# Solvency and Case Turns

### **VMT Fails- Laundry List**

#### VMT fails- inflation, evasion, retrofitting, privacy, and disincentivizes low emission vehicles.

Slone 10 (Sean, transportation policy analyst at The Council of State Governments. The Council of State Governments, Vehicle Miles Traveled Fees, March 2010, <http://www.csg.org/policy/documents/TIA_VMTcharges.pdf>) Azimi

VMT tolling is not inherently responsive to inflation. It would be necessary to either index VMT fees from the outset to some indicator of inflation (such as the consumer price index or construction cost index) or institute periodic rate hikes through legislative action in order to account for the effects of inflation. That’s the same political challenge policymakers face now with gas taxes. `` It would require a significant investment of capital. Onboard equipment would likely cost around $100 per vehicle, RAND estimates. There would also need to be additional upfront investment in the information systems required to collect and distribute revenues. After that, RAND concludes, automation should yield cost-efficiencies once the initial investments are made. `` Safeguards against VMT fee evasion are needed. Individuals may be able to hack components of a VMT system to evade tolls and this requires careful attention.8 As in the Oregon pilot project, a VMT system could be engineered to result in default payment of the gas tax if an on-vehicle device is tampered with The appropriate institutional framework for implementing VMT tolling is unclear. As indicated earlier, this framework will be determined by whether VMT tolling is implemented at a state, national, regional, or multi-state level. Different oversight agencies and institutions may be needed depending on which shape the system takes. `` VMT tolling would need to be phased in overtime. Although new cars could be purchased with VMT onboard equipment already installed, older cars could continue to pay traditional fuel taxes until they are retired from the fleet. That could provide a workaround for the expected high cost of retrofitting existing vehicles with VMT equipment. Such a phase-in period, RAND estimates, during which two revenue systems would need to operate in parallel, could last around 20 years. `` Privacy advocates and environmentalists may both find fault with a VMT system. Privacy advocates may be concerned that VMT onboard equipment could be used by government or law enforcement entities to monitor the travel patterns of individuals. Environmentalists may worry that replacing the per gallon gas tax with a flat per-mile tax would eliminate one of the few tax-related incentives for purchasing more fuel-efficient vehicles. While technical accommodations and pricing strategies can address these concerns, RAND said it will likely take some educational effort to overcome such fears as well.8

### No Solvency: Can’t Change Driving Habits

#### VMT only has an effect on driving habits at very high levels

Rahman et al, 11 (Kumi Harischandra, Justine Isola, Lazeena Rahman, and Anthony Suen, Stanford Institute for Economy Research, Graduate Policy Program Practicum, Prepared for: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “Going Forward: Prospects for Transitioning from Gas Taxes to Vehicle-Miles-Traveled Fees” p. 25) APB

Figure 7 above illustrates the marginally higher increase of economic incidence of VMT fees when compared to gas taxes for all the policy options, largely due to the reduced elasticity. However, the pattern changes when the magnitude of charges increases. The lowest quintile experiences a sharp decrease in gas tax incidence, accompanied by a less extreme, but equally marked decrease in VMT fee incidence for the two-dollar gas tax and equivalent VMT fee. The second and third quintiles also show a decrease in gas tax incidence, but just a slower growth of VMT fee incidence for the highest charge. As seen in the national results, households are more likely to engage in behavioral change only when policies become much more expensive.60 Implementing modest, incremental increases in gas taxes or VMT fees does little to instigate change in driving patterns. People start with the easiest changes. For example, they reduce mileage and gasoline consumption by foregoing discretionary trips. Tradeoffs between spending more and driving less only begin to take place when taxes and fees approach the two dollar per gallon level (see Figure 8). At this point, consumers use more fuel-efficient cars and driving patterns begin to change. Figure 8: VMT and gasoline consumption per household under new policies Sources: Authors’ calculations based on 2001 NHTS data, Parry (2005), and Wadud et al. (2009). 60 Gas tax policies show an earlier impact than VMT fee policies, but this may be the result of our model assumptions. 26 Assuming alternative transportation options remain the same, dramatic adjustments must stem from a change in jobs or residences. The drop in miles driven at the two-dollar policy option suggests that consumers would find ways to adjust driving habits if policymakers set prices sufficiently high. The incremental increases being discussed in Congress today will unlikely lead to consequential vehicle upgrades or shifts in driving.

### No Solvency: Can’t Price Congestion

#### VMT can’t accurately price congestion- gas tax is better.

Coyle et. al. 11(David, Department of Applied Economics University of Minnesota, Ferrol O. Robinson Zhirong (Jerry) Zhao Lee W. Munnich Jr. Adeel Z. Lari Humphrey School of Public Affairs University of Minnesota, From Fuel Taxes to Mileage-Based User Fees: Rationale, Technology, and Transitional Issues, August 2011, Center for Transporation Studies at Minnesota, <http://www.its.umn.edu/Publications/ResearchReports/reportdetail.html?id=2048>) Azimi

Since these technology methods do not account for congestion costs, it is difficult to achieve

efficient investment and efficient land use: the price signals sent to public officials and potential

home owners distort the true costs of road travel. In fact, the odometer-based approaches may be

even less effective than fuel taxes at capturing congestion costs since cars burn more fuel in

congested conditions and thus are forced to purchase more fuel and pay more fuel taxes. The

mileage estimate approach could potentially overcharge drivers who drive mostly congested

conditions. Given that more fuel is burned in congested conditions, the mileage estimate

approach will estimate a higher mileage than is actually driven. It is unclear whether this

overestimate of mileage would over or under compensate for congestion costs.

### No Solvency: Tech Failure

#### VMT is more susceptible to data loss and tech failure

Baker et al 9 (Ginger Goodin, Richard T. Baker and Lindsay Taylor, Texas Transportation Institute, Sponsored by the USDoT, “Mileage-Based User Fees: Defining a Path toward Implementation Phase 2: An Assessment of Institutional Issues” p. 35-6) APB

System redundancy, especially in pricing applications that are technology intensive, is also an important consideration. The current fuel tax system does not use advanced technology for data collection and fee transmission, so unless there are problems with the actual fuel pump or a given service station’s point‐of‐sale (POS) software, there is rarely a loss of income due to technical failure. However, depending on the 36 configuration employed, there are numerous opportunities for mileage‐based fee systems to be compromised and data lost.

### Long Solvency Timeframe

#### Phasing in the VMT could take up to 30 years.

Frisman 12 (VEHICLE MILES TRAVELLED (VMT) TRANSPORTATION FUNDING, Paul Frisman Principal Analyst at Office of Legislative Research Janurary 17th 2012, <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2012/rpt/2012-R-0029.htm> )

**A VMT System Would Take Many Years to Implement There are a number of variables affecting phase-in of a VMT system. For instance, it would take much longer to deploy such a program if only new vehicles are equipped with VMT technology and cars already on the road are not appropriately retrofitted**. In that case **the older cars might continue paying the fuel tax until they were retired. Such a phase-in could take 20 years, the CSG report said**. As noted below, ODOT estimated that implementation could take more than 10 years unless the federal government, or a large state such as California, with nearly 14% of the nation's vehicles, took the lead. **ODOT estimated that without retrofitting, full implementation of a comprehensive VMT system could take more than 30 years**. And, as noted above, the commission that authored Paying Our Way called for immediate congressional action to deploy a comprehensive federal program by 2020.

### Retrofitting Old Vehicles Bad

#### Retrofitting bad—guts solvency and expensive

Whitty and Imholt 5 (James, Manager, Office of Innovative Partnerships and Alternative Funding and Betsy, Alternative Funding Administrator, “Oregon’s Mileage Fee Concept and

Road User Fee Pilot Program”, Oregon Dept. of Transportation, http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/OIPP/docs/2005LegislativeReport.pdf?ga=t) GSK

In the 2003 Legislative Report, the Task Force concluded that retrofitting of currently owned vehicles is prohibitively expensive. ODOT staff has noted additional disadvantages of retrofitting including (1) problematic placement of the technology not designed for retrofitted vehicles; (2) greater likelihood of tampering with the inelegantly placed technology within retrofitted vehicles; (3) the likelihood of a significant number of highly uncooperative vehicle owners; and (4) greater system implementation risk.

#### Many vehicles cannot be retrofitted, and those that can be are easy to tamper with and lose battery power much more quickly

Baker et al 9 (Ginger Goodin, Richard T. Baker and Lindsay Taylor, Texas Transportation Institute, Sponsored by the USDoT, “Mileage-Based User Fees: Defining a Path toward Implementation Phase 2: An Assessment of Institutional Issues” p. 37-38) APB

Many factors will determine the time required to implement a mileage‐based fee system, but an overriding factor is likely to be cost. A quick implementation time frame and a mandatory system will most likely be the most expensive because it would require all vehicles to be retrofitted with the appropriate technology. From a technological standpoint, it would be extremely difficult to develop a mileage‐fee system that could be retrofitted to all vehicles within a given taxing jurisdiction. The State of Oregon found that many of the vehicles that volunteered for its pilot program had to ultimately be excluded. The lack of standardized ports and standardized power systems meant that the technology developed for the pilot could not be installed in all models and makes. Furthermore, there were problems with the OBUs draining batteries on some of the vehicles where installation had proved successful (13). Coupled with the aforementioned public resistance a mandatory program would trigger, an immediately phased‐in, mandatory mileage‐based fee program seems to be the least viable option. However, this would complicate enforcement of the fee because a retrofitted device would be easier to sabotage than a device that is fully incorporated in the vehicle.

### VMT Regressive- Hurts Poor and Rural Communities

#### The federal government has created a car dependent low income class that cannot afford higher commuting costs, VMT would only harm the poor.

Freemark 10 (Yonah,Winter, independent researcher on comparative urban development as part of a Gordon Grand Fellowship from Yale University, from which he graduated in May 2008 with a BA in architecture, “Cars, Highways, and the Poor” <http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Freemark-Dissent-Piece.pdf>) SI

For years, New York City has considered implementing a similar congestion charge system that would assess a fee on car owners entering or driving in the central business district south of Manhattan’s 60th Street. Despite criticism that the fee would hurt the poor, middle- and lower-income commuters would be minimally affected because they already have access to an extensive network of cheap bus and rail connections that would only be improved with the help of new funding. This lesson can be generalized to other cities—rare as they may be—that have a strong public transit system. They are the only places whose urban poor would be the least affected by any reform that emphasizes higher automobile fees. Progressive proponents of user fees. In 2006, for the first time, more of the nation’s impoverished families lived in the suburbs than in central cities—not to mention the millions living in sprawling municipalities whose form replicates suburbia in all but name. These people, who lack access to alternative modes of transportation, would be the most penalized by any approach that advocates user fees. Ironically, the federal transportation system’s emphasis on highway construction has produced a car-dependent class whose members cannot afford any hike in commuting costs. A case in point is Phoenix, Arizona, where sprawling suburbs and a relative dearth of bus and train service force nearly 90 percent of commuters to use their cars—this despite the fact that 16 percent of that city’s inhabitants live in poverty. In contrast, only 33 percent of New York’s population drives to work. In worst-case Arlington, Texas, population 400,000, there is no bus service at all, despite the city’s 10 percent poverty rate. Places like Phoenix and Arlington are the rule rather than the exception. If it was once accurate to stereotype American poverty as an inner-city phenomenon, it would be completely unacceptable to do so today. National housing and transportation policy has for decades favored extra-urban development, sponsoring investment in highways and giving incentives to homeowners. Those choices have encouraged sprawl; it is no surprise that the poor, looking for new opportunity, have followed the pioneering middle classes that first took advantage of life in the suburbs. Attractive as they may be to families hoping to escape the desolation of inner-city ghettos, however, suburban landscapes of strip malls and cheap single-family homes are hostile to pedestrians and transit users. Dwellings are out of walking range of offices, retail outlets, and parks, making the use of cars obligatory. Unsurprisingly, public transportation in suburban settings often suffers from low ridership, because it is difficult to make it convenient or accessible in places designed for the car. Although driving is expensive, millions of poor families have no alternative. Almost 30 percent of the nation’s households have annual incomes lower than $25,000, yet more than 90 percent of Americans own a motor vehicle, at an average expense of $8,000 per year. Any increase in user fees designed to reduce car travel would fall hardest on the budgets of the working class, whose freedom of movement is already limited significantly because of the high cost of transportation.

#### VMT tax overburdens the poor and targets rural communities

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, December 31, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

One unintended consequence of a Vehicle Miles Tax (VMT) is that it overburdens rural commuters who do not have the option of using public transportation. Specifically, this proposed legislation would overburden the poor – specifically the poor in rural areas who must drive to work. There are no public transportation systems in half of rural counties nationwide,55 and because some public transportation lines normally operate under restricted hours,56 commuters who work the night shift may have to drive cars to work. About two-thirds of all rural transportation lines that exist only operate in single counties or are limited in scope to specific cities or towns.57 To further complicate things, the lines that do exist can be confusing and might not take passengers to certain important locations like airports.58 But the wealthy and those who can afford to live in cities are not affected. The wealthy class that lives in the suburbs can continue to drive their imported European automobiles while the wealthy who live in metropolitan areas can continue to walk or bike to the office. Because most rural commuters have no options from which to choose other than commuting by car, they would be disproportionately overburdened by a tax that charges them per mile.

### VMT Unconstitutional: Penalty, not Tax

#### VMT is a penalty which regulates conduct, not a tax on a commodity, making it an unconstitutional use of federal tax power.

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, December 31, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

If this “pay as you drive” plan were to be implemented at the federal level, questions of whether Congress has the power to tax in this situation would arise. However, the provisions of the taxing Act must be reasonably related to the collection of the tax, and not solely to the achievement of some other purpose plainly within state power.99 It may not be declared unconstitutional because its effect may be to accomplish another purpose as well as raising revenue.100 The power to tax gasoline purchases clearly falls within the purview of Congress because of article 1, section 8 of the Constitution, which grants Congress the power to “lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises.”101 But if Congress were to enact a statute that required citizens to pay by the mile, Congress would not be taxing gasoline purchases – it would be taxing distance traveled. This would be especially true if this mileage tax were imposed on top of the already existing sales tax – the cumulative nature of the tax would make it a penalty. A tax imposed by Congress must not be a penalty,102 but that is exactly what a miles-based tax would be: a penalty with the aim of limiting the miles that people drive in order to address the environmental concerns mentioned above. In Bailey v. Drexel Furniture Company,103 the Court struck down the Child Labor Tax Law because it was a penalty against employers that hired children under the age of sixteen.104 The Court asks the question of whether the law “impose[s] a tax with only that incidental restraint and regulation which a tax must inevitably involve,” or if it regulates as a penalty.105 The Court says that if the Act were an excise on a commodity or other thing of value, it might not be able to infer that the tax was anything more than just that – a tax.106 But the regulation was not an excise on a commodity such as gasoline, but a regulation of labor with penalties imposed on those deviating from a prescribed course of conduct.107 Likewise, if Congress passes an Act that does not regulate a commodity such as gasoline, but instead regulates conduct – driving a car, it has instated a penalty, not a tax. The Court states The difference between a tax and a penalty is sometimes difficult to define, and yet the consequences of the distinction in the required method of their collection often are important…. Taxes are occasionally imposed in the discretion of the Legislature on proper subjects with the primary motive of obtaining revenue from them and with the incidental motive of discouraging them by making their continuance onerous. They do not lose their character as taxes because of the incidental motive. But there comes a time in the extension of the penalizing features of the so-called tax when it loses its character as such and becomes a mere penalty, with the characteristics of regulation and punishment.108 Such would be the case in the imposition of a miles-based tax. The motive of reducing the miles driven in vehicles, thereby reducing pollution and reliance on fossil fuel is not an incidental one. It would be the prime reason for the so-called tax, based on the environmental policy reasons mentioned above, thereby making it a penalty and not a legitimate tax.

### VMT Unconstitutional: Freedom of Movement, Equal Protection

#### A federal VMT violates the right to freedom of movement and equal protection

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, December 31, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

It might be that the installation of GPS devices and using those devices to tax by the mile infringes upon constitutional rights to interstate travel, intrastate travel, and freedom of movement. Federal case law supports the proposition that there is a constitutional right to interstate travel,115 but the Supreme Court has refused to decide whether there is a right to intrastate travel.116 Because the courts have refused to acknowledge any right to choose the most convenient mode of transportation,117 the states might not be infringing on citizens’ freedom of movement rights by placing GPS units in their cars as long as the citizens can walk, bike, or use public transportation. But we come back to a problem already mentioned in this note, the fact that in rural areas of the country the car is the only reasonable mode of transportation. Those with no public transportation must drive their own vehicles (which would contain GPS devices), and pay tax by the mile. Freedom of movement has been defined by the Supreme Court as the right to free movement inside a nation’s frontiers.118 Although The Court has not explicitly recognized the right to freedom of movement,119 it has suggested that there is at least a fundamental right to travel by foot.120 Lutz v. York121 acknowledged the constitutionally protected right to walk and extended this fundamental right to include a protected interest in driving a car.122 If a state imposes a regulation that mandates the installation of GPS devices into cars in order to tax drivers, the regulation will inevitably affect some people who do not have a choice in their mode of transportation – rural commuters. It is this class of people that might have an equal protection claim against the state’s imposition of this tax because it infringes on the peoples’ liberty.123 If the state’s imposition of a tax constitutes a penalty on the right to travel because it denies a basic necessity of life (being able to drive to work and earn an income) by making it impracticable or impossible to own or drive a car, this poorer class of people may have an equal protection claim.124

### VMT Unconstitutional: 4th Amendment

#### VMT tracking is an unconstitutional infringement on privacy

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, December 31, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

Perhaps the most important problem with government use of GPS devices to keep a log of miles driven on roads is the question of whether this violates citizens’ reasonable expectation of privacy. The 4th Amendment to the United States Constitution grants the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures.125 Katz v. United States126 provides an excellent example of the encroachment of modern technology upon persons’ reasonable expectation of privacy. Although Katz was in a public place – a phone booth, it was determined that he had a reasonable expectation of privacy – he expected that his telephone conversations would not be listened to via police wiretap.127 The Supreme Court has warned of the dangerousness of the government’s use of electronic surveillance in United States v. Bailey.128 The Court stated, “[w]e think electronic surveillance has such a potential for abuse that the Government must be held accountable for its use.”129 A case that appears to support the position that it is permissible for the government to install GPS devices in citizens’ cars is United States v. Knotts,130 which held that using a GPS unit to monitor a persons’ movements in his or her vehicle is not a search in violation of the 4th Amendment.131 But a later decision that narrowed the Knotts decision is United States v. Maynard,132 which said, “Knotts held only that ‘[a] person traveling in an automobile on public thoroughfares has no reasonable expectation of privacy in his movements from one place to another, not that such a person has no reasonable expectation of privacy in his movements whatsoever, world without end.’”133 The court explained the difference of using a GPS to track a person on a journey from one point to another versus using a GPS to track all of a person’s movements along that journey: First, unlike one’s movements during a single journey, the whole of one’s movements over the course of a month is not actually exposed to the public because the likelihood anyone will observe all those movements is effectively nil. Second, the whole of one’s movements is not exposed constructively even though each – sometimes a great deal more – than does the sum of its parts.134 Tracking one’s movements over a long period of time is like a video – we get to see how the subject got from point A to point B, and we see the subject at every point in between. But tracking a person from point A to point B is like a photo album – all we see is that the events happened, that the person got from point A to point B. What are not seen are all the private moments in between; the what is exposed, not the how. And this is an important difference because it is not reasonable for a person to expect that his starting point and destination will remain secret – one expects to be seen commencing the journey as well as arriving at the destination. But it is unreasonable to think that every moment along the journey one continuous observer has access to all the details of the trip – the start, the end, and all events in between. GPS devices are certainly capable of doing just that – tracking every move.135 Although most consumer-oriented devices are not capable of being found by another device via live tracking, once there is a market for GPS devices to have live tracking, devices could be made with the purpose of being tracked from a central location in real time because the technology is readily available.136 If the government institutes a vehicle miles tax, the market for GPS devices with technology allowing them to be tracked from a tracking center would be immediately developed. This modern version of a Hansel and Gretel137 tracking system is ready to be developed, but because there is a reasonable expectation of privacy in people’s movements in their vehicles, the use of GPS devices to track vehicle mileage is unconstitutional.

