

23 Mar 2016 The Vancouver Sun

Gas tax beats tolls

Increase in auto licence fees does nothing for environment

Re: Forget bridge tolls, Letters, March 21

I believe Jill Ewart was right on when she advocated that we forget bridge tolls.

The advent of technology, the decal system used by Treo, has most of us thinking tolling is costing next to nothing. In fact tolling is the largest operating expense for Treo, comprising around 15 per cent of revenue. This equates to around 45 cents for each crossing of the Port Mann Bridge.

The provincial government must come up with a simpler, more cost-effective way. Victoria is shirking its responsibility, hoping the federal government or resource revenues will avoid the need for consumer taxes. This should not be a popularity contest.

Jill suggests we increase auto licence fees. With three million vehicles registered in B.C., an increase of \$85 would raise \$250 million.

But increasing the auto licence fee means a car only used on Sundays to go to church costs the same as the commuter from Chilliwack, and a hybrid and an SUV pay the same. This does nothing for the environment.

I believe a tax on gasoline is a preferred method. As the price of gasoline rises, two things happen: Some will take to rapid transit and others will obtain a smaller or more efficient vehicle.

- DON ROBERTS North Vancouver

14 Comment(s)

[John Plummer](#)

23 March 2016

05:25

Absolutely correct! There is no good way to pay for the Highway 1 road improvements from Cassiar to 208th... but a few pennies on gasoline is the least bad way. Directly or indirectly, those road improvements benefit ALL residents of the Lower Mainland!

[Wig53](#)

23 March 2016

07:25

The gas tax should already pay for the tolls. We pay the highest cost for fuel in Canada and Translink has a steady stream of cash. They are fat and inefficient. Privatize and the costs will drop. Once you start feeding these public bureaucracies large amounts of money, the gluttony increases inversely with the efficiency.

[tug](#)

23 March 2016

08:20

Any tax going to general revenue is subject to abuse by our fearless leaders, all tax should be designated or not charged.

[Oor Wullie](#)

23 March 2016

08:29

The assignment of gasoline taxes to expenditures OTHER than highway improvement is in my opinion theft, pure and simple.

[G.A.](#)

23 March 2016

08:32

Agree Oor, and how long will it be before cities around the Province start using gas taxes as a way to get themselves out of the hole because of over spending?

[Ricketty Rabbit](#)

23 March 2016

08:41

Let's make it unanimous. Just mandate that gasoline taxes must be used for transportation infrastructure and maintenance, period! Let drivers pay, and don't take their payments for other purposes.

[Nanny Ogg](#)

23 March 2016

09:05

Absolutely, RR. Also, such gas taxes should be imposed and allocated regionally so that the many, many people with few if any demands on the provincial coffers for transport and roads do not end up having to pay for the badly managed Metro area.

[Oor Wullie](#)

23 March 2016

09:14

It can never happen :-("Social Engineering", beloved of the Nanny State, is too firmly entrenched. Gasoline taxes are supposed to be punitive, not economically useful.

[Ricketty Rabbit](#)

23 March 2016

09:18

Get off it, Wullie. "Social Engineering"?

Tell me what law, regulation, government, or rule of any kind ISN'T social engineering. It's all social engineering except the black market.

[Stryder](#)

23 March 2016

09:38

This was a very positive response to the letter, until ----

I would hope that those people in power would read these comments.

Nanny, everyone benefits from good transit and everyone should pay. I would question why it's limited to gas users. The whole province benefits, not just those who drive cars. Could we not have an increase in income taxes or sales taxes, and an increase in gas taxes.

[Nanny Ogg](#)

23 March 2016

10:08

Stryder, come live in an area where there is no regular public transport. What little there is (once a week from town centre to other town centres), is paid for locally, not provincially. We are hundreds of miles away from Metro. No, the people outside one specific area do not benefit from its transit, and should not be expected to pay for it.

[Oor Wullie](#)

23 March 2016

10:16

Tell me what law, regulation, government, or rule of any kind ISN'T social engineering. It's all social engineering except the black market.

Precisely! Criminal Code excepted of course. Governments at all levels should stick to only providing things that everyone needs, like clean water, international and intranational security, etc. Not playing Robin Hood! If the fruits of my honest toil are to be confiscated for the benefit of my countrymen who are too lazy, stupid or incompetent to do likewise, maybe I should join their ranks. Why not?

[Oor Wullie](#)

23 March 2016

10:17

Stryder, there IS life outside the city limits!

[Ricketty Rabbit](#)

23 March 2016

10:39

"Criminal Code excepted of course. "

Wrong. It, too, is social engineering. Anything that interferes with natural behaviour is social engineering.

I suspect you don't object to *piecemeal social engineering*, which aims to solve a problem almost everyone considers undesirable, but rebel against *utopian social engineering*, which aims to create an utopian society as defined by those employing the social engineers.

Thanks to Karl Popper for the distinction between the two.