

**Subject: RE: "JUST SAY NO!"**

**Date:** Wed, 28 Nov 2001 11:15:46 -0800

**From:** Ernie Crist <CristE@district.north-van.bc.ca>

**To:** "Elizabeth James" <cagebc@yahoo.com>

**CC:** Mayor and Council - DNV <Council@district.north-van.bc.ca>, Directors Team <managecomm@district.north-van.bc.ca>, "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Dear Ms. James:

I am indebted as we all are I am sure for your continuing endeavor re this important issue. I appreciate the well researched material you continue to make available and I agree with most your common sense approach has to offer.

The problem is that if we agree to the cuts as presented as options by Translink, the only ones who will suffer are those who can afford it the least. That is to say Translink will be quite happy to cut services, after all the un-elected directors of Translink will still be able to draw their salaries and drive their cars.

As for West Vancouver, they may be right on many points but they to me appear to be somewhat hypocritical. After all they have their own bus system and if everything else fails they can always avail themselves of their own private three Van plus per household transportation system.

Sorry to be so cynical but I am just getting a little tired with their sanctimonious haranguing. When I, on this and other related issues and on more then one occasion suggested that the GVRD and Translink Board be directly elected, they along with the other elected intelligentsia on the North Shore including the District of North Vancouver ridiculed the idea. So forgive me when I am somewhat suspicious of their motives. Still, I appreciate your principled stand, even though I can't "Say No" - the simple reason is that all those who have cars and who do not to rely on public transportation with the exception of a few could not care less about their less unfortunate and "carless" citizens. To sum up - Yes I agree that this is a mess, in fact even for BC it is remarkable but I am not prepared to put the burden of stupidity, incompetence and selfishness on the poor only. They are suffering enough as it is. Did you notice that there are more gas guzzlers then ever on the road? This is just by the by of course.

Yours truly

Ernie Crist

-----Original Message-----

From: Elizabeth James [<mailto:cagebc@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, November 27, 2001 11:53 AM

To: Mayor and Council;

Subject: Fwd: "JUST SAY NO!"

To: Director of Communications, BC Chamber of Commerce

In addition to the addresses shown below, this message is being sent to many other groups and individuals who have expressed their concerns about regional transportation issues.

Our Coalition appreciates the stand taken by the Chamber - as expressed by the West Vancouver Chamber President - and hope that, even at this late date, we can unite to take some positive action to change the TransLink decisions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Liz James, Chair

Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com> wrote:

Date: Tue, 27 Nov 2001 19:10:21 +0000 (GMT)  
From: Elizabeth James  
Subject: "JUST SAY NO!"  
To: karen@ara.bc.ca, gringdal@bcada.org <<mailto:gringdal@bcada.org>> ,  
michele.penz@bcaa.bc.ca,  
ammcinnis@telus.net, rvda-bc@vancouver.net, bcta@bctrucking.com,  
cfaces@home.com

URGENT - TO ALL CONCERNED TAXPAYERS and ALLIED GROUPS

FROM: The Coalition for Accountability in Government Enterprises [CAGE-BC]

DATE: 26 November, 2001

RE: TRANSLINK - RAISED FARES, GASOLINE TAXES and PROPERTY TAXES

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The Coalition for Accountability in Government Enterprises supports the ongoing implementation of a range of well-researched, safe, environmentally-sensitive, cost-effective, public transportation solutions which take people from where they are to where they need to be in a timely manner.

By now, readers will know only too well that TransLink has decided to raise bus-fares again next year, to take advantage of the additional 2-cents per litre gas tax conditionally approved by the Province, and to apply a transit tax of about \$7.90 per \$100,000 of residential assessed values in the Region. How that is to play out on commercial property is not completely clear. These measures should raise about \$80 million.

Using the fact that the NDP reneged on collection of a vehicle levy as an excuse, and welcoming the Auditor-General's emphasis of that fact, GVRD/TransLink Chair and Vancouver Councillor George Puil, reminds taxpayers that TransLink faces a shortfall, is not allowed to run a deficit [different than huge debts apparently] and that, though he 'doesn't want to do it' TransLink is 'between a rock and a hard place'. The claimed shortfall started out at \$40 million and climbed to \$47 million.

