

PLACER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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May 8th, 2026

Rafael Martinez
Director, Department of Transportation
County of El Dorado
2850 Fairlane Court
Placerville, CA 95667

Re: Parking Fines in El Dorado County

Dear Mr. Martinez,

On behalf of Placer County District 5, I am pleased to offer support for El Dorado County's proposal to increase the highway no-parking fine in the Emerald Bay area.

In North Lake Tahoe, we have experienced many of the same challenges associated with high visitation and unmanaged roadside parking, including congestion, safety concerns, and impacts to emergency access. In response, Placer County has implemented a comprehensive parking management program that pairs paid parking with active enforcement and escalating citation fines to help influence behavior and improve compliance.

As part of this effort, Placer County has moved away from nominal fines and toward more meaningful penalties that better reflect the impacts of illegal parking in high-demand areas. Citation amounts, which increase per violation, alongside consistent enforcement presence, has helped reinforce safe parking practices and support turnover in key locations. While no single tool solves these challenges on its own, we have found that appropriately scaled fines are an important component of an effective parking management strategy.

As visitation continues to grow across the Tahoe Basin, regional consistency in enforcement and penalties is critical. Aligning fine structures across jurisdictions helps set clear expectations for visitors and strengthens the overall effectiveness of these programs.

We appreciate El Dorado County's proactive approach and your leadership on this issue. Please feel free to reach out if we can share additional information from our experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindy Gustafson".

Cindy Gustafson, Supervisor (District 5)
Placer County Board of Supervisors

May 8, 2026

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
330 Fair Lane, Building A
Placerville, CA 95667

Letter of Support for Increasing Illegal Parking Fine at Emerald Bay, Lake Tahoe

Distinguished Supervisors:

The purpose of this letter is to express the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's (TRPA) support for El Dorado County increasing the illegal parking penalties at Lake Tahoe along the State Route 89 (SR89) recreation corridor. This includes increasing the penalty at Emerald Bay to \$200 to support law enforcement and public safety at Tahoe's popular recreation sites.

The State Route 89 Recreation Corridor is a two-lane mountain roadway that runs along the West Shore of Lake Tahoe. The area features some of Lake Tahoe's and El Dorado County's most popular recreation sites, including beaches, the iconic Emerald Bay, Meeks Bay Resort, Sugar Pine State Park, and Desolation Wilderness.

The roadway serves approximately 1 million vehicle trips each year. The concentration of recreation in a narrow two-lane corridor creates persistent public safety, environmental, and transportation challenges. One of the most visible safety challenges in the region is the high number of illegally and dangerously parked cars along the highway during summer months.

In 2024, Supervisor Brooke Laine convened a broad interagency working group to develop the 2025 Emerald Bay Shuttle and Parking Management Pilot Program. Partners included representatives from Caltrans, TRPA, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), California State Parks, Tahoe Transportation District, City of South Lake Tahoe, Placer County, South Shore Transportation Management Association, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Sierra State Parks Foundation, League to Save Lake Tahoe (Keep Tahoe Blue), and the Tahoe Fund.

The pilot program included shuttle service, removal of 50 dangerous parking spaces at Emerald Bay, a road safety audit, and increased parking enforcement. Approximately 5,000 riders used the Emerald Bay Shuttle during the pilot, demonstrating strong public acceptance of the transit-first access model.

One of the most important aspects of the 2025 pilot program was dedicated, contracted law enforcement through CHP. During summer weekends, CHP issued hundreds of parking tickets and towed dozens of illegally and dangerously parked vehicles at Emerald Bay. From firsthand experience, CHP officers indicated that the current illegal parking fine amount does not discourage bad parking behavior.

Increasing the illegal parking fine amount to \$200 and posting the amount on “No Stopping” and “No Parking” signs at Emerald Bay will help reduce dangerous and illegal parking, support CHP parking enforcement, enhance public safety, and allow people to continue to enjoy all that Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County have to offer.

Increased parking fines have also been proven to reduce illegal parking and improve safety on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe. Nevada partners increased the fine for tickets on State Route 28 and US Highway 50. Parking in a “No Parking” zone comes with a \$305 ticket and parking over the fog line has a \$538 fine, plus tow fees.

Thank you for your continued support of public safety and access at Lake Tahoe.

About TRPA:

Established in 1969, TRPA was the nation’s first bi-state regional environmental planning agency. Our mission is to lead the cooperative effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region, while improving local communities, and people’s interactions with our irreplaceable environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.C.' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Kimberly Caringer
Deputy Director, Chief Partnerships Officer
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency