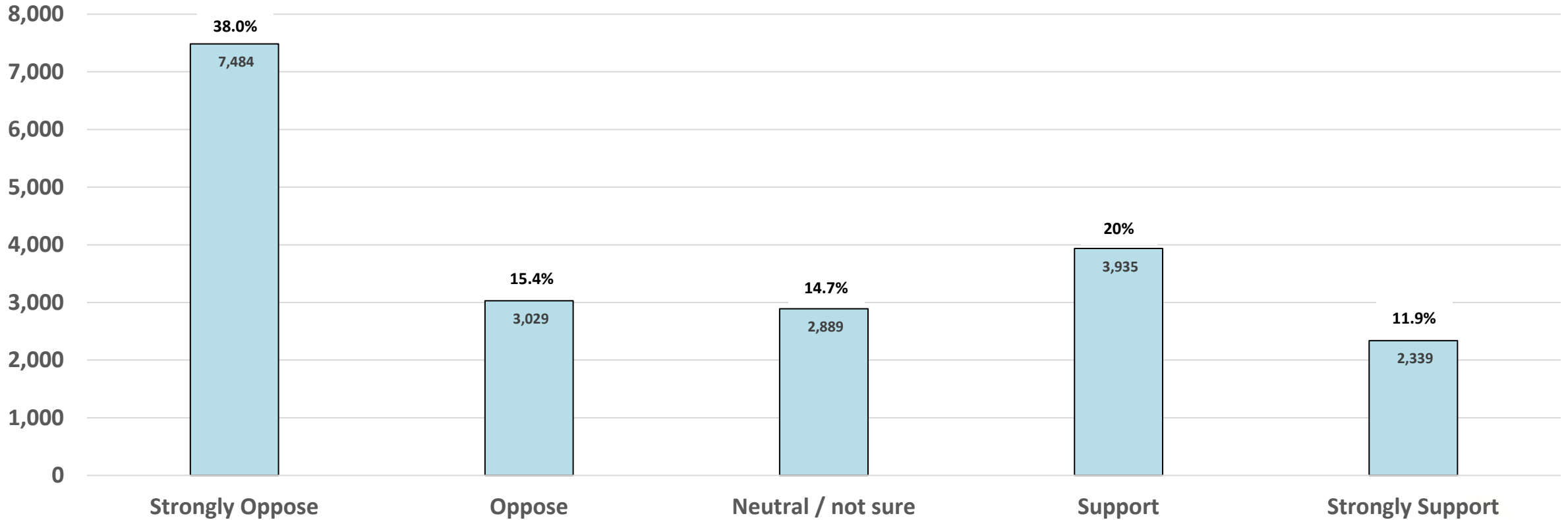
- **92%** from the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Area
- **8%** from other areas throughout Washington state
- **<1%** from outside of Washington state

** People of color defined as those who self-identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Asian American, Black, African or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern or North African, or two or more races.*

SR 520 Toll Rates: Option A

10% Uniform Increase + Nickel Rounding

Key Takeaway: 53.4% of respondents either oppose or strongly oppose Option A, compared to 31.9% of respondents who either support or strong support this option