Premier Campbell, who has the ear of his Deputy former TransLink CEO Ken Dobell, is staying virtually mum on the whole affair - "Not our problem," says Mr. Campbell, "transportation costs and solutions should be the business of those in the Region." Well, that would be all well and good were

it not for the fact that it was Glen Clark's Provincial government - aided and abetted, we'll admit, by Mr. Puil's overweening eagerness to grab the transportation brass ring - which got the Region into the SkyTrain expansion fiasco in the first place, at ten times the cost of the fast-cats, when all's said and done.

This Friday, November 30th, GVRD is to decide whether or not to ratify that TransLink vote and, although it's likely to be a much closer vote, in all likelihood the Vancouver-weighted Board will opt to go ahead.

The question then will be, what do we do? Do we just roll over and let them get away with it? Or do we all pull together and try to do something about it?

One of the reasons that TransLink, the Rapid Transit Project Ltd., and the Province have been able to get this far along the road, virtually unimpeded, is because their opposition has been fractured from Day One.... The Bus Riders' Union speaks for one lobby group, Neighbours for Fair Transit [NFFT] for another, the Grandview Cut people for their area, and the creme de la creme for theirs. The Chamber of Commerce speaks for its members, BCAA speaks for theirs, and the Trucking Association for theirs.

City of Port Coquitlam Mayor is all in favour of taxes, just so long as we pay for even more SkyTrain, and the City of Port Moody don't like the taxes but will vote for them conditional upon not building SkyTrain to disrupt their businesses! Vancouver, of course, wants everything it can get - just so long as Regional taxpayers underwrite the cost. And this is supposed to be regional planning?

If everyone on this mailing can agree with our header, then let's all talk from the same page. Let's look at the root cause of the problem, rather than engaging in interminable squabbling over the symptoms and how to divvy up the meagre spoils.

As it stands, decisions are being made by unelected, unaccountable politicians and bureaucrats who have little or no transportation expertise. So long as more and more SkyTrain is on their agenda, taxpayers in the Region will never be able to afford or implement a safe, region-wide, effective transportation network.

It is the capital, operating and, most of all, the debt-servicing costs of SkyTrain which are draining away most of the transportation dollars available to the region. It does not matter whether one is talking taxation at the provincial level, or at the level of TransLink/GVRD, it's all the same taxpayer. Furthermore, it will drain away jobs and services....all for a system which is inappropriate to the region, and which has proven to be incapable of attracting sufficient paying ridership to attract people out of their cars.

TransLink is not, as CEO Pat Jacobsen would have you believe, facing a one-time shortfall. The problem will continue for thirty years or more. It will also get much, much worse if Premier Campbell commits the province to the airport extension based on the excuse of the 2010 Olympic bid.

Until we get all levels of government to acknowledge the truth of that, the decisions will compound, the problems will escalate and taxation and fares will continue to increase. If they are allowed to win this round, once started down that road, the politicians and the entrenched bureaucrats they depend on will never, ever stop.

Regardless of Friday's GVRD Board decision, therefore, we are hereby asking you all to join with us, to dig in your heels on taxes until they agree to come to the table and negotiate with us the people - the shareholders of the

corporation. We need to launch a region-wide demonstration and/or forum. We need to tell them we are cutting off the money supply beyond the level of this year's funding, and we need to call for their mass resignation. Nothing less will get their attention.

Each one of us will have his/her own valid reasons - bus services, jobs, LRT, bikeways, pollution, trucking costs of fuel taxes and congestion, road maintenance, etc. - as to why we want to be at the table to discuss all of the options available.

But, surely, we can ALL agree that it must be done... and done NOW!

Thank you for your early response.

Sincerely,

Liz James, Chair  
Coalition for Accountability in Government Enterprises  
P.O. Box 16090, 3017 Mountain Highway,  
NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C. V7J 2P2

[604] 988-2066  
cagebc@yahoo.com <<mailto:cagebc@yahoo.com>>  
www.cagebc.com <<http://www.cagebc.com/>>


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