### Privacy/Surveillance Turn

#### VMT creates the infrastructure for routine surveillance.

Rahman et al, 11 (Lazeena Rahman is a Graduate School of Business and Public Policy student at Stanford, Kumi Harischandra, Justine Isola, and Anthony Suen are graduate students in Stanford’s International Policy Studies program, Prepared for: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “Going Forward: Prospects for Transitioning from Gas Taxes to Vehicle-Miles-Traveled Fees” p. ix) APB

Despite the advantages of VMT fees for sustainability, advocates of implementing VMT fees face a number of hurdles, not least of which is the stickiness of the status quo. VMT systems have also alarmed some privacy rights advocates who believe introducing such fees would create the infrastructure for routine surveillance.19 Further, in debating the pros and cons of increasing the gas tax or introducing VMT fees, policymakers will also have to consider implementation issues such as synchronizing local, state, and federal policies and the comparative administrative costs of collecting gas taxes and VMT fees (see Appendix A for further discussion of implementation hurdles).

#### VMT monitoring threatens civil liberties and sets a precedent for other intrusive technologies.

Rahman et al, 11 (Lazeena Rahman is a Graduate School of Business and Public Policy student at Stanford, Kumi Harischandra, Justine Isola, and Anthony Suen are graduate students in Stanford’s International Policy Studies program, Prepared for: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “Going Forward: Prospects for Transitioning from Gas Taxes to Vehicle-Miles-Traveled Fees” p. ix) APB

Privacy concerns Although VMT monitoring devices could be programmed not to record where a person travels, GPS sensors in the devices would have to be able to determine the location of a vehicle, especially if the fee collection system is designed to adjust charges as drivers cross state borders. Issues also arise over how officials would deal with false readings and tampering with monitoring devices. Here, the most important issue is how to prevent information recorded by VMT monitoring devices from being accessible to third parties, including the police, without the driver’s consent or due process. More broadly, civil liberties groups note that implementation of a VMT fee system sets an important precedent for other technologies over which the government has control.

# AT: Highways Advantage

### AT: Highway Trust Fund Collapse

#### No Highway Trust Fund collapse- Congress will just tap the general fund again

Copeland 12(Gas tax not filling enough; Federal funding method no longer suffices as main source for highways, bridges, transit. USA TODAY February 24, 2012 Friday FINAL EDITION, Larry Copeland.)

Tying the gas tax to inflation. Cohen says the federal gas tax would be more effective if it increased at the rate of inflation. He acknowledges that's a long shot. "It would be viewed initially as a tax increase," he says. "Right now, no one wants to do that." Using general tax revenue instead of a gas tax. Schank says the USA could follow the lead of Germany and other industrialized nations that do this. "We're already moving in that direction," he says, noting that Congress has tapped general revenue to cover shortfalls from the gas tax. A sales tax dedicated to transportation. Finn says that's unlikely in the current anti-tax climate.

### No Solvency: Not a Long Term Revenue Solution

#### Government still has to set the VMT rate- they won’t raise it when necessary.

Snider 11

(Adam, Transportation Reporter for Politico.com, “Transportation's future a rocky road” October 24th 2011, Lexis)ZLH

The VMT fee is simply a different mechanism for capturing transportation dollars based on road use. If Congress underprices roads, their conditions will still worsen and the Highway Trust Fund could face the same financial problems it has over the past few years. "Both are going to have to be set by government entities, so it's not going to be any easier for the government to change a VMT-related fee than it is the gas tax," Schenendorf said.

### See Starter Packet for Infrastructure Spending Bad and Heg/Econ cores for Impact Defense

# AT: Warming Advantage

### VMT fee increases Fuel Consumption

#### VMT tax increase fuel consumption because there’s no incentive to use a fuel-efficient car **Kim 8** (Chun Kon, Doctor of Philosophy in Economics, *Essays on Urban Transportation and Transportation Energy Policy*, University of California Transportation Center, 2008, pg. 40, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/7sn272sc>) PCS

Total fuel consumption shows increasing trend as vehicle miles do. The increase in the share of light trucks and the lower fuel economy of light trucks than cars would contribute to the increase in fuel consumption. All policy scenarios except the VMT Tax scenario show less fuel consumption than the baseline scenario. The largest decrease in fuel consumption is achieved by PATP policy scenario, about 12.8% decrease in average from the baseline scenario result, followed by CAFE (7.2%), PAYD (5.6%), and Fuel Tax (4.6%) while VMT Tax shows increase in 3.5% in average over 2008-2030. The decrease in overall fuel consumption in spite of the increased vehicle miles was possible by the higher decrease in fuel intensity, which allows less fuel use per mile of travel. VMT Tax policy shows more fuel consumption than the baseline scenario even with the decrease in vehicle miles. It is because there is no incentive to use a fuel-efficient vehicle in VMT Tax scenario and there is overall increase in vehicle stock as we see in Figure 3.4 (b). Less fuel efficiency and more vehicle stock lead to a more fuel consumption. Therefore, VMT Tax policy does not achieve the assumed policy goal of reducing fuel consumption.

## Electric Cars/LEVs Turn

### Punishes Fuel Efficiency

#### Flat VMT punished fuel efficiency compared to the current gas tax

Whitty and Imholt 5 (James, Manager, Office of Innovative Partnerships and Alternative Funding and Betsy, Alternative Funding Administrator, “Oregon’s Mileage Fee Concept and

Road User Fee Pilot Program”, *Oregon Dept. of Transportation*, http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/OIPP/docs/2005LegislativeReport.pdf?ga=t) GSK

Flat Rate All vehicles require the same level of service from the road system. All vehicles need occupying space, signaling, bridges, braking capacity, proper pavement condition, signage, entrances, exits and safety features. If designed as a true user charge, the mileage fee rate would have a flat rate per mile driven. Thus, as a true user charge, all light vehicle motorists would pay the same rate for each mile driven notwithstanding the type of vehicle operated or any other variable. • Environmental and Energy Policy If a mileage fee were imposed on a flat fee basis, the new system would advantage some vehicles and disadvantage others when compared to the tax burdens placed on motorists under the current fuels tax on gasoline. For example, motorists driving a vehicle with low fuel economy (i.e. less than 20 miles per gallon on average) would pay less tax per mile driven under a flat mileage fee than under the current gas tax. On the other hand, motorists driving a vehicle with higher fuel economy (e.g. more than 20 miles per gallon on average) would pay more tax per mile driven under a flat mileage fee than under the current gas tax. Some oppose the flat rate because they value environmental and/or energy policy concerns above road capacity or user responsibility concerns.

### Uniqueness: Electric Cars Increasing

#### Electric cars expected to determine half the market by the next decade

Gupta 12 (Poornima, reporter for Reuters, “Tesla CEO sees EVs being as popular as gas-powered cars”, *Chicago Tribune*, 6/22, <http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-06-22/classified/sns-rt-us-tesla-modelsbre85m01q-20120622_1_tesla-ceo-musk-coda-automotive>) GSK

FREMONT, Calif (Reuters) - Tesla Motors Inc Chief Executive Elon Musk, an entrepreneur known for his outsized ambition, on Friday made a stunning forecast: battery-powered cars will likely match the internal combustion engine in popularity by the middle of the next decade. "In 20 years more than half of new cars manufactured will be fully electric," Musk said. "I feel actually quite safe in that bet. That's a bet I will put money on." Musk, who divides his time between Tesla and his space exploration startup SpaceX, said it might even happen sooner than that. "It's probably going to be in the 12- to 15-year time frame," he said, speaking at an event at Tesla's manufacturing plant in Fremont, where he handed over the keys to the first buyers of the new Model S sedan. Electric vehicles have struggled to find an audience beyond Hollywood celebrities, Silicon Valley venture capitalists and policymakers in Washington, primarily due to their premium pricing and anxieties about their driving range. Most analysts see pure electric cars accounting for only a single-digit percentage of total sales over the next decade, in part because of the cost of batteries and the uncertainty around continued government subsidies for the new technology. Rival automaker Nissan Motor Co <7201.T>, the most bullish mass-market car maker, forecasts that by 2020 10 percent of all cars sold will be electric. In an interview with Reuters on Friday in Tokyo, Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn said he believed that forecast was attainable if enough automakers followed Nissan into offering EVs.

#### Electric car usage surging now

Department of Energy 11 (“One Million Electric Vehicles by 2011”, February p. 7, <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/vehiclesandfuels/pdfs/1_million_electric_vehicles_rpt.pdf>)

Over the past few years, interest in EVs in the U.S. auto industry has surged, with manufacturers beginning to introduce new generations of EVs. For example, in 2010 General Motors introduced the Chevrolet Volt extended range electric vehicle into the U.S. market. The Volt can travel up to 40 miles using power from its lithium-ion battery pack. After that, the Volt can travel up to 375 miles in extended range using its internal combustion engine electric generator. GM has announced plans to build 15,000 Chevy Volts in 2011 and 45,000 in 2012. Based on news reports, the company is working on plans to increase its production target for 2012 to 120,000. (See Table references.) In late 2010, Nissan introduced the Leaf, a 100-mile range all-electric vehicle that incorporates an advanced lithium-ion battery as its sole power source.

#### EV increasing now—policy is key

Department of Energy 11 (“One Million Electric Vehicles by 2011”, February, p. 7-8, <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/vehiclesandfuels/pdfs/1_million_electric_vehicles_rpt.pdf>)

In recent years there have been a number of federal and state policy initiatives to encourage the introduction and sales of EVs. Industry can achieve its planned production with the support of policies that encourage investment in manufacturing facilities, enable technology demonstration and deployment and provide incentives to promote adoption and drive consumer demand. Manufacturing Investments Through the Recovery Act, the United States made an unprecedented investment to build our domestic manufacturing capacity and secure our position as a global leader in advanced lithium-ion battery technology. This investment includes: • $2.4 billion in loans to three of the world’s first electric vehicle factories in Tennessee, Delaware, and California. • $2 billion in grants to support 30 factories that produce batteries, motors, and other EV components. Companies are matching the funding dollar for dollar, doubling the impact of taxpayer investments. These grants are enabling companies to build the capacity to produce 50,000 EV batteries annually by the end of 2011 and 500,000 EV batteries annually by December 2014. Deployment, Demonstration, and Outreach Recovery Act funds are also supporting the largest-ever coordinated demonstration of EVs, including nearly 13,000 vehicles and more than 22,000 electric charging points in more than 20 cities across the country. Companies are matching this $400 million public investment dollar for dollar. This effort will provide important and detailed real-world operational data on vehicle usage, time-of-use and charging patterns, and potential impacts on our nation’s electrical grid. The demonstrations will document lessons learned that help streamline infrastructure permitting processes and make data available that can alleviate consumer uncertainty and help transition EVs from clusters of early adopters to national, mainstream use. Coordinated with this large-scale demonstration are programs to educate code officials, first responders, technicians, and engineers, who are critical components of the human infrastructure needed for a successful transition to electric-drive transportation, both in terms of consumer acceptance and public safety. The Department of Energy is also working with local leaders in their efforts to encourage EV adoption and drive consumer demand. Through a new competitive program, seed funding will help communities across the country with regulatory streamlining, infrastructure investments, vehicle fleet conversions, deployment of EV incentives, partnerships with major employers/retailers, and workforce training. The FY12 budget request seeks to expand this initiative so that up to 30 communities could receive grants of up to $10 million to help catalyze EV deployment (see text box on page 6).

#### Incentives making total ownerships costs less now

Department of Energy 11 (“One Million Electric Vehicles by 2011”, February, p. 9-10, <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/vehiclesandfuels/pdfs/1_million_electric_vehicles_rpt.pdf>)

While leading manufacturers already have plans for cumulative U.S. production capacity of more than one million electric vehicles by 2015, according to public announcements and news reports, production will only reach levels supported by consumer demand. What issues will influence purchasing decisions? Fleet buyers tend to make vehicle purchasing decisions based on the total cost of vehicle ownership; retail vehicle consumers tend to focus on initial price. The Boston Consulting Group report on “Batteries for Electric Vehicles” concluded that with current incentives and oil prices in the United States, EV purchasers will reach lower total ownership costs within 3 to 5 years of operation. 10 These increasingly favorable economics for EVs aren’t going unnoticed by fleet buyers. General Electric announced that they will purchase 25,000 EV by 2015 11 – a strong indication that as EV total cost of ownership falls below that of conventional vehicles, fleet purchasers will respond positively.

### Uniqueness: Natural Gas Vehicles Increasing

#### Natural gas vehicles increasing now due to high oil prices and increased fracking efforts

Morris 6-21 (Floyd is the chief financial correspondent of The New York Times and writes a weekly column for the financial section, “Natural Gas for Vehicles Could Use U.S. Support”, 6/22, *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/22/business/natural-gas-vehicles-are-a-compelling-target-for-a-federal-program.html?pagewanted=all>) GSK

“Markets work when prices reflect the social cost of the products,” he said in an interview. “For a variety of reasons, the cost of gasoline now does not reflect all of those costs.” He pointed not only to the cost of pollution but to the risk to the economy from an oil-price shock and to the political dangers of being so dependent on Mideast oil. “Recent advances in natural gas drilling as well as increases in oil prices appear to have made natural gas competitive with oil in the long run,” Mr. Knittel wrote in a paper released last week by the Brookings Institution. But, he added, “such a change in price may not be enough to cause the United States to substitute natural gas for oil in the transportation sector, even when it is socially beneficial to do so.” If natural gas did become widely used in vehicles, a number of things would happen. Natural gas prices would rise, of course, which is why the natural gas industry is eager for that to happen. That would offend the chemical industry, and might alarm homeowners who heat with natural gas. It would reduce the United States trade deficit and, by lowering the use of oil, put a damper on that market. Higher natural gas prices could also make other alternative fuels more likely to be economical, something that is hard to accomplish now with natural gas so cheap. Natural gas prices are now so low that it is possible the market will develop without government help. A number of plans have been announced to build refueling stations near interstate highways, in hopes of attracting trucking companies that use those routes. But given the need for quick action — last year the United States spent $750 billion importing oil and oil products — it makes sense for the government to move to develop the natural gas transportation market as quickly as possible.

### Links: VMT Kills Electric Cars

#### VMT tax kills the electric car- decreased incentive to buy

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

2. A Vehicle Miles Tax Reduces Incentives to Buy Electric Vehicles Another reason a mileage-based tax should not be imposed is because a pay as you drive system will reduce consumer incentives to buy electric vehicles. In a market in which more than half of consumers would not even consider buying an electric car regardless of how high gas prices reach because of the value they place on reliability,59 potential buyers will need all the incentives they can get in order to change their minds and start buying electric cars. One of the main incentives for buying electric vehicles is that the per-mile cost of an electric vehicle is about one-third the cost of a gasoline vehicle.60 But by charging electric vehicle owners at the same rate as gasoline vehicle owners we are essentially tilting the balance back toward buying gasoline-powered vehicles, which is contradictory to a policy of trying to wean Americans off fossil fuels. If we only tax fuel consumption and not miles driven, electric vehicle owners only pay for the electricity used to charge their vehicles, while gasoline users are paying for their gas at the pumps and being taxed. By charging per mile, it appears that the field is leveled: electric vehicle users pay for their electricity, gasoline users pay for their gas, and once the cars are on driven on the road everyone pays by the mile. But the main incentive for consumers to buy electric vehicles is that electricity is much cheaper than gasoline.61 Part of the reason gasoline is much more expensive than electricity is the amount of tax that is included in the price paid at the pumps. If the tax that is now charged at the gasoline pumps will in the future be charged on the road by the mile, the difference in the price of gasoline and electricity will be much closer, reducing the benefits that potential electric vehicle buyers would have received by going electric. Because electric vehicles are better for the environment than gasoline vehicles, a mileage-based tax that reduces the incentives to buy electric vehicles is in opposition to policy of being environmentally responsible and would further this country’s dependency on foreign oil.

#### VMT tax kills electric car production

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

A Vehicle Miles Tax Reduces Manufacturer Incentives to Build Electric Vehicles It follows that if consumers have few incentives to buy electric vehicles, manufacturers will have less of an incentive to make them. If electric cars were not in demand, then why would anyone make them and try to sell them? In a market that is finding electric vehicles to be a tough sell,62 we need to encourage the sale and production of electric vehicles as much as possible. The effect of enacting a mileage-based tax will be the attrition of automakers producing electric vehicles, furthering the nation’s dependency on foreign oil.

#### VMT tax punishes electric cars

Edgerton 11 (Jerry, author of “Car Shopping Made Easy” and recurring automotive writer for CBS, “New Tax Would Penalize Electric Cars for Not Using Gas”, *CBS Money Watch*, <http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505145_162-40542612/new-tax-would-penalize-electric-cars-for-not-using-gas/>) GSK

Here's another entry for the no-good-deed-goes-unpunished file: Environmentally conscious drivers may soon get hit with a charge to make up for the gas that they're not using. Aiming to cut use of gasoline and dependence on foreign oil, the federal government gives you a $7,500 tax credit if you buy a new electric car. Various states add their own tax credits ranging up to $5,000. So far, so good. But now state and federal proposals would penalize electric cars for not paying gasoline tax, by imposing a tax on the miles they travel. And here's a hackle-raising detail: to make it work, states would have to track your mileage with a mandatory GPS device on the car. The cost of highway and other transportation expenses are (partially) offset by gasoline taxes -- an 18.4 cents per gallon federal levy and widely varying rates at the state level. (Check the rate in your state). The federal tax, unchanged since 1993, already has fallen short of financing the federal highway trust fund, with $19. 5 billion transferred from general revenues this year. And revenues may continue to decline: Federal regulations require vehicles to average 35.5 mpg by 2016, which has already cut into gas tax revenue. (See What You'll Be Driving in 2016). Armed with a report released last week by the Congressional Budget Office, Senate Budget Committee head Kent Conrad (D-N.D.) has raised the possibility of a "vehicle miles traveled" tax. In fact, legislation already is pending in three states -- Oregon, Texas and Washington -- that would impose some form of VMT tax. So owners of electric cars such as the Nissan Leaf (right) and Chevrolet Volt (below), who now pay no or very little gas tax, would get slammed by a VMT. Same with owners of high-mileage hybrids and low-emission cars powered by natural gas, which is generally not taxed now as a motor fuel. The CBO report says taxing miles traveled is a more accurate way than gas taxes to assure motorists pay their fair share for road repairs. And new GPS technology makes it feasible -- though not immediately. Such a GPS device would track mileage, allowing drivers to be billed for the tax. In an advanced system, readers on gas pumps would measure mileage since the last fill-up and impose the tax immediately in your gas bill. But the CBO says the cost would be prohibitive to retrofit cars and trucks now on the road with the GPS device, though it could be mandated in new cars. Interim low-tech measures might involve having your odometer mileage certified at an annual safety inspection.