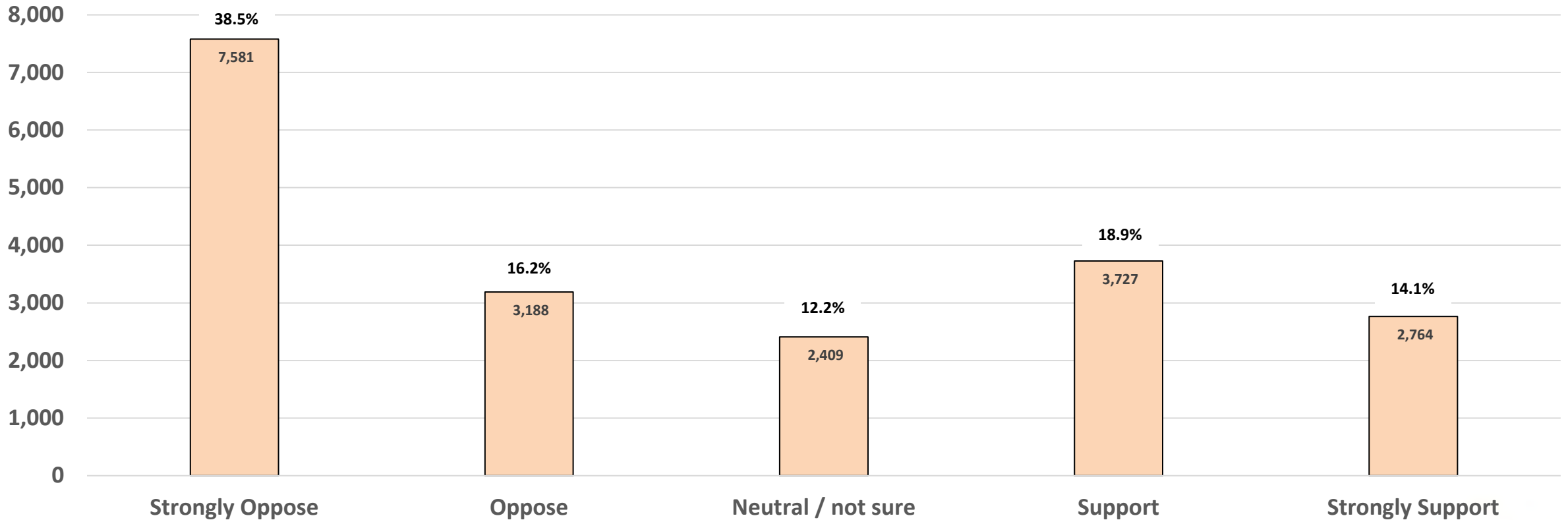


19,676 total votes

SR 520 Toll Rates: Option B

~10% Tailored Increase + Nickel Rounding

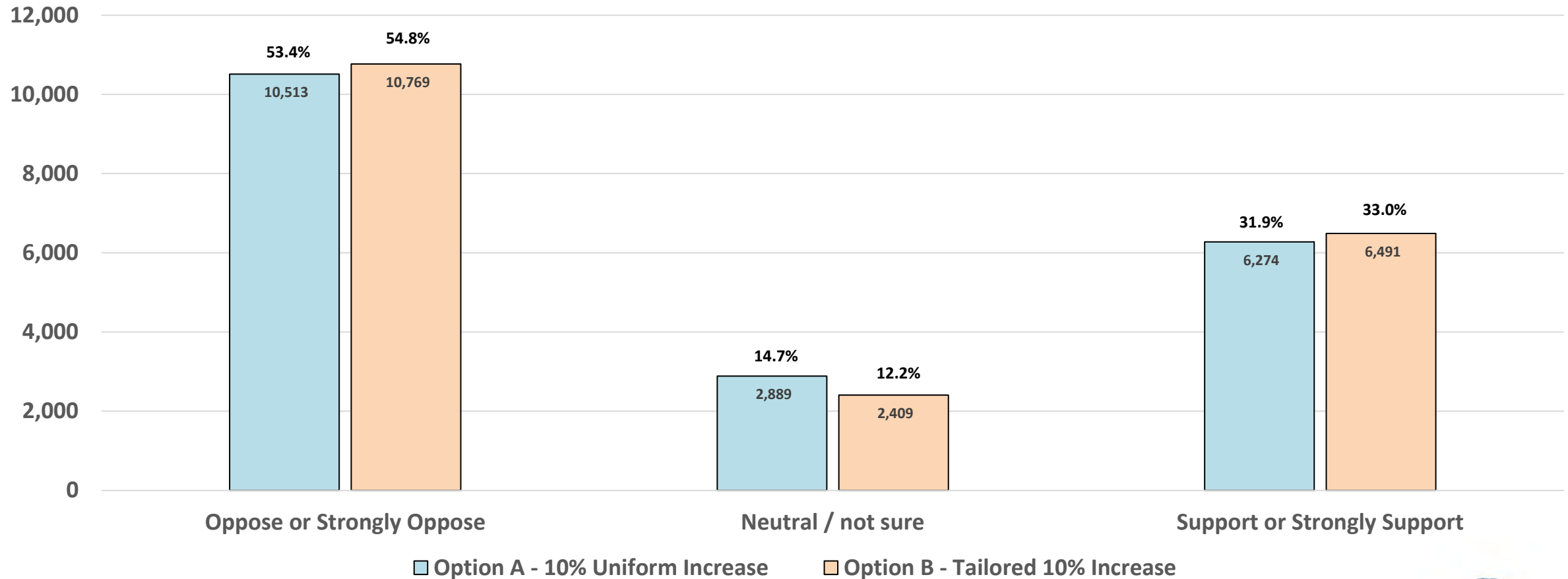
Key Takeaway: 54.8% of respondents either oppose or strongly oppose Option B, compared to 33% of respondents who either support or strong support this option



19,669 total votes

Overall Survey Results Comparison

Key Takeaway: There was both more overall opposition and support for Option B than for Option A



