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EDITORIAL: Under the bus

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File photo

As debate on the TransLink tax vote heats up, the Yes side threw CEO Ian Jarvis under the bus this week.

By tossing Jarvis — whose salary had become a symbol of TransLink waste — to the curb, the Yes side hopes to up their chances of success at the ballot box.

The move is presumably meant to signal a new era, where the new tax the Yes side craves won't go to a fat cat's bloated paycheque.

Except of course that it will — two salaries, in fact, instead of one.

Jarvis will continue to be paid more than \$420,000 in an "advisory" capacity while a new interim CEO gets \$35,000 a month.

Just how those optics will convince anyone that sound financial decisions are around the next corner remains a mystery.

While Jarvis was a highly paid executive who presided over a number of bungled projects at TransLink, his departure doesn't change some basic problems.

TransLink is still run by an unelected board that spends public money with little accountability. But the ability to change anything about that board is not on the ballot.

B.C.'s Transportation Minister has said TransLink needs new leadership. He's right — just not in the way he's pitching it.

TransLink is a creation of the province. To fix it, the province needs to step back and return the board to locally elected officials whose political fortunes could be tied to its performance.

Until then, the need for more transit and the bloated bureaucracy of TransLink will continue to be linked in the public mind.

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