#### Kills benefit of electric cars

Cholia 10 (Ami, co-editor of Alt Transport, ““Pay As You Go” Or The Gas Tax? We Need Both”, *Alt Energy*, <http://alttransport.com/2010/10/pay-as-you-go-or-the-gas-tax-we-need-both/>) GSK

But while we’re in support of people being more accountable for the excessive use of their cars. VMT probably isn’t a solution on its own. We need some combination of the VMT and the gas tax in the long run. While the idea behind the gas tax was originally implemented to fund the upkeep of our road surfaces, it also inadvertently taxes people on their fossil fuel consumption. VMT, on the other hand, doesn’t give drivers any incentive to drive eco-friendly vehicles. A tax on miles driven ignores the amount of fuel used to drive those miles as a result, a gas guzzler is taxed the same as a hybrid, making little sense from an environmental perspective.

#### VMT directed at electric cars

Hurst 11 (Timothy, Reuters reporter, “Is the Electric Car's Tax-Free Ride Coming to an End?”, *Reuters*, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/04/11/idUS175572720320110411>)

Well at least it was fun while it lasted. The tax-free joyride electric and hybrid-electric vehicle owners have been enjoying while cruising the highways and byways of America may soon be a thing of the past. A handful of states and the U.S. Government are looking at "vehicle miles traveled" (VMT) standards and other fees for plug-in vehicles to make up for the tax revenue not collected via gasoline taxes. While electric vehicle advocates say it is too early to tax the emergent EV industry, VMT supporters say consumers pumping gasoline into their vehicles shouldn't have to shoulder all of the tax burden for road and highway repair and maintenance. Under the current system in the U.S., unlike most other industrialized countries, funds for road construction and repair come directly from local, state and federal gasoline taxes paid at the gas pump. But as vehicles become more fuel efficient and as gasoline prices rise, revenue from gasoline taxes, which range from thirty-two to thirty-five cents per gallon in Wyoming and parts of the south, to over sixty-five cents per gallon in states like New York and California, dip and state and federal transportation budgets feel the pinch. Three states, Oregon, Washington and Texas are looking at different ways of bringing electric cars and hybrids into the mix. And it's not just states that are facing a rough road for transportation budgets, the U.S. Government is looking for ways to stabilize current and future transportation revenue. The federal gasoline tax hasn't increased since 1993 and the government has transferred nearly twenty billion dollars from the general revenue fund into the federal highway trust fund since 2008. In Oregon, a bill would charge drivers of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles 1.43 cents for each mile they drive. The law, which is being watched closely as a possible model for other states, would go into effect beginning in 2014. Currently, American drivers pay on average about two cents per mile in state and federal taxes. "It's a fairness issue," said Sen. Bruce Starr, a Republican from Hillsboro, Oregon, a proponent of the VMT bill. "They're not paying any gas tax. Everyone else is paying, why should they get a fair ride?" Although it is not clear how the miles would be tracked and taxed by the state, a pilot program tested two years ago in Oregon that tracked mileage via GPS satellite and collected taxes at filling stations is one possible route suggested in a new Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report.

#### VMT taxes electric cars

Cobb 11 (Jeff, \*\*internally cites the Congressional Budget Office, “Congressional Budget Office study could spur new taxes on plug-in vehicle drivers”, *GM-Volt.com*, http://gm-volt.com/2011/03/31/congressional-budget-office-study-could-affect-plug-in-vehicle-drivers/)

To examine new ways to compensate for federal highway budget shortfalls, along with other consequences of roadway traffic, alternative ways of taxing vehicles have recently been analyzed by the Congressional Budget Office. If the study prompted legislation taxing motorists for miles they drive, instead of fuel they consume, drivers of electric cars would have to pay in ways for which they are not now required. The CBO’s study was reportedly a quick turnaround released last week. It was done following an early March request by the Senate Budget Committee Chairman, Kent Conrad (D-N.D.). In that same hearing, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood had said the Obama administration hopes to spend $556 billion over the next six years – with the bulk of it going toward federal transportation improvement projects. In response, Conrad broached upon the possibility of levying road use taxes based upon Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) instead of fuel taxes as a way to collect more revenues as people move to more fuel-efficient vehicles. “Do we do gas tax?” Conrad asked. “Do we move to some kind of an assessment that is based on how many miles vehicles go, so that we capture revenue from those who are going to be using the roads who aren’t going to be paying any gas tax, or very little, with hybrids and electric cars?”

### Kills Fuel Efficient Vehicles

#### Even for consumers who will never buy an electric, VMT tax eliminates incentive to buy a fuel efficient vehicle.

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

A Vehicle Miles Tax Reduces Incentives to Buy Efficient Gasoline-Powered Cars For those consumers who will never purchase an electric vehicle, but wish to have a gasoline-powered vehicle, fuel-efficiency may be a deciding factor in which vehicle to buy.63 High gasoline prices result in consumers buying vehicles that are more fuel-efficient.64 But if a vehicle miles tax is instituted, fuel-efficiency will be less of a factor because the driver of a gas guzzler will pay the same road tax as the driver of a fuel-efficient car. This disincentive to buying efficient vehicles counters the public policy of being environmentally responsible, although there may be a positive side to instituting a vehicle miles tax, which will be discussed in the following section.

### Impacts: EVs Solve Emissions, Oil Dependence

#### Electric cars generate wider carbon solutions

Clark 10 (Josh, analyst for Discovery News \*\*internally cites the senior analyst at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, “ARE ELECTRIC CARS BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT?”, July 30, *Discovery News*, <http://news.discovery.com/tech/are-electric-cars-better-for-the-environment.html>)

"The general consensus is that if you power an electric vehicle from coal, the net carbon emissions are about the same as a gasoline vehicle," says Paul Denholm, senior analyst at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, Colo. "But that's the worst-case scenario; anything that is a cleaner source is an improvement." Such a problem can also provide solutions; at the very least, energy researchers looking to make improvements on net carbon dioxide emissions have a clear picture of their point of attack. Investigating ways to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions of power plants that generate electricity through fossil fuels can lead to sweeping reductions in carbon dioxide emissions, especially as sales of plug-in electric vehicles rise. Influencing the source, in other words, can have a metastasizing effect elsewhere along the electrical grid. "Using a centralized energy source would facilitate future environmentally friendly steps," says Ruez. "It's easier to add carbon scrubbers to a single power station than to 100,000 vehicles in an area." Ultimately, both Ruez and Denholm agree that electric vehicles are better for the environment than cars that run on fossil fuels, as they represent an important step toward reducing emission. As the number of electrical grows, utility companies will have more incentive to upgrade the electrical grid and make renewable energy sources more practical. And that is good for everyone.

#### Electric cars good—future energy sources and independence

Yarow 9 (Jay, Jay Yarow edits SAI, the tech section of The Business Insider. He also produces SAI's popular Chart Of The Day. He has a degree from the University of Delaware in economics and a masters in journalism from NYU. He has been on CNBC, CBC, and KCBS., “Sorry, Electric Cars ARE Better For The Environment”, *Business Insider*, 7/1, <http://articles.businessinsider.com/2009-07-01/green_sheet/30016685_1_lithium-electric-cars-evo-morales>)

With the government pressing full steam ahead on electric cars, some naysayers question if the cars are good for the environment or even good for protecting "energy independence." Tim Carney\* at the DC Examiner is one such naysayer, and he brings it up in a column today. We disagree with his two points of debate, but consider them worth addressing because they're common attacks. His first point of contention: The Department Energy estimates that coal provides half our electricity. A recent Government Accountability Office study reported that a plug-in compact car, if it is recharged at an outlet drawing its juice from coal, provides a carbon dioxide savings of only 4 to 5 percent. A plug-in sport utility vehicle provides a CO2 savings of 19 to 23 percent. If the cleaner and cheaper fuel of a plug-in causes someone to drive even a bit more, it’s a break-even on CO2. Sure, we get lots of energy from coal today, but tomorrow will be different. Duke Energy CEO Jim Rogers admitted that new coal plants in this country will become increasingly rare. The government will pass a renewable portfolio standards that will incorporate more clean energy sources. If CO2 is really a worry, a driver can buy some solar panels for their roof and power their plug-in that way. If your power comes from natural gas the GAO estimates that a plug-in compact car reduces CO2 by 54%, for an SUV, it's 63%. From clean energy sources like nuclear plants, solar or wind the CO2 reductions are 85%-100% for both SUVs and compacts. Carney's second point of contention: Those more concerned with energy independence than green fuels also have reason to doubt electric cars: About half of the world’s lithium reserves are in Bolivia. A major shift to lithium-powered cars “could substitute reliance on one foreign resource [oil] for another [lithium],” the GAO writes. This is another argument we've heard in the past. Bolivia's President, Evo Morales, says he's willing to work with foreign companies, but he wants Bolivia to retain 60% of the earnings from any lithium production in his nation. We don't have any problem with that. Why can't the U.S. or Korea or any nation work in a productive manner with Bolivia, if it has the natural resource in its ground? Further, the GAO says, "reliance on foreign sources of lithium may not pose the same dependence issues as oil." Lithium is highly recyclable, so issues of demand won't be as great. Also, auto companies are working on battery technology that doesn't use lithium.

#### EVs solve all car related issues

Anair and Mahmassani 12 (Don is a senior engineer in the UCS Clean Vehicles Program,

Amine is an engineer in the UCS Clean Vehicles Program, “State of Charge”, *Union of Concerned Scientists*, April, p. 1, <http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/clean_vehicles/electric-car-global-warming-emissions-report.pdf>)

Over the past 100 years, we have become increasingly dependent on our cars for meeting life’s most basic needs. For most Americans, getting to and from work, bringing food home from the grocery store, or going to the doctor means using one’s car. This reliance on the automobile, and on the petroleum-powered internal combustion engine in particular, comes with significant costs. Our dependence on oil makes our overall economy and household budgets highly vulnerable to volatile oil prices. The pollutant emissions from our vehicles contribute to unhealthy air and global climate change. As the search for oil moves to more remote and difficult-to-access locations, the risk of serious accidents increases, as demonstrated by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. And defending our access to oil is a great burden to our nation’s finances, our military men and women, and their families. Vehicles powered by electricity have the potential to reduce many of these problems. In most places, electric drive lowers the smog-forming and global warming pollution associated with vehicle use; and when powered by renewable resources, electric vehicles can nearly eliminate such pollution from vehicular operation. Electric vehicles powered by a clean electricity grid offer a key pathway to achieving the greater than 80 percent reduction in global warming pollution we need by mid-century to avoid the worst consequences of climate change. Powered by domestically produced electricity, electric vehicles (EVs) could be a significant part of reducing our oil dependence.

#### EVs solve and coal generation declining in the status quo

Anair and Mahmassani 12 (Don is a senior engineer in the UCS Clean Vehicles Program,

Amine is an engineer in the UCS Clean Vehicles Program, “State of Charge”, *Union of Concerned Scientists*, April, p. 2-3, <http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/clean_vehicles/electric-car-global-warming-emissions-report.pdf>)

For example, a 2007 study by the Electric Power Research Institute and the Natural Resources Defense Council examined the potential impact of millions of plug-in electric vehicles on air quality through 2030. The study concluded that, even under a scenario of heavy reliance on coal-fired power plants to meet future electricity needs, most regions of the United States would see improvements in air quality, while some might experience increases in air pollutant emissions (EPRI and NRDC 2007b). However, we are already moving away from such a scenario, as projections for new coal-fired power plants have been declining; and in 29 states and the District of Columbia, utilities must increasingly rely on renewable resources for generating electricity (UCS 2011). A future with greater use of high-emissions coal-powered electricity would not be consistent with our climate change goals. As this report’s analysis shows, the benefits of electric vehicles are inherently tied to our electricity grid, and a continued shift from coal fired power plants to natural gas and cleaner renewables must occur at the same time as our vehicles transition from burning oil to running on electricity. This shift will not only decrease the global warming emissions from electric vehicles but also reduce many of the other pollutants associated with coal-fired electricity.

#### EVs solve regardless of power source—some power generation just solves better

Anair and Mahmassani 12 (Don is a senior engineer in the UCS Clean Vehicles Program,

Amine is an engineer in the UCS Clean Vehicles Program, “State of Charge”, *Union of Concerned Scientists*, April, p. 4, <http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/clean_vehicles/electric-car-global-warming-emissions-report.pdf>)

Is driving on electricity instead of gasoline a good choice when it comes to reducing emissions responsible for climate change? The answer is yes. But because different regions of the United States receive their electricity from different mixes of power plant types, how good depends on where the vehicle is charged. For example, using wind- or solar-generated electricity to power an electric vehicle can result in almost no global warming emissions. By contrast, the use of coal-generated electricity releases significant amounts of global warming emissions, similar to those from an average gasoline vehicle. The good news is that no matter where you live in the United States, electric vehicles charged on the power grid have lower global warming emissions than the average gasoline-based vehicle sold today. In some areas—where coal makes up a large percentage of the power plant mix—the most efficient gasoline-powered vehicles will actually deliver greater global warming benefits than EVs. In other areas of the country, however, where cleaner sources of electricity prevail, EVs are far and away the best choice.

#### Electric cars good for the economy and the environment

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

Electric vehicles are good for the economy and the environment, and here is why: (1) Electric vehicles are cost-effective." Electric vehicle owners annually pay about one third for the electricity they use to power their cars than gasoline-powered car owners pay for fueling their cars.27 (2) The electricity used to power electric vehicles is locally generated, rather than bought from a foreign country. Since electric vehicles use electricity7 instead of gasoline produced from foreign oil, the increased use of electric cars will decrease our dependency on foreign oil and increase the use of domestic electricity', keeping our American dollars on American soil/" (3) Electric cars have zero tailpipe emissions, something that cannot be said for any gasoline-powered car." (4) Electric vehicles can be charged overnight, taking advantage of off-peak electric bill rates, further saving the electric vehicle owner money.30 (5) Having an electric vehicle means no more trips to the gasoline pumps will be necessary - just charge it at home.3 Electric vehicles are economical and good for the environment; those who develop them and improve their efficiency should be rewarded, as should the consumers who buy them.

# AT: Accidents Advantage

### Fatalities Low/Declining

#### National fatality rate at its lowest level since 1949

NHTSA 12 (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration - 2010 Motor Vehicle Crashes: Overview - DOT HS 811 552 - <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811552.pdf>) Date Accessed 6-12-12 AJY

In 2010, 32,885 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States—the lowest number of fatalities since 1949 (30,246 fatalities in 1949) (see Figure 1). This was a 2.9-percent decline in the number of people killed, from 33,883 in 2009, according to NHTSA’s 2010 Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). In 2010, an estimated 2.24 million people were¶ injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes, compared to 2.22 million in 2009 according to NHTSA’s National Automotive Sampling System (NASS) General Estimates System (GES). This slight increase (1.0% increase) in the estimated number of people injured is not statistically significant from the number of people injured in crashes in 2009.

#### Accident death rate is at an all time low and facing a sharp decline

thenewspaper.com 10 (Journal of the politics of driving - Road Fatality Rate Continues Historic Decline - <http://www.thenewspaper.com/news/33/3320.asp>) Date Accessed 6-12-12 AJY

American roads have never been safer according to statistics released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for the first half of 2010. Already in 2009, the number of people killed per 100 million vehicle miles traveled had dropped to 1.13 from 1.26 in 2008. This 5.3 percent drop in accidents already represented the lowest rate on record.¶ Statistics for the first half of the year are even better. Deadly collisions have dropped another 9.2 percent for an accident rate of just 1.02. In total, 1513 fewer people died on the roads by the end of June as compared to the same period last year. The safety improvement streak that has lasted unbroken for seventeen consecutive quarters. Shorter safety streaks last happened around 1981 and 1990 -- corresponding to the last major economic recessions.¶ Local officials frequently credit their own policies for reductions that might happen in a given city, especially in areas where red light cameras or speed cameras are used. The benefit, however, extends nationwide and throughout jurisdictions where photo enforcement is illegal. As a result of the current sluggish economic situation, vehicle travel has remained relatively stagnant, increasing only by one-tenth of a percent compared to the first half of 2009. Compared to 2005, the chance of being involved in a fatal accident has dropped a full 30 percent.¶ In addition to economic factors, road fatalities nationwide continue to decline as hospitals improve trauma care services and older cars on the road are replaced with newer models equipped with stability control, anti-lock brakes, crumple zones and other advanced safety features. Assuming accident trends continue, about 13,000 fewer people will die on the roads in in 2010 than perished in 2005.

#### Motor vehicle accident rate is declining rapidly

Williams-Derry 12 (Clark Williams-Derry: Programs director, leads Sightline's research and outreach efforts - A New Low For Car Crashes - <http://daily.sightline.org/2012/01/20/a-new-low-for-car-crashes/>) Date Accessed 6-12-12 AJY

But the data release also included another piece of excellent news: motor vehicle deaths also fell to their lowest level in decades. As the chart to the right shows, last year’s decline continues a remarkable trend: over just the last 5 years, car crash deaths fell by more than 20 percent. And if you believe this data series from saferoads.org (and the recent data all looks correct to me) traffic fatalities in 2010 were at their lowest level since the 1950s. Double booyah!¶ But the decline in fatalities is only part of the good news. According to the National Safety Council, for every crash death there are roughly 53 nonfatal injuries and 234 crashes that just cause property damage. So the decline in crash fatalities also means a decline in injuries, trauma, and cash wasted on car repairs.¶ The crash in car crashes also has huge economic benefits. The NSC estimates that every crash fatality corresponds to $6.8 million in economic losses (a figure that incorporates both fatal and nonfatal crashes, and includes both property costs and losses of economic productivity). So the recent decline in fatalities—which has trimmed the number of crash deaths by more than 10,000 per year—is equivalent to an annual economic boost of roughly $70 billion. And if you consider how much people are willing to pay to prevent being killed or injured in a car crash, the economic benefits of fewer fatal crashes grow even larger.

#### New vehicle safety features are reducing the fatality rate

Halsey 11 (Ashley Halsey III – staff writer for the Washington post - Safety features reduce deaths in crashes between cars and SUVs, study says - <http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/safety-features-reduce-deaths-in-crashes-between-cars-and-suvs-study-says/2011/09/28/gIQAJ1bg5K_story.html>) Date Accessed 6-12-12 AJY

Fifteen years ago the family sedan and ever more popular sports utility vehicle were the David and Goliath of the highways, a mismatch that David rarely won when they collided.¶ David, it was revealed by a study released Wednesday, is doing better these days.¶ Safety features introduced to both cars and SUVs in the past decade have reduced the number of additional deaths caused by the inequity in size, according to a study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.¶ In 1996, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said that 2,000 people killed in crashes would have survived if their vehicle had collided with a sedan rather than a heavier SUV or pickup truck.¶ At the time, auto manufacturers, who were making almost half their sales in the light truck category, which includes SUVs, said the unfortunate trend was mostly a matter of weight winning when vehicles collided.¶ NHTSA agreed that SUVS were “twice as likely to cause a fatality in the struck car than a passenger car of comparable weight,” but asked whether design changes could make a difference.¶ In 2003, the auto industry embraced changes that the Insurance Institute, which has access to the most comprehensive crash data in the nation, says have made a difference.¶ In fact, the institute found, occupants of sedans and minivans now are slightly more likely to die in a collision with another car or minivan than they are when they hit an SUV.¶ Ten years ago, people in cars or minivans died at a rate of 44 per million registered vehicles when they collided with SUVs and pickups. The number dropped by nearly two-thirds, to 16, by 2008-2009. When they collided with other cars and minivans that year the rate was 17 per million.¶ There are two main reasons that deaths have decreased in the lighter vehicles, the report said. Front air bags now are standard, and side air bags are common in vehicles of all weight classes.¶ And the front end of SUVs have been redesigned to lower their bumper level so that they are more compatible with those of cars and minivans. That has reduced the chance that an SUV will ride up over a smaller vehicle in a head-on or rear-end collision.¶ The advent of electronic stability control (ESC), now required on new cars by the federal government, also played a role.¶ “New designs and technology like side air bags are making it safer for cars, SUVs and pickups to share the road,” said institute chief Joe Nolen, who co-authored the study.

