

# **Bond Case Briefs**

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## **North Carolina Toll Project Faces Citizen Lawsuit.**

A citizen advocacy group on Tuesday filed a lawsuit against the state of North Carolina and its private sector partner to block the construction of toll lanes on I-77 in Charlotte, N.C., arguing the project is not in the best interest of the public.

Widen I-77, an anti-toll community group, claims the \$655 million project includes illegal contracts, violates public policy and benefits the private company more than drivers.

"The state has unconditionally delegated taxing authority and failed to provide appropriate limitations on taxing powers it has delegated," Widen I-77 attorney Matt Arnold, told WSOC TV.

The group expects the lawsuit to permanently stop the toll road, but hopes to have a hearing on their preliminary injunction request in the next few weeks. A trial would likely take more than a year.

The lawsuit comes two days before Mobility Partners, the private sector team formed by Spanish-owned Cintra, was supposed to have secured financing. The North Carolina Department of Transportation, however, granted Mobility Partners an extension as two move toward completing all contractual requirements.

I-77 currently has one high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction. The 26-mile project stretching from Charlotte to Mooresville will convert those HOV lanes to express lanes. The company also will build a second express lane alongside the converted HOV lane on I-77 North and South.

NCPPP

By Editor

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