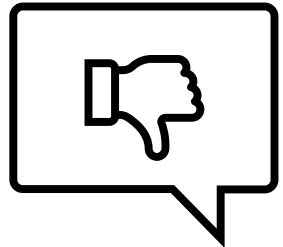
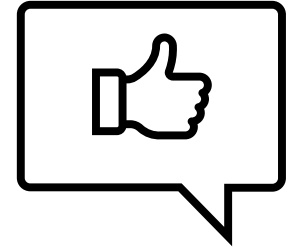
Additional Survey Takeaways

- 6,436 respondents use the bridge on either a daily or weekly basis (*frequent users*). Of these respondents:
 - ❑ 87% use the facility on weekdays
 - ❑ 51% use the facility on weekends
- Most subgroups did not indicate a strong preference for one option. However, the following groups showed the strongest **Option B** compared to their support for Option A:
 - ❑ Frequent users, who supported Option B by an additional **2%**
 - ❑ Weekend users, who supported Option B by an additional **5.9%**
 - ❑ Weekend midday users, who supported Option B by an additional **3.5%**
 - ❑ People of Color, who supported Option B by an additional **4.9%**
- Weekday midday users was the only group that indicated a strong preference for **Option A** compared to their support for Option B, who supported Option A by an additional **2.6%**

Written Comments From Respondents

7,465 comments received. In summary*:

- The vast majority stated dislike for tolls or toll increases altogether
- More comments stated preference for Option B, which mostly said that they feel it makes sense to charge higher prices when there are more users on the roads
- Comments in favor of Option A said that they prefer this option because of its simplicity
- Other comments included
 - ❑ Equity concerns
 - ❑ Desire for commuter passes and/or low-income options
 - ❑ Sentiment that there are too many different rates in general
 - ❑ Increased toll rates may impact bridge usage
 - ❑ Lack of trust due to a perceived lack of transparency, accountability, and efficiency



* Summary reflects of a sampling of 1,035 of the total comments received

Recap of Survey Results

Option A

- 32% Support
- 15% Neutral / not sure
- 53% Oppose

Option B

- 33% Support
- 12% Neutral / not sure
- 55% Oppose

- There was both more overall opposition and support for **Option B** than Option A.
- Respondents tended to feel more strongly about **Option B** than Option A.
- Most subgroups did not indicate a strong preference for one option. However, those that did tended to be more supportive of **Option B**.

Selection of Preferred Toll Rates Option

State law (*RCW 47.56.850 & RCW 47.56.870*) requires the following:

- A variable schedule of toll rates must be set with the intent to:
 - Maintain travel time, speed, and reliability on the corridor, and
 - Generate the necessary revenue to meet funding obligations.
- Tolls may vary by multiple factors in support of improved system performance, including:
 - Type of vehicle, time of day, and traffic conditions
 - System performance includes managing congestion on the facility and minimizing impacts to alternative routes.
- Tolling may only be imposed on the floating bridge portion of the SR 520 corridor

Selection of Preferred Toll Rates Option

State law (*RCW 47.56.830*) establishes the following considerations for state toll facilities:

- Toll rates must be set to meet anticipated funding obligations, and to the extent possible, optimize system performance
- In addition to being a source of project funding, tolling should:
 - Be fairly and equitably applied in the context of the statewide transportation system;
 - Avoiding increased traffic diversion to other routes;
- When deciding to toll a facility the following factors should also be considered:
 - Social equity, environmental, and economic issues; and
 - Supporting progress towards the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Selection of Preferred Toll Rates Option

- Tolling subcommittee recommends selection of Option B:
 - Meets SR 520 Bridge financial requirements
 - Provides an improved customer experience with fewer toll rate changes compared to existing schedule and Option A
 - Minimizes the toll rate increase for the peak hours compared to Option A
 - Survey indicates frequent users most often use the bridge during peak hours
 - Slight preference for Option B in survey for frequent users, and for people of color inclusive of individuals from historically disadvantaged and marginalized communities
 - Maintains capacity for tolls to support traffic management

Next Steps: SR 520 Bridge Rate Setting Schedule

Following the selection of a preferred toll rate scenario today, the Commission plans to adopt toll rates by mid-July, with an effective date of August 15, 2024.

Date	Milestone
Today – March 13, 2024	Select two rate scenarios for public input and financial sufficiency verification
April 17 – May 1	Hold online public input survey to inform rate-setting decisions
May 2024 WSTC Meeting	Receive financial analysis and select toll rate proposal for public comment period
By May 22 (noon)	Propose permanent rates (File CR-102)
Late May – June 30	Public input to inform final toll rate proposal
July 10, 2024	Public hearing for permanent toll rate proposal (File CR-103P)
August 15, 2024	Final toll rates take effect

Questions?

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