#### Traffic deaths are lower than ever- cars are safer, regulations are stronger, and litigation drives increasing safety standards.

Vance 11 (Gibson, President of the American Association for Justice, ‘How are cars got safer’, April 15th 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-our-cars-got-safer/2011/04/15/AFcCg1kD_story.html> )LD

**Traffic deaths in the United States have dropped to their lowest level since 1949, according to a report released this month by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Remarkably, this drop occurred even as Americans drove 21 billion more miles in 2010 than they had the previous year. The drop in fatalities is due in large part to the fact that cars are getting safer**. Since the introduction of the Ford Pinto nearly four decades ago — a car synonymous with danger, destruction and executives putting profits ahead of consumer safety — amazing advancements have been made in auto safety. **The technology is better, regulations are stronger and buyers have more information. Not surprisingly, consumers are drawn to cars with the latest safety features.** Yet these factors alone do not tell the whole story**. History shows that litigation and the civil justice system have served as the most consistent and powerful forces in heightening safety standards, revealing previously concealed defects and regulatory weaknesses and deterring manufacturers from cutting corners on safety for the goal of greater profits.** The Ford Pinto litigation sent a strong message to the auto industry. Unfortunately, manufacturers have still sold dangerous cars. In June 2004, a Dallas-area mother stopped her Ford F-150 truck to speak with her husband through the driver’s side window. Her 3-year-old daughter leaned out the passenger’s side window and accidentally hit the rocker switch, causing the window to close on her neck. When her parents noticed moments later, it was too late — their daughter was strangled. As power windows became more common, so too did instances of children being strangled. Seven children died within a three-month period in 2004. Manufacturers were aware of the issue, and the fix was relatively simple and inexpensive. In response to regulations in other countries, European and Asian cars already used a safer switch — one that must be pulled up to raise a window — and so did many U.S. manufacturers on cars they offered to foreign markets. Yet incredibly, U.S. manufacturers did not install the safer switches on domestic cars because NHTSA had no rules governing power-window safety. Litigation eventually forced universal acceptance of the safer switches in 2006. It is easy to take for granted just how much safer vehicles have become and how safety measures have been standardized. For years, the auto industry has worked to undermine regulations and limit its liability by pushing for complete immunity from lawsuits when their vehicles comply with minimum federal safety standards. This would, in short, be devastating for consumers. Recall that the Pinto’s design met all government standards of the time. Had compliance with federal standards been a complete defense of vehicle safety, Ford could not have been held accountable for the many burn victims that the company was later shown to have anticipated. Put another way, without the civil justice system, gas tanks would still explode in rear-end collisions, seat belts and airbags would not be standard, and cars would roll over onto roofs that would be easily crushed. **There are multiple reasons behind the welcome news that traffic deaths continue to decline. But the role of the civil justice system is often overlooked. Litigation has spurred safety innovations in vehicles for more than half a century and will continue to be essential in keeping Americans safe and holding manufacturers accountable.** The writer is president of the American Association for Justice.

### VMT Increases Accidents

#### **Plan would increase the number of crashes**

Taylor and Van Doren 7(Jerry Senior fellow at the Cato Institute; Peter Senior Fellow and Editor, Regulation Cato Institute. “Don’t Increase Federal Gasoline Taxes—Abolish Them” Policy Analysis No 598 pg 19 <http://americandreamcoalition-org.adcblog.org/automobility/pa-598.pdf> August 7th 2007) ZLH

Although some economists have argued that a tax on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) alone would internalize the accident externality (see, for instance, Todd Litman, “Distance-Based Vehicle Insurance as a TDM Strategy,” Transportation Quarterly 51 [Summer 1997]: 119–37; and Edlin and Karaca-Mandic, pp. 952–53), statistical analysis finds little correlation between VMT and automobile accidents. Oddly enough, a VMT tax might have the perverse effect of actually increasing the percentage of bad drivers on the road because it would disproportionately affect good drivers. If accidents are more closely correlated with bad driving than with VMT, a tax on the latter would likely increase automobile accidents. Clifford Winston and Vikram Maheshri, “Towards an Efficient Policy for Reducing Automobile Accidents,” Working Paper, April, 2007 (available from authors).

# AT: Sprawl Advantage

### Alt Causalities

#### Multiple alternate causes to species extinction

Whitty 7 (Julia, environmental correspondent and writer and former documentary filmmaker and the author of Deep Blue Home: An Intimate Ecology of Our Wild Ocean, The Fragile Edge: Diving & Other Adventures in the South Pacific, “Animal Extinction - the greatest threat to mankind” excerpt from *The Fragile Edge: Diving and Other Adventures in the South Pacific*, reprinted at <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/animal-extinction--the-greatest-threat-to-mankind-397939.html> on 05/07/07) VZ

In the final stages of dehydration the body shrinks, robbing youth from the young as the skin puckers, eyes recede into orbits, and the tongue swells and cracks. Brain cells shrivel and muscles seize. The kidneys shut down. Blood volume drops, triggering hypovolemic shock, with its attendant respiratory and cardiac failures. These combined assaults disrupt the chemical and electrical pathways of the body until all systems cascade toward death. Such is also the path of a dying species. Beyond a critical point, the collective body of a unique kind of mammal or bird or amphibian or tree cannot be salvaged, no matter the first aid rendered. Too few individuals spread too far apart, or too genetically weakened, are susceptible to even small natural disasters: a passing thunderstorm; an unexpected freeze; drought. At fewer than 50 members, populations experience increasingly random fluctuations until a kind of fatal arrhythmia takes hold. Eventually, an entire genetic legacy, born in the beginnings of life on earth, is removed from the future. Scientists recognise that species continually disappear at a background extinction rate estimated at about one species per million per year, with new species replacing the lost in a sustainable fashion. Occasional mass extinctions convulse this orderly norm, followed by excruciatingly slow recoveries as new species emerge from the remaining gene-pool, until the world is once again repopulated by a different catalogue of flora and fauna. From what we understand so far, five great extinction events have reshaped earth in cataclysmic ways in the past 439 million years, each one wiping out between 50 and 95 per cent of the life of the day, including the dominant life forms; the most recent event killing off the non-avian dinosaurs. Speciations followed, but an analysis published in Nature showed that it takes 10 million years before biological diversity even begins to approach what existed before a die-off. Today we're living through the sixth great extinction, sometimes known as the Holocene extinction event. We carried its seeds with us 50,000 years ago as we migrated beyond Africa with Stone Age blades, darts, and harpoons, entering pristine Ice Age ecosystems and changing them forever by wiping out at least some of the unique megafauna of the times, including, perhaps, the sabre-toothed cats and woolly mammoths. When the ice retreated, we terminated the long and biologically rich epoch sometimes called the Edenic period with assaults from our newest weapons: hoes, scythes, cattle, goats, and pigs. But, as harmful as our forebears may have been, nothing compares to what's under way today. Throughout the 20th century the causes of extinction - habitat degradation, overexploitation, agricultural monocultures, human-borne invasive species, human-induced climate-change - increased exponentially, until now in the 21st century the rate is nothing short of explosive.

### Sprawl Doesn’t Hurt Environment

#### Urban sprawl doesn’t hurt the environment or biodiversity.

Dick Jones Communications 7 (Dick Jones Communications, “Research Finds Urban Sprawl Not So Bad for Wildlife” [http://www.newswise.com/articles/research-finds-urban-sprawl-not-so-bad-for-wildlife 01/09/07](http://www.newswise.com/articles/research-finds-urban-sprawl-not-so-bad-for-wildlife%2001/09/07)) VZ

Newswise — Urban sprawl might not be as harmful to wildlife as previously thought, according to a new study by researchers from the Landscape Analysis Lab at Sewanee: The University of the South in Tennessee. Using field surveys and digital maps of habitat, David Haskell and Jonathan Evans, both biology professors at Sewanee and Neil Pelkey, an environmental science professor at Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pa., compared the diversity of bird populations in natural forests, tree plantations and "exurban" (urban sprawl) areas along the Cumberland Plateau in Tennessee. They found that tree plantations had substantially less bird population diversity than did native forests and exurban areas. In some cases, exurban areas had more diversity than did the native forests. "These findings suggest that urban sprawl is not all bad for wildlife," Haskell says. "This turns conventional wisdom about wildlife conservation on its head." For years scientists have been concerned with the loss of biodiversity resulting from worldwide deforestation. Governments and private organizations have implemented conservation programs that discourage sprawl and promote tree plantations to replace deforested areas. "Scientists had assumed that tree plantations were preferable to exurban areas for wildlife conservation," Haskell says. "This study firmly refutes this assumption, and has important implications for government policies, many of which subsidize plantations and penalize sprawl in the name of wildlife conservation." For estimates of forest cover, the U.S. government classifies forest converted to tree plantation as "no loss of forest", and classifies wooded areas where houses have been built as "loss of forest." "Yet our data show that plantations have much lower levels of biodiversity than do native forests and that exurban areas can retain much of the biodiversity of native forests," the researchers write. "Therefore, current methods of accounting for forests give potentially misleading results for biodiversity analyses." Haskell says that tree plantations have nearly doubled in acreage in the U.S. over the last 15 years to nearly 45 million acres, due in large part to government policies encouraging such land use. The researchers believe that extensive chemical and mechanical land clearing techniques used to prepare land for tree plantation, along with the fact that most plantations contain only a single type of tree, result in poor nesting habitats for many types of birds. Exurban areas on the other hand have a mix of forest, ornamental shrubbery, lawns and other structures that provide diverse nesting opportunities for a wide variety of bird species.

### Urban Sprawl Good

#### **Turn: Urban sprawl good- converting farmland to residential lots is comparatively better for the environment.**

Chavez 2k (Linda, columnist at the Chicago Tribune, “Urban Sprawl Isn't All Bad” [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2000-06-08/news/0006080039\_1\_sprawl-move-farmland 06/08/00](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2000-06-08/news/0006080039_1_sprawl-move-farmland%2006/08/00)) VZ

Bulldozers seem as common a sight as cows dotting the landscape of this rural Virginia farmland. When we moved here two years ago, only a handful of new houses were visible from the two-lane road connecting our home to the small town of Purcellville. Now, sprawling neo-Victorian model homes have sprung up like weeds. I must admit, I'm not entirely happy with all these new neighbors, though I'm sympathetic to what attracts them and millions like them to move further away from the city. Our decision to move to a rural area was made without much forethought. With our children grown, we were casually looking to move from our large, suburban home. We happened on a lovely log cabin with a gorgeous view of the Shenandoah range and nine acres of pasture some 60 miles from Washington, D.C., and wrote a contract on the property within a week. Only after the ink was dry did we begin to consider what an enormous change the move would represent. Since I work in town only two or three days a week, and my husband runs his business from our home, the commute seemed manageable. It takes about an hour and 15 minutes most days, almost all of it traveled at 65 mph, so long as I avoid the peak rush hours. But even with sharing the driving with my son, who has also moved his family to Purcellville, I come home very tired from my days in the city. If my children were still young, I simply could not do it. Yet, young families are just the ones who seem to be snatching up the crop of new houses that sprout all around us. The schools are good. The people friendly. Crime is low--a shoving match outside the supermarket qualifies as "crime" in the local papers, as does abusive language in public and attempting to buy cigarettes if underage. No wonder so many families want to come here, but I worry that the commute may undermine the very "family values" that attract them in the first place. Parents, especially mothers, who already work long hours may have little energy left over. Most of the objection to so-called urban sprawl comes from environmentalists concerned with people despoiling nature. But converting farmland to 3-acre homesites may actually exact less toll on the environment than farming. The legitimate objection to the phenomenon is mostly aesthetic. Tract homes or faux mansions every few hundred feet simply aren't as beautiful, at least to those not actually living in them, as rolling hills of wheat and oats. So, what can--or should--be done to preserve those amber waves of grain? Loudoun County, where my home is located, elected a slow-growth board of supervisors during the last election, but the town of Purcellville itself rejected the more anti-growth slate of candidates in the last election. No one, however, has any really great ideas about how to stop folks from coming. And why should we stop those who want to share what we already enjoy? No, the answer isn't draconian zoning laws or even mass transit, which doesn't shorten the commute but actually adds to it. Technology has already helped ease the problem for people like me who can "telecommute" from their home offices at least some of the time. As for the views, the best way yet devised to avoid seeing houses is to plant trees. Maybe as more farmland gets turned into home lots, more trees will appear. And that would be the final irony, since most of these bucolic hills were heavily forested a few hundred years ago before the first settlers established farms here. If more people mean more trees, it will not have been such a bad bargain after all. And if not, there's always the rest of the 95 percent of U.S. land mass that lies vacant to which I can retreat.

### Wetlands- Alt Causes

#### Alt causes- agriculture accounts for the majority of wetland loss

Theis 91 (Joseph G., Attorney and Advisor, Office of Enforcement-Water Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency, *“Wetlands Loss and Agriculture: The Failed Federal Regulation of Farming Activities under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act,”* Pace Environmental Law Review, 9(1), pg. 4, <http://digitalcommons.pace.edu/pelr/vol9/iss1/1>) PCS

By far the leading cause for this substantial loss of wetlands has been their conversion to cropland for agriculture." Farmers are enticed to convert wetlands to croplands because of their rich, fertile soil. Thus, it is the biologically productive nature of wetlands that has itself helped lead to their destruction. A 1984 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service report estimated that eighty-seven percent of wetland losses between the mid-1950's and mid-1970's resulted from agricultural development involving drainage. A recent update to that re- port analyzed wetland losses from the 1970's to the 1980's and concluded that conversions to agriculture still accounted for fifty-four percent of wetland losses." So while the rate of wetland losses to agriculture may have decreased, agricultural conversions continue to account for the majority of all wetland losses, more than losses from all other land uses combined. Over the next 20 years, the demand for new cropland is expected to increase despite advances in productivity. As the demand for new croplands continues to grow, the pressure to convert wetlands to agricultural uses will also increase.

#### Fish farming destroys wetlands

Sierra Club 12 (largest grassroots environmental organization in the United States, *“Food Consumption & Its Environmental Impact,”* The Sierra Club, 2012, <http://www.sierraclub.org/sustainable_consumption/food_factsheet.asp#contacts>) PCS

Although seafood might seem a less damaging food choice, there are also negative consequences associated with fishing and aquaculture. Highly subsidized factory fishing "stripmines" our oceans. For every pound of shrimp sold, upwards of 20 pounds of other sea creatures are caught. "Fish farming" destroys wetlands and mangroves, pollutes with fertilizers and pesticides and creates sickly, abnormal fish that may escape into the wild. Further, aquaculture still depends on factory fishing in the ocean to feed the "farmed" fish. Even production of grains, fruits, and vegetables can have negative ecological consequences. Heavy use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in industrial agriculture result in air and water pollution and damage to many native plant and animal species. Food grown outside the U.S. (and eaten "out of season" here) often comes from countries with weak regulations regarding pesticides and pollution. Further, "out of season" food is transported great distances, using huge amounts of fossil fuels and adding greenhouse gas emissions.

#### Agriculture affects the ecological structure of wetlands

Verhoeven and Setter 9 (Jos, Institute of Environmental Biology at Utrecht University, and Tim, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia, “*Agricultural Use of Wetlands: Opportunities and Limitations,”* Annals of Botany Vol. 105, August 21, 2009, pgs. 156-157, <http://aob.oxfordjournals.org/content/105/1/155.full.pdf>) PCS

Summarizing, intensive agricultural use of wetlands has definitely altered their ecological character, because the growth of crops or raising of livestock necessitate reclamation measures such as drainage or tillage. In such wetland areas, biodiversity has often been impacted severely and large parts may no longer even qualify as wetlands. Where, however, low- intensity agriculture takes place in wetlands, involving a regime of extensive use without fertilizers or pesticides, the diversity of the wetland landscape may be high, although the species composition and setting differs strongly from that in its pristine situation. This ‘secondary biodiversity’ is often worthy of protection because it includes many rare and characteristic species. The agricultural intensification of the 20th Century, with its fertilizer and pesticide use, has destroyed many of these values, so that many crop fields, pastures and rice fields are very species-poor. Nevertheless, there are wetland areas in many parts of the world where low-intensity agriculture is combined with ecosystem services other than food, including biodiversity and flood detention (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).

#### Agricultural demands will continue to damage wetlands

Verhoeven and Setter 9 (Jos, Institute of Environmental Biology at Utrecht University, and Tim, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia, “*Agricultural Use of Wetlands: Opportunities and Limitations,”* Annals of Botany Vol. 105, August 21, 2009, pg. 160, <http://aob.oxfordjournals.org/content/105/1/155.full.pdf>) PCS

Recently, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment has shown that global food production has doubled in the past 40 years, and has been able to keep pace with the increasing human population (Hassan et al., 2005). However, the assessment also showed that this major accomplishment has been realized at the expense of major losses in biodiversity, disruption of global element cycles, problematic eutrophication and toxification of our freshwater resources, and loss of regulating ecosystem functions. The challenge for the next 25 years will be that food production will have to increase by another 50 % merely to match the projected growth of the population. Given that at present there are still food shortages, and that the food habits of large parts of the human population are starting to shift to be more animal-based, the pressure to produce more food per area, as well as to reclaim more land for agriculture, is expected to increase strongly (FAO, 2003). Another trend that will result in additional demands for agricultural land and increasing production is the increasing use of first- generation biofuels as an alternative energy source to fossil fuels (Smeets et al., 2007). All these developments together will inevitably lead to reclamation of natural or marginally used land for intensive crop production. There will be increasing pressure to use wetlands for growing crops, so that an evaluation of the feasibility of such a use is urgently needed. The use of new, more flood-tolerant crop varieties may help to find sustainable solutions where agriculture, wetland ecosystem services and biodiversity can all benefit. In addition, it should be evaluated whether less intensive forms of agriculture could be used in (semi-) natural wetlands and lead to higher food production in a sustainable way, leaving intact species- rich wetland landscapes with additional benefits.

#### Agriculture produces multiple alternative causes- flood detention, water quality and biodiversity initiatives

Verhoeven and Setter 9 (Jos, Institute of Environmental Biology at Utrecht University, and Tim, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia, “*Agricultural Use of Wetlands: Opportunities and Limitations,”* Annals of Botany Vol. 105, August 21, 2009, pgs. 157, <http://aob.oxfordjournals.org/content/105/1/155.full.pdf>) PCS

Apart from intensive agricultural uses, which have destroyed wetland functions and services across the world, many wet- lands are currently subject to extensive land uses, in which food production is often combined with other functions such as water quality enhancement, flood detention or biodiversity. Examples of such land uses are traditional crop cultivation methods without chemical fertilizers or pesticides, grazing schemes involving livestock, or traditional water management schemes to stimulate fish production and to improve fish catches.

### Biodiversity Impact Defense

#### Diversity is irrelevant to environmental health

Mokani et al 8 (Karel, School of Botany and Zoology, Australia National University, Julian Ash, School of Botany and Zoology, Australia National University, Stephen Roxburgh, Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre, School of Biological, Earth, and Environmental Sciences, University of New South Wales, *“Functional Identity is More Important than Diversity in Influencing Ecosystem Processes in a Temperate Native Grassland,”* Journal of Ecology, 96(5), May 7, 2008, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1365-2745.2008.01395.x/asset/j.1365-2745.2008.01395.x.pdf?v=1&t=h4l0r8ay&s=320b3b59053eee9c8c7fbc9646b72ee3c6db8789>) PCS

In conclusion, the results from our study suggest that the traits of the dominant species are of primary importance in determining the effect of the biota on ecosystem processes, supporting Grime’s (1998) mass ratio hypothesis. Functional diversity was also important in some instances, indicating that complementarity may influence ecosystem processes, but not always positively. In contrast, we found species richness to be relatively poor at explaining variation in ecosystem processes. The results we present suggest that changes in community dominance hierarchies deserve the greatest attention when managing communities for the maintenance of ecosystem processes.

#### Diversity plays a weak role in ecosystem health- dominant species outweigh

Mokani et al 8 (Karel, School of Botany and Zoology, Australia National University, Julian Ash, School of Botany and Zoology, Australia National University, Stephen Roxburgh, Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre, School of Biological, Earth, and Environmental Sciences, University of New South Wales, *“Functional Identity is More Important than Diversity in Influencing Ecosystem Processes in a Temperate Native Grassland,”* Journal of Ecology, 96(5), May 7, 2008, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1365-2745.2008.01395.x/asset/j.1365-2745.2008.01395.x.pdf?v=1&t=h4l0r8ay&s=320b3b59053eee9c8c7fbc9646b72ee3c6db8789>) PCS

In contrast, traditional measures of community diversity (i.e. richness, evenness, Simpson’s diversity) generally explained very little variation in ecosystem processes (Fig. 1; Table 2a,b). Of particular interest are the weak relationships between species richness and ecosystem processes. Species richness has been a core focus of most early studies examining the interaction between biodiversity and ecosystem processes, with much empirical research and mechanistic theory devoted to understanding how the number of species in a community may influence ecosystem processes (Schmid 2002; Hooper et al. 2005). The weak relationships we observed between richness and ecosystem processes suggest that the number of species present in a community is likely to have little direct impact on ecosystem processes, and that changes in the identity and abundance of the most dominant species will be of far greater importance.

#### Stability is dependent on the traits of the most abundant species- not on biodiversity alone

Mokani et al 8 (Karel, School of Botany and Zoology, Australia National University, Julian Ash, School of Botany and Zoology, Australia National University, Stephen Roxburgh, Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre, School of Biological, Earth, and Environmental Sciences, University of New South Wales, *“Functional Identity is More Important than Diversity in Influencing Ecosystem Processes in a Temperate Native Grassland,”* Journal of Ecology, 96(5), May 7, 2008, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1365-2745.2008.01395.x/asset/j.1365-2745.2008.01395.x.pdf?v=1&t=h4l0r8ay&s=320b3b59053eee9c8c7fbc9646b72ee3c6db8789>) PCS

Our results indicate that the mass ratio hypothesis (Grime 1998) provides a more appropriate framework for explaining how the biota influences key ecosystem processes in comparison to the diversity hypothesis, for the native grassland studied. Mean trait values best explained variation in five of the eight ecosystem processes (Table 2a,b; Fig. 1), supporting Grime’s (1998) hypothesis that it is the traits of the most abundant species which largely determine ecosystem processes. Our results correspond with previous research demonstrating the power of mean trait values to explain variation in key ecosystem processes (Garnier et al. 2004; Vile et al. 2006). The trait-based functional diversity indices (especially FD, FDQ and FDvar) also performed well, often approaching and occasionally exceeding mean trait values in their explanatory power (Table 2a,b). Most notable of the functional diversity indices was FDvar (Mason et al. 2003), which explained more variation than any other diversity measure for seven of the eight ecosystem processes, and had the highest r2 values of all the diversity/trait indices for three of the ecosystem processes (green shoot biomass, root biomass, soil moisture) (Table 2a,b). Functional diversity indices which weigh the traits of species by the abundances of those species (namely FRO, FDQ and FDvar) are essentially fusing elements of both the diversity hypothesis and the mass ratio hypothesis. Implicit in these indices is the assumption that the diversity of traits is important, but is relative to the abundances of the species possessing those traits (Ricotta 2005). The fact that these diversity measures (FRO, FDQ, FDvar) tend to perform intermediately between the pure diversity indices (e.g. species richness) and mean trait values supports our suggestion that it is the traits of the abundant species that are most important in influencing ecosystem processes.

#### No Ecosystem collapse- Redundancy and adaptation solve

Doremus 00 (Holly, Professor of Law – UC Davis, Washington & Lee Law Review, "The Rhetoric and Reality of Nature Protection: Toward a New Discourse," 57 Wash & Lee L. Rev. 11, Winter, Lexis)

Notwithstanding its attractions, the material discourse in general, and the ecological horror story in particular, are not likely to generate policies that will satisfy nature lovers. The ecological horror story implies that there is no reason to protect nature until catastrophe looms. The Ehrlichs' rivet-popper account, for example, presents species simply as the (fungible) hardware holding together the ecosystem. If we could be reasonably certain that a particular rivet was not needed to prevent a crash, the rivet-popper story suggests that we would lose very little by pulling it out. Many environmentalists, though, would disagree. n212 Reluctant to concede such losses, tellers of the ecological horror story highlight how close a catastrophe might be, and how little we know about what actions might trigger one. But the apocalyptic vision is less credible today than it seemed in the 1970s. Although it is clear that the earth is experiencing a mass wave of extinctions, n213 the complete elimination of life on earth seems unlikely. n214 Life is remarkably robust. Nor is human extinction probable any time soon. Homo sapiens is adaptable to nearly any environment. Even if the world of the future includes far fewer species, it likely will hold people. n215 One response to this credibility problem tones the story down a bit, arguing not that humans will go extinct but that ecological disruption will bring economies, and consequently civilizations, to their knees. n216 But this too may be overstating the case. Most ecosystem functions are performed by multiple species. This functional redundancy means that a high proportion of species can be lost without precipitating a collapse.

#### Species can adapt- doesn’t cause biosphere collapse.

Idsos 3 (Sherwood, Craig and Keith, Keith, Vice Pres. Ctr Study CO2 and Global Change, Ph.D. in Botany @ ASU, won several top awards while instructing students in biological and botanical laboratories and lectures at ASU, and Craig, Chrmn Brd of Ctr for Study CO2 & Global Change, Ph.D. in Geog. ASU, “The Spector of Species Extinction: Will Global Warming Decimate Earth’s Biosphere?”, Marshal Institute, http://www.marshall.org/pdf/materials/150.pdf//umich-mp)

XI. Discussion of Real-World Observations Are significant impacts of global warming “already discernable in animal and plant populations,” as Root et al. claim? Is climate change “already affecting living systems,” as Parmesan and Yohe contend? The answer to both of these questions in many but not all of the cases they cite is a definite yes. Much of the biosphere has indeed responded to the global warming of the past century and a half that has transformed what we have come to call the Little Ice Age into what can now be called the Modern Warm Period. But it has not — we repeat not — brought us to the verge of biospheric disintegration, as the world’s climate alarmists would have everyone believe. In fact, it has done just the opposite, aided in no small part by the concomitant rise in the air’s CO2 content. To substantiate this fact, ironically, we need look no further than to the very papers that are used by Root et al. and Parmesan and Yohe to suggest, as Root has claimed, that “we’re sitting at the edge of a mass extinction.” And when we do, we find that the studies they cite do not imply anything of the kind. It is true that some species of plants and animals have indeed moved poleward and upward in response to 19th and 20th century warming; but they have not been forced to do so. The poleward and upward extensions of the cold-limited boundaries of these species’ ranges have been opportunistic movements, movements that have enabled them to inhabit regions that previously were too cold for them. But where it has been predicted that species would either be compelled to move towards cooler regions or suffer death, i.e., at the heat-limited boundaries of their ranges, they have in many instances, if not most instances, succumbed to neither alternative. As a result, instead of suffering range contractions, indicative of advancement towards extinction, these species have experienced range expansions, indicative of a propensity to avoid extinction. We note also, with respect to latitudinal movements, that it is not necessary for the heat-limited boundary of a species’ range to remain totally stationary for the CO2- induced global warming extinction hypothesis to be found null and void. If the heat limited boundary merely moves slower than the cold-limited boundary in response to an increase in temperature, a range expansion will occur that makes extinction even less likely than it was before the warming occurred. What is more, the viability of species in a warming world can be maintained by relaxing even this condition; for if a species’ heat-limited boundary moves at the same speed as its cold-limited boundary, its range size will remain fairly constant (depending upon local geographical constraints, of course), which also precludes the possibility of extinction. In fact, if the cold-limited and heat-limited boundaries of a species’ range are widely separated, as in the case of the butterfly studied by Parmesan (1996), even if the heat-limited boundary were to move faster than the cold-limited boundary, the large temperature difference between the two boundaries would prevent the heat-limited boundary from ever merging with the cold-limited boundary for the degree of warming that would be likely to occur in the real world. Hence, there is currently not the slightest shred of evidence that what is “already discernable in animal and plant populations,” in the words of Root et al., and “already affecting living systems,” in the words of Parmesan and Yohe, portends the eminent or even far-distant extinction of a single species of plant or animal.

#### Biodiversity loss is inevitable

NPR 7 (5/30/2007, Donald J. Dodds M.S. P.E., President of the North Pacific Research, “The Myth of Biodiversity,” northpacificresearch.com/downloads/The\_myth\_of\_biodiversity.doc CS)

Humans are working against nature when they try to prevent extinctions and freeze biodiversity. Examine the curve in figure one, at no time since the origin of life has biodiversity been constant. If this principal has worked for 550 million years on this planet, and science is supposed to find truth in nature, by what twisted reasoning can fixing biodiversity be considered science? Let alone good for the environment. Environmentalists are now killing species that they arbitrarily term invasive, which are in reality simply better adapted to the current environment. Consider the Barred Owl, a superior species is being killed in the name of biodiversity because the Barred Owl is trying to replace a less environmentally adapted species the Spotted Owl. This is more harmful to the ecosystem because it impedes the normal flow of evolution based on the idea that biodiversity must remain constant. Human scientists have decided to take evolution out of the hands of Mother Nature and give it to the EPA. Now there is a good example of brilliance. We all know what is wrong with lawyers and politicians, but scientists are supposed to be trustworthy. Unfortunately, they are all to often, only people who think they know more than anybody else. Abraham Lincoln said, “Those who know not, and know not that the know not, are fools shun them.” Civilization has fallen into the hands of fools. What is suggested by geologic history is that the world has more biodiversity than it ever had and that it maybe overdue for another major extinction. Unfortunately, today many scientists have too narrow a view. They are highly specialized. They have no time for geologic history. This appears to be a problem of inadequate education not ignorance. What is abundantly clear is that artificially enforcing rigid biodiversity works against the laws of nature, and will cause irreparable damage to the evolution of life on this planet and maybe beyond. The world and the human species may be better served if we stop trying to prevent change, and begin trying to understand change and positioning the human species to that it survives the inevitable change of evolution. If history is to be believed, the planet has 3 times more biodiversity than it had 65 million years ago. Trying to sustain that level is futile and may be dangerous. The next major extinction, change in biodiversity, is as inevitable as climate change. We cannot stop either from occurring, but we can position the human species to survive those changes.

#### Long time-frame to ecosystem collapse

Kay 1 (Jane, “Study Takes Historical Peek at Plight of Ocean Ecosystems”, San Francisco Chronicle, 7-26, Lexis)

The collapse of ecosystems often occur over a long period. In one example, when Aleut hunters killed the Alaskan sea otter about 2,500 years ago, the population of their natural prey, the sea urchin, grew larger than its normal size. In turn, the urchins grazed down the kelp forests, important habitat for a whole host of ocean life. Then, when fur traders in the 1800s hunted the otters and sea cows almost to extinction, the kelp forests disappeared and didn't start to regenerate until the federal government protected the sea otters in the 20th century. In California, the diversity of spiny lobsters, sheephead fish and abalone kept down the urchin numbers. At present in Alaska, the kelp beds are declining again in areas where killer whales are preying on sea otters. Biologists think the killer whales switched to otters for food because there are fewer seals and sea lions to eat.

# Disads

## Politics/Elections

### Politics/Elections: VMT Unpopular

#### VMT is a political third rail- anyone who supports it faces electoral execution

Samuels 11 (Peter Samuels, Toll Road news editor, “Alternatives to MBUFs, VMT fees, national tolls - devolution, privatization”, <http://www.tollroadsnews.com/node/5459>, August 31 2011)

There have now been repeated recommendations from expert panels that VMT fees, MBUFs or simply comprehensive tolls - all the same in essence - be adopted. Late in the Bush administration there was a National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue study commission which reported to the US Congress in January 2008 The commission chaired by then secretary of transportation Mary Peters: "The Commission envisions that a VMT tax would be levied instead of current fuel taxes at both the Federal and State levels, and potentially by local jurisdictions as well….The Commission recommends that the next surface transportation authorization act require a major national study to develop the specific mechanisms and strategies for transitioning to an alternative to the fuel tax to fund surface transportation programs" (p52-53) Early in the Obama administration a National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission of 15 transport experts appointed by the Democrats and chaired by Rob Atkinson recommended (Feb 2009): "The current federal surface transportation funding structure that relies primarily on taxes imposed on petroleum-derived vehicle fuels is not sustainable in the long term and is likely to erode more quickly than previously thought… The current indirect user fee system based on taxes paid for fuel consumed provides users with only weak price signals to use the transportation system in the most efficient ways… A federal funding system based on more direct forms of “user pay” charges, in the form of a charge for each mile driven (commonly referred to as a vehicle miles traveled or VMT fee system), has emerged as the consensus choice for the future. The Commission cast a wide net, reviewed many funding alternatives, and concluded that indeed the most viable approach to efficiently fund federal investment in surface transportation in the medium to long run will be a user charge system based more directly on miles driven (and potentially on factors such as time of day, type of road, and vehicle weight and fuel economy) rather than indirectly on fuel consumed." (p7) **This was the unanimous recommendation of the Obama administration's own panel. Yet no one in the Administration has said a word in support of it, or even words about it. The recommendation is taboo. The recent study by a panel at the University of Minnesota came to precisely the same conclusion as the Atkinson commission, except they called their recommended new charge an MBUF rather than a VMT fee. So have other panels of experts. It is indeed the "consensus choice" of policy analysts and experts**. There have been trials, notably in Oregon, that have demonstrated its feasibility, and persuasively written reports from those trials on how to implement VMT, MBUFs or whatever we want to call them. **Trouble is the legislators, whether of left, right or center, won't touch it. It ain't going anywhere. Perhaps the legislators sense the public will forcefully oppose a new federal charge that channels more money through the same old system of politically driven grants and project selection, of hand-downs from one level of government to the next.** **Elected officials seem to see the VMT fee/MBUFs/comprehensive federal tolls as a political "third rail" threatening them with sudden electoral execution. They stay well clear.**

#### Plan unpopular- 7 out of 10 voters are opposed to it.

Hayes 9 ( Civitas Poll: Vehicle Miles Traveled Tax Unpopular, <http://www.nccivitas.org/2009/civitas-poll-vehicle-miles-traveled-tax-unpopular/>, Chris Hayes (writer for civitas) February 5, 2009)

Raleigh, N.C. – Last month, a legislative committee, formed to study funding proposals for future transportation projects, announced a series of recommendations for new taxes, fees and toll roads in order to increase transportation funding**. One proposal, taxing drivers based on the number of miles, or a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) tax, appears to be a hard sell to the public, according to the most recent poll released by the Civitas Institute. Of the 600 voters who were polled, 70 percent said they viewed a system that charges drivers based on the number of miles they drive unfavorably. Only 21 percent responded favorably, while nine percent said they were not sure.** “Legislators are looking at a number of ways to increase, and make more reliable, the tax stream that supports transportation funding. A VMT adopted without engaging the support of the public would be a very bad political mistake,” said Executive Director of the Civitas Institute Francis De Luca. “With seven out of 10 voters skeptical of simply the idea of a VMT, proponents of it have much work to do to convince the public it will be successful.” The 21st Century Transportation Committee recommended the VMT tax be levied, in addition to the current gas tax. In other states, where a VMT is being discussed, it is seen as a replacement for the gas tax. The committee also discussed raising gas and highway-use taxes, as well as increasing registration fees, implementing toll roads and issuing bonds. “We know that relying on revenues from the gas tax is an unsustainable model. As people drive more fuel efficient cars and as we seek different sources of fuels to power our cars, gas tax revenues will continue to decline,” De Luca said. “The VMT may be an option to replace the gas tax in the future, but voters are not ready to go there yet.” Full text of question: “In order to fund transportation projects in North Carolina, a legislative commission has recommended changing the current system to a plan that would charge all drivers based on the number of miles they drive in North Carolina each year. Would you view such a system favorably or unfavorably?” Favorably- 21% Unfavorably- 70% Not Sure- 9% The study of 600 registered voters was conducted Jan. 19-22, 2009. All respondents were part of a fully representative sample of registered voters in North Carolina. For purposes of this study, voters we interviewed had to have voted in either the 2004, 2006 or 2008 general elections or were newly registered voters since 2008. The confidence interval associated with a sample of this size is such that: 95 percent of the time, results from 600 interviews (registered voters) will be within +-4% of the “True Values.” True Values refer to the results obtained if it were possible to interview every person in North Carolina who had voted in either the 2004, 2006 or 2008 general elections or were newly registered voters since 2008.

#### Plan unpopular- increases costs of driving and privacy concerns.

Cravaack 12 (Press release from the office of Representative Chip Cravaack, <http://cravaack.house.gov/press-releases/cravaack-passes-amendment-to-prohibit-federal-driving-tax/>, June 29th 2012)

Washington, D.C. – **U.S. Representative Chip Cravaack (MN) offered an amendment to H.R. 5972, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations Act of 2013, which would prohibit the utilization of funds by the Secretary of Transportation to research, or implement, a distance-based fee system**. **This system is commonly referred to as Vehicle Miles Traveled, or “VMT,” which would levy a fee tax drivers based on the distance traveled. H.R. 5972 was passed by the House today with bipartisan support. “I’m already paying over $3.50 for a gallon of gas. The last thing that would help me is a little black box taxing me for every mile I drive**,” said Al Cekalla, an Eighth District resident who commutes 112 miles roundtrip from Sturgeon Lake to Mora each day. Under the VMT tax, every automobile on the road would need to be fitted with a device that both records miles driven and transmits the information to a government database. This complicated system would cost millions of dollars and raise a number of concerns. “**My constituents often have to drive many miles more than their urban counterparts to perform the same daily tasks, like grocery shopping, dropping the kids off at school, and making deliveries from their small businesses,” said Rep. Cravaack**. “Minnesotans are already struggling to make ends meet with the current gas prices – penalizing them for nothing other than living in a rural area will put them over the edge,” he added. **Importantly, the VMT tax would be yet another unwelcome increase in the cost of driving. The gas tax is already in place for the purposes of funding transportation infrastructure, and it is an inexpensive and efficient form of taxation that is collected directly from fuel sales. By contrast, the VMT tax would be an expensive and inefficient form of taxation that targets each and every driving American. The concern for privacy abuses also exists.** According to a Heritage Foundation report, “**A VMT would be expensive to implement because every car would need to be fitted with a device that both records miles driven and transmits the information to a government database. This complicated system would cost millions and raise concerns of big brother watching our every movement. Americans don’t like paying the gas tax, but they are sure to be even more unhappy having to deal with the administrative nightmare the VMT promises**.” Representative Cravaack serves on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee – where he is Vice Chair of the Aviation Subcommittee – the Homeland Security Committee, and the Science, Space and Technology Committee. The 8th Congressional District covers 18 counties in Northeast Minnesota.

#### **Plan Unpopular-privacy and truckers**

Schank 12(Joshua President, Eno Center for Transportation “Transportation Investment as Part of a Deficit-Reduction Package” pg 12 [http://www.enotrans.org/wp content/uploads/wpsc/downloadables/Deficit-Redux-paper1.pdf May 2012](http://www.enotrans.org/wp%20content/uploads/wpsc/downloadables/Deficit-Redux-paper1.pdf%20May%202012))ZLH

VMT System. Instead of tolls on limited access highway, us­ers could be charged for the entirety of their travels and rev­enues go to the roads they use. While there may be privacy concerns with personal automobiles, there is the potential to apply VMT to federal motor carriers as has been done in Germany. However, truckers in the U.S. remain adamantly opposed to such a proposal, and would prefer an increase in diesel fuel taxes. Moreover, privacy concerns still have most elected officials avoiding this issue at all costs, at least at the federal level.

### Politics: VMT Controversial in Congress

#### VMT passage requires a rough political battle

Szakonyi 12

(Mark, Associate Editor of the Journal of Commerce Online, “Why Congress Won’t Pass A Transport Bill This Month; Prospects for passage of a bill by year-end don’t look much better” June 8th 2012, Lexis) ZLH

The prognosis for future surface transportation spending doesn't look any better. Although Georgia Republican Rep. Paul Broun's non-binding motion to instruct conferees not to use general fund dollars to plug the Highway Trust Fund shortfall won't likely connect in this bill, it signals an even larger coming battle. TIGER grants, federal grants to fund freight rail and port projects, are also in jeopardy , because a recently released House bill for fiscal 2013 funding includes no dollars for the program. The prospects of Congress, along with President Obama, supporting a fuel tax increase are also dismal. A vehicle miles traveled tax gets a lot of cheers in Washington, but such policy will find anti-tax and libertarian members with knives out if it gains traction in Congress.

### Politics: Flip-Flop

#### Plan is political suicide—blocked from the transportation bill and would be a flip-flop for Obama.

Kasperowicz 6-27 (Pete, reporter at Thomson Financial, “House puts brakes on taxing cars by the mile”, *The Hill*, <http://thehill.com/blogs/floor-action/house/235261-house-slams-the-door-on-taxing-cars-by-the-mile>) GSK

The House has approved an amendment that would prevent the Secretary of Transportation from exploring raising new highway revenues by taxing cars for each mile they drive. Members are considering the 2013 spending bill for the Transportation Department and other agencies, and late Wednesday, they accepted an amendment from Rep. Chip Cravaack (R-Minn.) that would block any money in the bill from being used to explore a so-called Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) tax system. The House approved the language by voice vote. "There is an important need to come up with new, better ideas on how to appropriately fund our highway trust fund system," Cravaack said. "However, I'm here to tell you today that the concept of using a Vehicle Miles Traveled fee system is not one of those better ideas." Cravaack said such a system would hurt rural drivers, cost a lot to implement, since it would require devices in each car to track how many miles have been driven, and could impinge on privacy rights. "The potential for privacy abuses is a hazard waiting to happen. Government databases have already been compromised in the past, and this government system would be no exception," Cravaack said. Rep. Tom Latham (R-Iowa) said he supported the language, in part because the Obama administration's Transportation Department said two years ago that it would not explore a VMT system. "So I don't see why the Secretary would need to do research or any kind of means of implementation if in fact they so strongly oppose this type of taxation," he said.

### Politics: Spin

#### Plan will be spun as an invasion of privacy and a massive tax increase.

Whitty and Imholt 5 (James, Manager, Office of Innovative Partnerships and Alternative Funding and Betsy, Alternative Funding Administrator, “Oregon’s Mileage Fee Concept and

Road User Fee Pilot Program”, Oregon Dept. of Transportation, http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/OIPP/docs/2005LegislativeReport.pdf?ga=t) GSK

Transition to a new road revenue system will not be easy. Most people are not fond of change and many actually fear it. Working through the policy issues, managing public sensibilities and attaining public consent (if not consensus) will take a significant amount of time, perhaps as much as a decade. Given this needed lead time, it is incumbent upon policymakers to start this effort early—now, in fact—so that the new system can be implemented before the road funding situation becomes an emergency. Oregon’s Road User Fee Task Force has concluded that the best approach for replacing the pergallon tax is a per-mile charge—the mileage fee. After 3 ½ years of technical research and policy analysis, the Task Force and ODOT staff present a mileage fee system that is administratively and technologically feasible, affordable and more reliable revenue-wise than the gasoline tax. As a practical alternative to the gasloine tax, this new mileage fee system could become the foundation for a new road revenue system for Oregon and the nation. Critics often make inaccurate claims about the Oregon mileage fee concept, citing invasion of privacy, added taxation, unfair taxation, excessive cost, complexity—all generated by unfounded assumptions. The propagation of inaccuracies over new ideas must be expected and weathered as a necessary hurdle in modern policymaking. The Oregon mileage fee concept, as refined and tested over the past several years, resolves every issue generated by these reactionary claims— carefully, effectively and simply.

### AT: Plan Popular- Replaces the Gas Tax

#### Public prefers the gas tax to a VMT- they dislike the complexity of the new system, and the gas tax is more familiar and invisible.

Frisman 12 (Paul, Principal Analyst at Office of Legislative Research , Office of Legislative Research Report, VEHICLE MILES TRAVELLED (VMT) TRANSPORTATION FUNDING, Janurary 17th, <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2012/rpt/2012-R-0029.htm>)

Public Reluctance to Accept a New Financing Mechanism According to a November 2009 Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) report, **the public has been “uneasy” with the idea of VMT fees and has “doubts about the necessity of abandoning the fuel tax.”** **The report attributed public uneasiness about the VMT system to the system's novelty and complexity**. It said **the public is wary about abandoning the fuel tax because the current tax is both familiar and largely invisible as part of the total price paid at the pump. “The public…might therefore view a different and more transparent system, as an added fee, regardless of the individual fiscal impact**,” it said. “Implementing pricing on facilities that have been previously regarded as 'free' will require extensive work on the part of policy makers in terms of public outreach,” the report said. “This is due to the fact that the public has yet to make the connection between increasing fuel efficiencies and declining future fuel tax revenues and the added transparency [of] a mileage-based fee…Therefore, implementing mileage-based user fees will require strong advocates, which will only be created with the prospect of significant rewards.” The report says, for example, that “ensuring that revenues are used to maintain and/or expand roadway networks will be crucial in gaining the support of the trucking industry.”

## Spending

### Spending Link: VMT Startup Expensive

#### Start-up costs are at least 10 billion for a national VMT according to the CBO.

Frisman 12 (VEHICLE MILES TRAVELLED (VMT) TRANSPORTATION FUNDING, Paul Frisman Principal Analyst at Office of Legislative Research, Janurary 17th 2012, <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2012/rpt/2012-R-0029.htm>)

**A VMT Fee System Would Have Potentially Significant Upfront Costs Although new and improving technology makes a VMT system practical**, the CBO report states that “**the operational costs of VMT systems are higher then the costs associated with current fuel taxes, and they have high start-up costs as well**.” But CBO says there is not much information on how expensive such a system would be. Paying Our Way breaks down the costs of a national system into three components: start-up costs; installing technology in vehicles; and operating costs. The report says **start up costs for a national system would be high – preliminary research for the federal DOT estimate that initial costs for hardware, system development, and start-up would be “in the range of $10 billion.” To these must be added the cost of installing GPS technology on vehicles. This cost would depend on whether vehicles already on the road are retrofitted with the devices or whether the technology is installed only in newly manufactured vehicles. Finally, the report says the federal DOT estimated annual operating costs at 1.7% of estimated revenue**. “Although this is more than the cost of administering the current motor fuel taxes, estimated at 1.01% of revenues, it would still represent a comparatively inexpensive fee to administer,” the report said. On a state level, the ODOT estimated Oregon's capital costs of $33 million for the initial setup of data transfer and service station infrastructure in that state, but said costs could be greater depending on the level of technology used. It estimated annual operating costs of $1.6 million. A 2009 report by the RAND Corporation, which examined proposals that would enable nationwide adoption of VMT fees by 2015, said **it would be costly to retrofit vehicles already on the road with the appropriate VMT technology.**

# Counterplans

## States

### Neg – States CP – States solve VMT better

#### Federal implementation of VMT is inefficient. States are key.

Thomas and Heaslip 11 (Michael D. and Kevin, Michael Thomas, Ph.D., is a researcher for the Utah Transportation Center at Utah State University and Kevin Heaslip, Ph.D., P.E. is an Assistant Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Utah State University, *Journal of City and Town Management*, “Technological Change and the Lowest Common Denominator Problem: an Analysis of Oregon’s Vehicle Miles Travelled Fee Experiment”, February 1, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm? abstract\_id=1878656](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?%20abstract_id=1878656)) AH

VMT fees have been proposed for implementation at the national level because of the urgent need to replace vanishing revenues from the current fuel tax. This paper identifies the significant obstacles to implementing a successful VMT fee as the lowest common denominator (LCD) problem. By thinking only about the number of miles driven, the LCD problem ignores two elements that a fuel tax implicitly penalized: vehicle weight and fuel efficiency. Oregon Commission Director James Whitty (2008) acknowledges this by stating; “the fuel tax is close to perfection from the standpoint of good tax policy.”2 The VMT fee should not only be focused on replacing lost revenue. An oversimplified VMT implemented by the federal government could impede the ability for local jurisdictions to administer more dynamic revenue schemes. Further, a national VMT does not address the unwillingness to raise the cost of surface transportation at the federal level. State and local authorities have a better track record in overcoming these log jams, while federal budget debates have proven intractable in recent years. This paper argues that local transportation management issues are better addressed by states, cities, and metropolitan planning organizations than the federal government. Local governments often have goals that include: discouraging local pollution, accounting for congestion, and even managing growth. Local authorities have access to contextual information and are best suited to avoid the LCD problem. Successful examples around the world (e.g. Singapore, London, Stockholm, Amsterdam and Milan) highlight the potential of new technology to address local transportation issues. The objective of this paper is to propose additional ways that a VMT fee can be utilized to provide opportunities for revenue generation and transportation operations. These opportunities are detailed in the following sections of the paper. First, the basic VMT solution to the revenue problem is introduced. Then a case is made that a simple fee would solve the revenue problem, but also would cause other unintended consequences. The proposed solution, a modified VMT, would include additional transportation goals to reduce the most obvious distortions. The obstacles to implementing a modified VMT at the national level are then discussed in terms of the LCD problem. The LCD approach rejects a one-size-fits-all solution that corresponds with a federal, or top-down, solution. The problems at the local level are overcome by approaching the problem from the ground-up, through state and local organizations. Starting with a detailed analysis of the VMT fee and considering the implementation problems; this paper suggests a way to leverage opportunities for transportation solutions created by technological change and experimentation at the local level.

#### **VMT works best at a local level**

Thomas and Heaslip 11 (Michael D. and Kevin, Michael Thomas, Ph.D., is a researcher for the Utah Transportation Center at Utah State University and Kevin Heaslip, Ph.D., P.E. is an Assistant Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Utah State University, *Journal of City and Town Management* , “Technological Change and the Lowest Common Denominator Problem: an Analysis of Oregon’s Vehicle Miles Travelled Fee Experiment”, February 1, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm? abstract\_id=1878656](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?%20abstract_id=1878656)) AH

The VMT solution is a likely candidate for the (LCD) problem because the revenue issue it seeks to solve is deceptively simple. 13 VMT replaces the lost funds that were traditionally provided by the motor fuel tax. The motor fuel tax was a solution that relied on tax policy at both the state and federal level. Both parties had the ability to tax based on local concerns. Oregon, as one example, has an above average tax rate and is an example of a more active taxing policy relative to some of the southeastern states which tax at much lower rates. Oregon also charges a weight per mile tax.14 This leadership advancing new methods is encouraging but it cannot be assumed that separate VMTs at the state and federal levels would integrate smoothly. While the motor fuel tax policy, perhaps accidentally, developed desirable effects on other driving habits, the Oregon VMT fee, as specified, will not have these same effects. More innovation is predicted if the design is controlled locally. If a VMT fee is passed at a national level, it is not likely to be a modified VMT fee. Imposing this new system from the top-down means that local goals may be subsumed by the expediency of replacing the tax revenue. Congestion or pollution added only as afterthoughts face implementation problems similar to the problems faced in the past by increasing the fuel tax. Movements toward more local solutions help to reduce the scope of the unintended consequences. An alternative approach to this general problem is to emphasize the role of leadership. USDOT has a key role in aggregating information across the different state level experiments and helping to disseminate lessons learned. For example, the use of product demonstration showcases has had measured success in sharing ideas between state DOTs.

#### **States implement VMT better—cuts cost and access to MPOs**

Thomas and Heaslip 11 (Michael D. and Kevin, Michael Thomas, Ph.D., is a researcher for the Utah Transportation Center at Utah State University and Kevin Heaslip, Ph.D., P.E. is an Assistant Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Utah State University, *Journal of City and Town Management* , “Technological Change and the Lowest Common Denominator Problem: an Analysis of Oregon’s Vehicle Miles Travelled Fee Experiment”, February 1, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm? abstract\_id=1878656](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?%20abstract_id=1878656)) AH

Since roadblocks to a modified VMT exist at the federal level, the alternative is to approach the issue from the bottom-up or the local level. This section looks to international successes to suggest the way forward. State governments have to take a leadership role in the next chapter of policy development. Oregon’s VMT fee is a good example of this type of leadership. State agencies can detail the types of policies they think are most efficient in promoting not only state goals, but by working with local authorities, specifically Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The transportation goals of the regions within a state can be realized by indentifying innovative solutions by lowering cost, increasing the level of service, or both. This new opportunity is presented by rapid technological advance and the desire of tech companies to market products to the diverse interests of local cities. Surveying multiple experiments from around the world clarifies some of the different approaches cities have used for vehicle pricing to solve unique local problems.

#### **State action leads to tailored solutions. Solves problems with national implementation**

Thomas and Heaslip 11 (Michael D. and Kevin, Michael Thomas, Ph.D., is a researcher for the Utah Transportation Center at Utah State University and Kevin Heaslip, Ph.D., P.E. is an Assistant Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Utah State University, *Journal of City and Town Management* , “Technological Change and the Lowest Common Denominator Problem: an Analysis of Oregon’s Vehicle Miles Travelled Fee Experiment”, February 1, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm? abstract\_id=1878656](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?%20abstract_id=1878656)) AH

City based systems have less of an aggregation problem and therefore a better chance at developing consistent feedback loops between revenue collected and the required expenses for constructing, operating, and maintaining their roadway infrastructure. They can create solutions that are more flexible in adapting to an ever changing technological reality. To the extent that State level policy can benefit from the existing system to aggregate this information and use examples from other states to evaluate goals, opportunities to benefit from rapid technological change exist. Solving problems of complexity at state or national levels are only possible during a mature phase of policy, where the policy environment is relatively static. In the case of changing from a motor fuel tax to a VMT the technological change is just beginning. To these ends, innovation is encouraged by working closer with local level authorities to discover how the diverse needs can be met with tailored solutions. The VMT framework is not yet flexible enough to be applied broadly and a switch to a national VMT now would result in misaligned incentives with regard to fuel conservation and congestion.

#### **Local level implementation key to success through trial and error**

Thomas and Heaslip 11 (Michael D. and Kevin, Michael Thomas, Ph.D., is a researcher for the Utah Transportation Center at Utah State University and Kevin Heaslip, Ph.D., P.E. is an Assistant Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Utah State University, *Journal of City and Town Management* , “Technological Change and the Lowest Common Denominator Problem: an Analysis of Oregon’s Vehicle Miles Travelled Fee Experiment”, February 1, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm? abstract\_id=1878656](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?%20abstract_id=1878656)) AH

The opportunity presented by rapid technological change is great. However, implementing a national VMT too quickly could stifle opportunities for revenue generation created by trial and error at the local level. When technology is new, experimenting is even more important. It is argued in this paper that the best solution to rapid change is to give more leeway to the local level. Responding this way is counter-intuitive for many of those who study policy because it does not provide a concrete way to maximize the rate of convergence to a new system for revenue generation. However, the absence of revenue in the system creates pressure which has led to a period of innovation, things like High Occupancy Toll lanes, in cities around the United States and the many pricing schemes worldwide. A decentralized process of innovation promises the widest possible experimentation and consequently an opportunity for discovering a better solution.

#### Counterplan solves best- avoids political firestorm, leads to broader compliance because of public distrust towards the feds, and avoids fights over distribution of funds.

Schank 4/16 (Joshua, President and CEO, Eno Transportation Foundation, Say yes to VMT- at state level, <http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2012/04/the-driving-tax.php#2197173>) Azimi

But at the federal level, a VMT fee faces several obstacles that together seem insurmountable. First, we have not yet articulated a clear enough need for a federal program to convince the public to pay any fee at all. We have an existing mechanism in place - the federal gas tax - that would work just fine for the near future if we had the political will to increase it. But instead of support for an increase, we see more evidence of support in Congress for devolving the program to the states. Second, the perception of a privacy issue is unlikely to be overcome in this country, where people are inherently suspicious of the federal government. All the technological fixes in the world are unlikely to convince people that it is ok for the federal government to charge them by the mile for driving. Third, there are large administrative costs associated with a VMT-style fee. Some reports have indicated that this cost is so high that a VMT fee would have to be substantially higher than the existing gas tax on a per-mile basis in order to bring in the same amount of revenue. Finally, VMT fees will perpetuate and exacerbate the donor-donee fights we currently experience with the gas tax. When we know exactly where all the funds are coming from, those paying are likely to demand 100% back on every dollar. In which case, why have a federal program at all? The VMT-fee concept at the federal level is so toxic that we cannot even get anyone to agree to spend federal money to study it. Secretary LaHood got in trouble with the White House for even saying we should "look at" the issue.

#### States solve better—federal enactment would require new inspection stations

Lush 12 (Greg, law student at Regent University, supervised by Professor Kathleen A. McKee, “The Vehicle Miles Tax: The Unintended Consequences of Paying as You Drive”, *Regent University School of Law*, December 31, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1989051&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=87&ved=0CJQFEBYwVg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2FDelivery.cfm%2FSSRN_ID2004325_code1776956.pdf%3Fabstractid%3D1989051%26mirid%3D1&ei=l4HvT7ypJIXMqgHizZiOAg&usg=AFQjCNG5ekZNH3QJH_cYrWiKUkiQPnoKsw&sig2=FTb7KIM2Vc90NhSqsf5OkA>) GSK

If the federal government implements a pay as you drive system of taxing automobile drivers, it must enforce the system. There are limited options available in keeping track of how many miles each vehicle has been driven. The first option is to mandate that car owners must bring each vehicle to an inspection station for a periodic odometer check to verify how many miles the vehicle has been driven. Once each car’s odometer has been checked, the owner would be given a bill based on the miles driven. The second option is to install a Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) unit into every car that periodically sends data to whatever entity is responsible for collecting such data, and sending the owner a bill. Both options raise several problems. Option 1 could work provided there are plentiful inspection stations available to which drivers may bring their cars. Many states already have periodic vehicle safety inspection regulations, and already have inspection stations in place. So if this legislation is enacted state-by-state and not federally, those states that already have inspections stations and choose to implement the pay as you drive program, will not have much difficulty in putting this program into practice. But if a mileage-based tax were imposed by the federal government, many states would have practical difficulties implementing this program, not to mention the extra costs that would be involved. Because the federal Government cannot compel the States to implement federal regulatory programs, the federal government will not be allowed to commandeer the state inspection stations that are already in place.85 The Supreme Court said in Printz v. United States, “opinions of ours have made clear that the Federal Government may not compel the States to implement, by legislation or executive federal action, federal regulatory programs.”86 The Printz decision involved a federal regulation that forced the states’ chief law enforcement officers (CLEOs) to ensure that persons buying handguns were legally allowed to buy them. The federal government was compelling states to enforce federal law, putting into effect a type of federal takeover of state government. The Court continued by saying that in previous cases it, “sustained statutes against constitutional challenge only after assuring ourselves that they did not require the states to enforce federal law.”87 Because of these Supreme Court decisions, the federal government will have to build and run inspection stations if Option 1 is implemented, requiring periodic odometer checks. If the government wishes to avoid the hassle of building inspection stations, it may decide that it would be better to not worry about creating a nationwide infrastructure, but would rather enforce the collection of the Vehicle Miles Tax through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or an IRS-like branch. After all, we do not require taxpayers to come by an IRS office every year to report earnings; the IRS simply makes them send in a report of their earnings by the mail or Internet. The IRS relies on taxpayers to be honest and accurately report their earnings, and deters malfeasance by occasionally auditing people and inflicting punishment for those who deceive.88 People who lie to the IRS are subject to receiving a fine of up to $100,000 and three years in prison.89 To ensure that people accurately report their wages, W2 forms provided by the employer must be sent to the IRS. But if the government wishes to make individuals report the miles they have driven monthly or annually, there must be a way to ensure they are reporting accurately – there must be some documentation proving their honesty about the miles they have driven. With income tax, it is fairly easy to determine if a taxpayer has reported his or her wages accurately – the declared earnings of the employee are checked against the declared wages paid by the employer, but with individuals and their vehicles, there will be no practical way to ensure that drivers report honestly and accurately unless they are required to have periodic odometer checks by an outside party like an inspection station.

#### The States solve best- flexibility allows them to set their own rate structure.

Transportation Research Board 6 (Transportation Research Board, Committee for the Study of the Long-Term Viability of Fuel Taxes for Transportation Finance, The National Academies, “[The Fuel Tax and Alternatives for Transportation Funding: Special Report 285](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11568)”, The National Academies Press, pg. 137 of 248, <http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=11568&page=137>) DMD

A proposal developed with the support of 15 state departments of transportation calls for a road use metering system that could be implemented nationwide but that would provide flexibility so that each state or substate jurisdiction could decide independently whether to charge mileage fees and establish its own rate structure (Forkenbrock and Kuhl 2002; Forkenbrock 2004). The 2005 federal surface transportation aid reauthorization legislation (SAFETEA-LU, Sections 1919 and 1934) authorized a 3-year, large-scale field test of the technical approach of theNewApproach to Road User Charges proposal funded at $16.5 million. The main elements are as follows ([Figure 5-1](http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=11568&page=142#p2000f6319960142001)): Each vehicle would be equipped with an onboard computer. The computer would receive inputs from a GPS receiver and the vehicle odometer and would contain a data file defining the boundaries of taxing jurisdictions and tax rates. In the simplest implementation, the fee schedule would be a flat rate for each mile traveled within a jurisdiction. The onboard computer would calculate the fee and accumulate the total amount owed. The computer would read mileage from the odometer; the GPS input would be used to determine the jurisdiction in which the travel occurred so that the appropriate fee per mile could be applied. Periodically, the vehicle operator would communicate with a fee collection center to report the amount owed. The communication would be by a wireless connection or a smart card. Smart card readers would be attached to motorists’ home computers or located at service stations or in other convenient places. In the same communication, the onboard computer’s data file of rate information would be updated. The collection center would bill the operator and distribute the receipts among the participating jurisdictions. The system would be capable of supporting more complex fee schedules, including charges that depended on the specific road and time of day. Such applications would be at the discretion of each jurisdiction and are seen in the proposal as a later development, after experience was gained with the flat rate mileage charge. Trucks equipped with onboard weighing devices (which are in commercial use today) could be charged fees that depended on road characteristics and weight. Identifying the road on which travel occurred would allow the state to set rates on state-owned roads and local governments to set rates on roads that they owned.

### Opt Out of HTF CP

#### States can initiate the devolution process on their own by opting out of the Highway Trust Fund and directly collecting fees on their own.

Samuels 11 (Peter Samuels, Toll Road news editor, “Alternatives to MBUFs, VMT fees, national tolls - devolution, privatization”, <http://www.tollroadsnews.com/node/5459> August 31 2011)

Utt (in another paper) argues that **a practical way forward is for states to opt out of federal highway and transit program money. Legislation is already being promoted to allow state opt-outs, or the state taking over from the US government its power to tax gasoline and diesel within that state**. **A full third of this federal road fuels tax money presently goes for non-road uses - to transit which takes 20% of the money and caters to just 2% of trips, USDOT overhead costs, to MPOs for metro planning, to bike paths, historic bridge restorations, landscaping, and secretary LaHood's new enthusiasm 'livability' programs.** "**Freed from federally imposed one-size-fits-all policies, states could use the funds to finance their own transportation priorities, not those of the many influential lobbyists and trade associations that seek to gain at taxpayers’ expense or those of the anti-road, anti-car activists who want to return America to a nostalgic vision of how they thought we lived in 1905**…. Because the plan is voluntary, states that preferred to operate under presidential and congressional micromanagement and regulation and the whimsy of fashionable opinion could 'opt in' and continue to serve their transportation needs in the warm embrace of Washington’s bureaucracy." **Under an opt-out program, a state would forgo its annual authorization from the federal highway trust fund and avoid the many mandates like union-only labor, regulations, and scores of specific spending allocations**. It would instead choose to receive the federal fuel taxes collected within its borders as a block grant, or itself directly collect and spend, according to its own priorities, the 18.3c/gallon previously collected in the state by the Feds. It might decide to tax fuel less and toll more, or to toll less and tax more. That would be up to the state's elected officials to decide.

## IRoUTE CP

#### FYI- IRoUTE

Greene 11(David, Ph.D., Geography and Environmental Engineering “Transportation Research Part D 16 (2011) 451–458, Elsevier Journal, p. 452) APB

We argue changing gradually from a financing system based on the motor fuel excise tax to a system based on a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) user fee. Previous studies have paid little attention to modifying the existing system to create a more environmentally beneficial solution to the erosion of motor fuel tax revenues: transforming the motor fuel tax into a user fee on all roadway energy use, indexed to the average efficiency of all highway vehicles and indexed to highway cost inflation. The Indexed Roadway User Toll on Energy (IRoUTE) we propose comprises: 1. All forms of commercial energy used to move transportation vehicles are subject to a user fee per unit of energy (e.g., per megajoule). There are no exceptions, e.g., for biofuels, hydrogen or electricity. 2. The user fee is initially set at a rate that provides an adequate amount of surface transportation revenue. For example, the current federal motor fuel tax rate on gasoline is 18.4 cents per gallon. A typical gallon of gasoline contains 121.7 megajoules of energy, making the tax rate in energy terms 0.15 cents per megajoule. 3. The energy user fee is indexed to the average energy efficiency (e.g., kilometers per megajoule) of all highway vehicles, and to an appropriate index of inflation for surface transportation construction and maintenance.

### IRoUTE CP Solvency

#### IRoUTE increases energy efficiency more than the VMT, but still creates a stable source of infrastructure revenue.

Greene 11(David, Ph.D., Geography and Environmental Engineering “Transportation Research Part D” 16 (2011) 451–458, Elsevier Journal, p. 452) APB

An important advantage of an Indexed Road User Toll on Energy (IRoUTE) versus a VMT user fee is that it provides a continuing incentive to improve vehicle energy efficiency. By raising the price of energy, the toll encourages consumers to choose more efficient vehicles than they would in the absence of a surcharge on energy for road use. It also encourages motorists to operate and maintain their vehicles more efficiently. The short-run gasoline price elasticity of the on-road fuel economy of the vehicle stock has been estimated to be in the vicinity of +0.1 (Greene, in press).5 Li et al. (2009) estimated the long-run price elasticity of fuel economy to be +0.2 for the combined effects of vehicle choice and the on-road efficiency of the vehicle stock. Thus, the price elasticity of new vehicle fuel economy with respect to the price of gasoline, via the mechanism of vehicle choice is in the vicinity of +0.1. The elasticity of new light-duty vehicle fuel economy with respect to the price of gasoline via the mechanism of manufacturers adopting more fuel economy technology has been estimated to be in the range of +0.1 to +0.2 (Greene and DeCicco, 2000). Thus, the combined elasticity of fuel economy with respect to fuel price is +0.3 to +0.4, implying that a 20% increase in the price of fuel would produce a 6–8% increase in fuel economy in the long run. The fuel price elasticity of vehicle travel has recently been estimated to be approximately -0.1, and decreasing over time as motorists’ incomes rise (Small and Van Dender, 2007; Greene, in press). The combined effect of all these mechanisms produces a long-run elasticity of gasoline demand with respect to the price of gasoline of -0.4 to -0.5 (Fig. 5): an elasticity of -0.3 to -0.4 due to improved fuel economy plus an elasticity of -0.1 due to the effect of fuel price on vehicle travel. This range corresponds very well to literature reviews of recent estimates of the long-run price elasticities of gasoline demand, which are in the neighborhood of -0.5 (Dahl, 1995; Espey, 1996). In contrast, an equivalent simple VMT user fee would reduce gasoline demand with an elasticity of -0.1 (one-fourth to one-fifth as large) because it would reduce only VMT and have no impact on fuel economy. If fuel economy standards or GHG standards are, however, in effect and binding on manufacturers (as they likely will be for decades to come) the energy user fee would not have the same effect on energy efficiency via vehicle technology and design. The difference depends on the degree to which the standards induce manufacturers to change the prices of vehicles to encourage consumers to purchase the more efficient makes and models. If the standards induce pricing that impacts vehicle choice as well as vehicle technology and design, the elasticity of fuel economy with respect to the price of energy could be as low as - 0.1 and the impact of the IRoUTE on petroleum use and GHG emissions would be only double that of the VMT user fee. Even in this case, the user toll on energy would help encourage consumer demand for fuel economy. It would also make a small contribution to mitigating the rebound effect of fuel economy on VMT because it would increase in inverse proportion to the average efficiency of the vehicle stock. Indexed to energy efficiency and extended to all forms of energy used for transportation, the IRoUTE addresses the threats of erosion of revenue due to fuel economy improvement and loss of revenue to subsidize alternatives to petroleum. Historically, however, the greatest threat to the stability of motor fuel excise tax revenues has been inflation. The necessity of indexing highway revenues to inflation was noted by the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission (2007). **‘‘**A limitation of the fuel tax is that it is not responsive to increasing construction costs when levied on a per gallon basis. That weakness can be remedied by indexing the tax to inflation**,** using either a broad measure (such as the Consumer Price Index) or a more targeted measure (such as the Producer Price Index for Highway and Street Construction).

#### IRoUTE solves CO2 emissions better, and is cheaper and faster to implement than VMT.

Greene 11(David, Ph.D., Geography and Environmental Engineering “Transportation Research Part D 16 (2011) 451–458, Elsevier Journal, p. 453) APB

The system for collecting a user toll on energy already exists for petroleum based fuels as well as natural gas and alcohols. If hydrogen becomes a transportation fuel in the coming decades, it could be easily included in the existing system. Electric vehicles, on the other hand, pose a challenge. When there are relatively few vehicles taking electricity from the grid, it should be feasible to collect user fees from electric utilities based on the number of grid-connected vehicles in their area and typical usage rates. Eventually, as the grid becomes smarter, it will be possible to collect an IRoUTE in real time as vehicles are recharged.6 Because it is so similar to a motor fuel tax, an IRoUTE would cost less to administer than a VMT user fee. Sorensen et al. (2009) concluded that there are no low-cost options for metering vehicle travel that can be easily verified and enforced. The only low-cost option they could identify was self-reporting of odometer readings, which they judged very difficult to verify, enforce and administer. Given the difficulties of transitioning from the motor fuel user fee to a VMT user fee, they proposed a ‘‘pay-at-the-pump’’ fuel consumption-based method of estimating VMT as the best transition strategy. That strategy is, in effect, an approximation of a user fee indexed to energy efficiency. ‘‘Under this approach, fuel consumption would serve as the basis for estimating travel distance. All vehicles would be equipped with some form of automated vehicle identifier, or AVI, device (likely a radio-frequency identification, or RFID, tag embedded in the license plate or registration sticker). When a vehicle visits a gas station to purchase fuel, electronic readers installed at the pump would detect the vehicle ID and use this information to determine the vehicle’s fuel-economy rating (and, optionally, other characteristics such as weight or emissions class) based on the make and model. The expected mileage could then be estimated based on the number of gallons purchased.’’ (Sorensen et al., 2009) Sorensen et al. recognized that this system requires shifting the point of collection from the wholesale to the retail level, entailing many more reporting points and substantial capital expense for vehicle identifiers and pump detectors. It has been estimated that in mass production, GPS-based monitoring devices might cost under $50 each (Forkenbrock and Hanley, 2006). With approximately 250 million vehicles on the road that still amounts to a total investment of over $12 billion or approximately $1 billion on an annual basis. A user fee based on laboratory test-rated fuel economy would also have the disadvantage of eliminating the incentive created by an energy user fee to operate the vehicle more efficiently. In the future, as highway vehicles transition from fossil carbon based fuels to electricity and hydrogen produced via low greenhouse gas processes, the petroleum and GHG benefits of the IRoUTE will diminish proportionately. Such a transition is not at all likely to be completed before 2050, however (NRC, 2008; Greene et al., 2008). In the meantime, the energy user fee will produce important co-benefits. At the current rate of highway fuel consumption (170 billion gallons per year) and assuming a gasoline price of $2.80 per gallon and an energy user fee equivalent to $0.40 per gallon (federal plus state tax rates), the difference between a VMT user fee and an energy user fee is approximately 45 million metric tons of CO2 per year, or about 5 billion gallons of petroleum.

#### IRoUTE provides the same incentive to reduce miles traveled, but also encourages more energy efficiency than a straight VMT fee.

Greene 11(David, Ph.D., Geography and Environmental Engineering “Transportation Research Part D 16 (2011) 451–458, Elsevier Journal, p. 458) APB

It could begin with local congestion pricing and widespread adoption of mileage-based user fees for heavy, commercial vehicles. In the meantime, a better way to provide basic revenue to maintain, build and operate highway infrastructure is needed. The Indexed Roadway User Toll on Energy could be an important part of the solution. Since it is, on average, a mileage-based toll, it might also accustom motorists to the idea of a graduated system of paying for road use. As nations struggle to curb GHG emissions and address oil dependence, removing the financial incentive to improve motor vehicles’ energy efficiency provided by the current motor fuel excise tax would be a mistake. The Indexed Roadway User Toll on Energy provides an efficient, reliable, predictable, sustainable mechanism for providing a base of financing for surface transportation that is, on average, equivalent to a VMT user fee. At the same time, it would encourage vehicle manufacturers to seek new ways to improve energy efficiency and to adopt advanced energy efficient technologies in the vehicles they design and market. It would encourage consumers to choose more energy efficient vehicles and motorists to operate and maintain vehicles efficiently. Because it is indexed to energy efficiency, it would provide the same incentive to reduce VMT as a general VMT user fee, and would generate the same level of revenue.

## Gas Tax CP

### Gas Tax Solves Laundry List

#### Increasing gas tax solves economy, environment, terrorism, and sets a global example

Appleby 10, (Andrew D., a member of Sutherland’s Tax Practice Group, focusing his practice on state and local tax matters, has experience in many areas of multi-state taxation, including income, franchise, sales and use taxes, Graduate Tax Scholar fellowship program at Georgetown University Law Center, “SYMPOSIUM: TRANSPORTATION ENERGY POLICY IN NATIONAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: A NEW BEGINNING?: PAY AT THE PUMP: HOW $ 11 PER GALLON GASOLINE CAN SOLVE THE UNITED STATES' MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES”, Cumberland Law Review, 40(3)) DMD

Currently, the government mandates fuel efficiency standards for automakers. These standards force automakers to produce cars for which there is little demand. Instead, the government needs to alter American consumers' demand. Essentially, the government should back away from supply-side mandates and incentivize demand for alternative-energy vehicles. Only if Americans have financial incentives to demand alternative-energy vehicles will these vehicles become profitable and make sense for automakers to produce.  [\*6] Government intervention is necessary because it is difficult for myopic consumers to see the range of long-term benefits that would accrue with the elimination of gasoline. American consumers have struggled to adopt long-term economic perspectives, as "we have lived through an era where too often, short-term gains were prized over long-term prosperity." If gasoline prices are low, Americans will only demand alternative-energy vehicles if they make "long-term decisions that aren't in their short-term economic interests." Thus, our government must raise gasoline prices and American consumers must accept a potential short-term sacrifice of higher transportation costs to reap the tremendous benefits resulting from an oil-free transportation sector. A significantly increased gasoline tax is the ideal solution; nothing else so simple can have such an immense impact on all our nation's most pressing challenges. [n16](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n16) An increased gasoline tax makes sense from both an economic and public policy perspective. The aggregate effects of a significantly increased gasoline tax would be astonishing. Within three years, nearly all Americans would drive plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.The percentage of United States renewable energy would increase exponentially. Domestic construction and manufacturing companies would thrive and employ hundreds of thousands of Americans. Detroit would return to profitability and would not have to deal with complex regulatory patchworks. Carbon emissions would drop drastically and public health would improve. The United States would no longer fund terrorism and extremism in the Middle East, and it would finally achieve foreign policy freedom. Most importantly, the United States would set a global example of sustainable growth and prosperity, and our technologies would flow to developing nations.

### Gas Tax Solves Warming/Emissions

#### Germany proves empirical solvency- higher gas taxes increase energy efficiency, decrease emissions, and increase public transit.

Buehler et al. 9, (Ralph, Assistant Professor in Urban Affairs & Planning at Virginia Tech, researches contrasting transport and land-use policies, transport systems, and travel behavior, and John Pucher, Professor, Urban Planning and Policy Development Program, “Making Transportation Sustainable: Insights from Germany”, Metropolitan Policy Program, April, <http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/26736/1/Making%20Transportation%20Sustainable%20-%20Insights%20from%20Germany.pdf?1>) DMD

Gasoline taxation also has a significant impact on costs. The fuel tax was nine times higher in Germany than in the United States in 2006 and Figure 3 shows that the gap between German and American fuel prices has increased over time. 30 While gasoline cost about 70 percent more in Germany than in the U.S. in 1990, the difference increased to 107 percent in 2006. That was partly due to an explicit policy of regular, annual increases in the gas tax in Germany between 1999 and 2003. The Green Party initiated this measure when it became part of the governing coalition in 1998. The tax increase was explicitly designated as an environmental tax intended to curb car use and promote the purchase of more fuel-efficient cars. 31 Studies found that this fiveyear policy resulted in 11 percent reduction in the energy use of passenger transportation, 9 percent reduction in carbon emissions, 12 percent increase in public transportation ridership, and only 1 percent growth in vehicle miles traveled per person. 32 Though the policy expired in 2003, the five-year implementation of the environmental tax helped boost gas taxes and prices permanently.

### Gas Tax => Fuel Efficient Cars

#### Higher gas taxes increase car fuel efficiency

Buehler et al. 9, (Ralph, Assistant Professor in Urban Affairs & Planning at Virginia Tech, researches contrasting transport and land-use policies, transport systems, and travel behavior, and John Pucher, Professor, Urban Planning and Policy Development Program, “Making Transportation Sustainable: Insights from Germany”, Metropolitan Policy Program, April, http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/26736/1/Making%20Transportation%20Sustainable%20-%20Insights%20from%20Germany.pdf?1

Vehicle technology policy: Both the United States and Germany are world technology leaders. Higher fuel taxes in Germany, however, encourage more energy efficient cars. The German car fleet was 50 percent more fuel efficient than American cars and light trucks in 2005. Over the past 15 years, the average fuel efficiency of U.S. vehicle fleet increased only slightly. On average, the cars used by Americans in 2005 were less fuel efficient than the cars driven by Germans as far back as 1980. Germany relies mainly on tax incentives to encourage the purchase and use of more fuel efficient and less polluting cars. The United States uses mainly federal standards. The high level of gas taxes is the driver of fuel efficiency technology in Germany, as throughout Europe. In addition, annual registration fees in Germany favor less polluting, more fuel efficient cars with small engines. The United States provides income tax credits for hybrid and other fuel efficient cars. In addition, the United States experimented with taxes on fuel inefficient cars in the late 1970s. The “gas guzzler tax” has been paid by manufacturers of cars averaging less than 22.5 miles per gallon. However, this tax does not apply to pick-up trucks or sport utility vehicles. While successful initially, the U.S. federal Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) standards have remained virtually unchanged since 1985, though in December 2008 Congress approved a new fuel-economy target of 35 mpg by the year 2020.

### Solves Economy Advantage

#### **Raising the gas tax would solve transportation funding, create jobs, and improves mobility. Chamber of Commerce lobbying provides political cover.**

Mitchell 9, (Josh, journalist at the Wall Street Journal, “Chamber of Commerce Pushes Increase in Gas Tax”, July 15th, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124769092956347439.html>) DMD

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce said Wednesday that it will attempt to do what a string of economists and urban planners couldn't: persuade lawmakers to raise the federal gasoline tax to pay for better roads. The new push by the powerful business lobby, which includes a six-figure ad campaign, comes as Congress has begun debating how to pay for repairs to the nation's highways, bridges and mass-transit systems. Boosting the 18.4-cent federal tax on a gallon of gasoline by roughly 10 cents a gallon would cover the growing funding gap while creating jobs and improving mobility, Chamber officials said Wednesday. "Just damn do it," Chamber President Thomas Donohue said Wednesday at a news briefing, at which he called on Congress not to delay action on a new highway bill as the Obama administration has proposed. Wednesday, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee backed a plan to put off debate on new highway funding for 18 months, extending current funding levels until then. A boost in highway spending could also be a boon for Chamber members like Caterpillar Inc., the heavy-equipment maker that has joined the lobbying campaign. About 100 business executives affiliated with the Chamber fanned out on Capitol Hill Wednesday to meet with lawmakers. The executives ranged from small retailers from North Myrtle Beach, S.C., to [Office Depot](http://online.wsj.com/public/quotes/main.html?type=djn&symbol=odp) Inc. Chief Executive Steve Odland. While the Chamber has previously called for a gas-tax increase, the group is ramping up lobbying because now is an opportune time to make such a move, with gas prices well below last summer's peak of $4 a gallon, Mr. Donohue said. The Chamber has begun paying for billboards and ads in Capitol Hill newspapers advocating a boost in transportation spending. The gas tax hasn't been raised since 1993, and an increase is seen as a politically risky move, particularly during a recession. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood repeated in a congressional hearing this week that the administration wouldn't raise the gas tax during a recession. But Mr. Donohue said the chamber will try to assure officials that businesses will support such a move, providing cover for lawmakers. "We certainly want to negate this issue of a gas tax as a campaign issue," said Janet Kavinoky, a transportation lobbyist for the U.S. Chamber. "When these members go home, they've got to hear from their constituents, 'This is OK.'" She said that while many lawmakers are still expressing fears that they would draw voter ire by voting for a gas-tax increase, she has seen "cracks in the armor," with some expressing more openness to a fuel-tax increase, at least in the medium term. Sen. Barbara Boxer (D., Calif.), chairwoman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, said during a hearing last month that she opposed an immediate gas-tax increase but would be open to eventually tying fuel-tax increases to inflation. Office Depot's Mr. Odland said the idea that Congress is unwilling to raise taxes is "laughable." He cited climate-change legislation that would force businesses to purchase permits for greenhouse-gas emissions, and a proposed surtax on the wealthiest Americans to help pay for a health-care overhaul. "We're raising taxes all over the place," Mr. Odland told reporters Wednesday, saying gas taxes should be considered "user fees" on drivers and businesses. "Stop with those taxes and let's start with the user fees." The Chamber is supporting legislation by James Oberstar (D., Minn.), chairman of the House Transportation Committee, to spend $500 billion over six years on transportation projects – including a 40% increase over current spending levels on highways and transit.

### Gas Tax Solves Heg

#### Increased gas taxes decreases US dependency and economically undermines major geopolitical adversaries

Krauthammer 9 (Charles, American Pulitzer Prize–winning syndicated columnist, political commentator, and physician, “The Net-Zero Gas Tax A once-in-a-generation chance”, January 5, <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/015/949rsrgi.asp>)

So why even think about it? Because the virtues of a gas tax remain what they have always been. A tax that suppresses U.S. gas consumption can have a major effect on reducing world oil prices. And the benefits of low world oil prices are obvious: They put tremendous pressure on OPEC, as evidenced by its disarray during the current collapse; they deal serious economic damage to energy-exporting geopolitical adversaries such as Russia, Venezuela, and Iran; and they reduce the enormous U.S. imbalance of oil trade which last year alone diverted a quarter of $1 trillion abroad. Furthermore, a reduction in U.S. demand alters the balance of power between producer and consumer, making us less dependent on oil exporters. It begins weaning us off foreign oil, and, if combined with nuclear power and renewed U.S. oil and gas drilling, puts us on the road to energy independence.

### Gas Tax effectively Prices Externalities

#### An increased gas tax can effectively price all negative externalities of driving.

Appleby 10, (Andrew D., member of Sutherland’s Tax Practice Group, focusing his practice on state and local tax matters, has experience in many areas of multi-state taxation, including income, franchise, sales and use taxes, “TRANSPORTATION ENERGY POLICY IN NATIONAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: A NEW BEGINNING?: PAY AT THE PUMP: HOW $ 11 PER GALLON GASOLINE CAN SOLVE THE UNITED STATES' MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES”, Cumberland Law Review, 40(3)) DMD

The economic justification for a significant increase in the gasoline tax is that the current tax does not account for all the costs of consumption. Drivers do not pay all the costs associated with driving. There are external costs that are borne by society rather than by the individual. In the case of gasoline consumption, these external costs -- called negative externalities -- are significant. An increased gasoline tax will shift these external costs from our society to the drivers who should properly bear the costs. Only if individuals bear all of the costs of driving gasoline vehicles will consumers have incentive to account for external costs when making consumption decisions. Several researchers suggest that the "social benefits created by taxing gasoline may justify a tax rate significantly higher than the existing rate." A gasoline tax can "correct this market failure by adjusting the cost of motor vehicle use to accurately [\*26] reflect the burdens on society and can use the revenues generated to foster alternative modes of transportation."

### VMT more expensive- Administration Costs

#### VMT tax administration costs much more of revenue than the gas tax

Rahman et al, 11 (Lazeena Rahman is a Graduate School of Business and Public Policy student at Stanford, Kumi Harischandra, Justine Isola, and Anthony Suen are graduate students in Stanford’s International Policy Studies program, Prepared for: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “Going Forward: Prospects for Transitioning from Gas Taxes to Vehicle-Miles-Traveled Fees” p. ix) APB

Administrative costs Administering the gas tax system currently costs less than one percent of total gas tax receipts.63 Administering a VMT fee system would be far more challenging and expensive. Estimates from VMT fee experiments in the Netherlands indicate that a VMT system might impose a six percent administrative fee with one-time startup costs of around 200 dollars per vehicle.64 A major driver of costs will be whether the requirement for estimating mileage and charges is geographically coarse, such as estimating mileages for each state, or geographically fine, such as estimating specific charges due to the use of particular roads. Granular GPS-based information may suffice for assuring the accuracy of usage estimates by facility rather than by broader geographic area. Detailed data is needed if a VMT system were to differentiate between road lanes, for example, to distinguish the usage of high-occupancy lanes.

### Gas Tax > VMT

#### The fuel tax is more equitable and efficient than any alternative- VMT has far higher administrative costs.

Christopher and Reiley 9( Pete and Allison Reporters at Transport Topics Fuel tax a better method than VMT, ATA, other groups tell house panel. Transport Topics,(3855), 13-13. August 3rd 2009) ZLH

Representatives of American Trucking Associations and other business groups urged Congress not to dismiss an increase in the federal fuel tax as a way to pay for a long-term surface transportation bill.

"No alternative funding schemes can match the efficiency or equitability of the federal fuel tax," said Barbara Windsor, president of Hahn Transportation Inc. and second vice chairwoman of ATA.

Windsor, testifying on July 23 before the House Ways and Means Committee's panel on select revenue measures, said ATA was opposed to alternative types of financing, specifically a venicle-miles traveled fee that was floated by some members of the committee.

"The challenge is not to find a replacement for the fuel tax but to design a tax mechanism to augment the fuel tax," she said. "It is clear that the collection costs to both the user and the tax collector will be far greater [with a VMT tax] than is currently experienced under the fuel tax system."

Windsor said that currently, fuel taxes are paid by "around 1,300 facilities, owned by approximately 300 companies," while a VMT would push the number of taxpayers into the hundreds of millions.

Janet Kavinoky, director of transportation infrastructure of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, told the panel her group agreed with ATA.

"Fuel taxes are currently the simplest, fairest and most effective way to generate additional revenues to sustain the user-fee funded approach to surface transportation infrastructure investment," Kavinoky said. "Capital investment requires capital, and there is no alternative for the systemic funding needed at the federal level."

### Avoids Politics

#### **VMT is massively unpopular, considered costly and unnecessary by public. Indexing and increasing the gas tax solves and is politically viable.**

Baker et al 9 (Ginger Goodin, Richard T. Baker and Lindsay Taylor, Texas Transportation Institute, Sponsored by the USDoT, “Mileage-Based User Fees: Defining a Path toward Implementation Phase 2: An Assessment of Institutional Issues” p. 17-8) APB

Focus group data have shown that the general public may view threats to transportation financing more in terms of the need for more responsible spending and less in terms of threats to the revenue base. For example, Minnesota focus groups showed that the public has yet to make a connection between increasing vehicular fuel efficiencies and declining future revenues (6), while focus groups conducted in Texas showed that diversions to non‐road maintenance and development programs were deemed as a much larger problem than deficiencies with the fuel tax (7). Focus group data have also shown that the public may view mileage‐based user fees as being too costly and complex relative to the fuel tax (6, 7). As such, they are viewed as being too costly an alternative. Therefore, it is likely that the public will be resistant to large‐scale changes without first attempting “easy fixes.” States and the federal 18 government, in developing mileage‐based alternatives, may therefore do well to attempt these short‐term easy fixes in addition to implementing mileage‐based fee systems. Indexing and/or Increasing the Fuel Tax Simply increasing and/or indexing the fuel tax to some measure of inflation, such as a highway construction cost index or the consumer price index, is perhaps the most straightforward solution to the near‐term insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). The National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Committee (NSTIFC) has recommended a $0.10 increase in the federal gasoline tax, a $0.15 increase in the federal diesel tax, a doubling of the federal heavy vehicle use tax (HVUT), and measures to index these and other special fuels taxes in conjunction with the upcoming federal transportation reauthorization cycle

## Graduated Oil Tax CP

### Graduated Oil Tax Solves Highway Revenue

#### A graduated tax on each barrel of oil consumed provides sufficient revenue for transportation infrastructure while avoiding political opposition to raising the gas tax.

Crane, Burger, and Wachs 11(Keith, director of the Environment, Energy, and Economic Development program at the RAND Corporation, Nicholas, and Martin, senior principal researcher at RAND, professor at the Pardee RAND Graduate School, formerly served as director of the RAND Transportation, Space, and Technology Program, RAND, nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis, “The Option of an Oil Tax To Fund Transportation and Infrastructure”, RAND Corporation, March, <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP320.pdf>) DMD

In light of opposition to raising federal gasoline taxes, one option for covering increased costs of maintaining and improving our roads and transportation infrastructure would be to replace fixed-rate taxes on gasoline and diesel fuel with a percentage tax on each barrel of oil consumed in the United States. We argue that the percentage rate levied under this tax should be flexible: It should be set so as to ensure adequate revenues for surface transportation and other expenditures deemed to be tied to U.S. oil consumption. This percentage should be adjusted on an annual or quarterly basis to ensure that sufficient revenues are available but that consumers are not penalized during periods when prices spike. Accordingly, when oil prices rise, the tax rate would fall so that consumers and businesses are not doubly penalized by both higher oil prices and higher taxes. Conversely, when oil prices fall, the tax rate would rise, ensuring that sufficient revenues are available to cover the cost of roads.

#### Graduated oil tax solves for current gas tax shortfalls- would be indexed to ensure sufficient revenue for transportation funding.

Crane, Burger, and Wachs 11(Keith, director of the Environment, Energy, and Economic Development program at the RAND Corporation, Nicholas, and Martin, senior principal researcher at RAND, professor at the Pardee RAND Graduate School, formerly served as director of the RAND Transportation, Space, and Technology Program, RAND, nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis, “The Option of an Oil Tax To Fund Transportation and Infrastructure”, RAND Corporation, March, <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP320.pdf>) DMD

There are multiple advantages to employing a graduated percentage tax on oil as opposed to fixed per-gallon taxes on gasoline and diesel. First, one of the greatest problems with the current tax is that it is not adjusted for inflation. Road construction costs rise over time, but the tax does not. Revenues from a graduated percentage tax would increase as oil prices rise, and the percentage rate could be automatically adjusted to ensure that a sufficient level of revenue for transportation funding is available if prices drop.

### Oil Tax Solves Oil Dependence

#### Replacing the gas tax with a graduated oil tax discourage oil dependence, and can provide enough revenue for both the HTF and other federal spending on transportation too.

Crane, Burger, and Wachs 11 (Keith, director of the Environment, Energy, and Economic

Development program at the RAND Corporation, Nicholas, and Martin, senior principal researcher at RAND, professor at the Pardee RAND Graduate School, formerly served as director of the RAND Transportation, Space, and Technology Program, RAND, nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis, “The Option of an Oil Tax To Fund Transportation and Infrastructure”, March, RAND Corporation, <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP320.pdf>) DMD

In 2009, the United States consumed 6,865,650,000 barrels of oil or oil-equivalent fuel products (Energy Information Administration [EIA], 2010a, Table A11), purchased at an average price of about $59.04 per barrel of oil (EIA, 2010a, Table A12), for a total expenditure of $405 billion. 1 If all federal taxes on gasoline and diesel were eliminated and replaced with a percentage tax on oil, in 2009, a 9-percent tax on the value of a barrel of oil would have generated the same amount of revenue for the federal HTF as current taxes do on gasoline and diesel fuel. Assuming that U.S. oil consumption remains flat and oil prices average $72 per barrel, roughly the price of oil at mid-summer, sufficient revenues ($83 billion) could be raised to fund federal surface-transportation programs with a percentage tax of approximately 17 percent. 2 In the long run, oil demand would respond to higher prices from an oil tax, and higher tax rates would likely be needed to achieve revenue targets. We address this point further in Section 4. Different percentage taxes and various oil prices would generate a wide range of revenues. Table 1 illustrates potential revenue streams for a variety of price points and levels of taxation assuming 2009 oil-consumption levels. For example, a tax on oil could be set at a level to cover federal spending on air transportation as well as on surface transportation. U.S. revenues from taxes on air travel were $10.6 billion in 2009. If a tax on oil were to be substituted for these taxes, it would have to be set at 19 percent at a price of $72 per barrel to cover all expenditures on transportation, 2 percentage points more than a tax set just to cover federal expenditures on ground transportation. As we discuss in more detail in Section 4, higher oil prices would lead to a drop in the amount of oil demanded in the long run. As a result, the tax rates presented in Table 1 might not reflect the long-run revenue potential for an oil tax, since the total oil consumed would fall, reducing the total tax revenue generated. In Table 2, we present revenue numbers based on how consumers might respond to higher oil prices. The “long-run” revenues reflect reduced demand for oil—based on a –0.3 elasticity—from higher prices. 3 For any given oil price and tax rate combination, the long-run revenues are smaller than the short-run revenues; for example, a tax of approximately 19 percent would be needed to generate $83 billion in revenue, the amount needed to fund near-term transportation expenditures. Although the long-run revenue potential is important to consider, we focus in the remainder of the paper on short-run revenue generation, since we are motivated by near-term appropriations for highway transportation.

### Oil Tax => Eliminate Other Fuel Taxes

#### Counterplan allows elimination of other forms of fuel taxes.

Crane, Burger, and Wachs 11(Keith, director of the Environment, Energy, and Economic Development program at the RAND Corporation, Nicholas, and Martin, senior principal researcher at RAND, professor at the Pardee RAND Graduate School, formerly served as director of the RAND Transportation, Space, and Technology Program, RAND, nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis, “The Option of an Oil Tax To Fund Transportation and Infrastructure”, RAND Corporation, March, <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP320.pdf>) DMD

Second, the tax could replace several other taxes, potentially simplifying the tax system. If

the proposed tax were adopted, excise taxes on gasoline, diesel fuel, and aviation fuel all could

be eliminated, reducing the number of transportation taxes collected.

### Oil Tax Solves Economy

#### Oil tax key to preserve economic stability during a supply interruption- it allows accurate pricing of the environmental and national security costs of oil dependence.

Crane, Burger, and Wachs 11(Keith, director of the Environment, Energy, and Economic Development program at the RAND Corporation, Nicholas, and Martin, senior principal researcher at RAND, professor at the Pardee RAND Graduate School, formerly served as director of the RAND Transportation, Space, and Technology Program, RAND, nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis, “The Option of an Oil Tax To Fund Transportation and Infrastructure”, RAND Corporation, March, <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP320.pdf>) DMD

In addition to environmental costs, imported oil from unstable or unfriendly states imposes national security costs on the United States. Abrupt cutoffs in the global supply of oil, no matter the source, would trigger a sharp rise in world oil prices, potentially harming the U.S. economy. By imposing a tax on oil, the U.S. government would tap into a stream of revenues that would defray some of the costs of preserving economic stability in the event of a surge in oil prices. For example, the tax could be designed to cover the cost of stocking and maintaining the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Since the presidency of Jimmy Carter, U.S. armed forces have been tasked with defending sources of oil and the transportation routes along which oil is shipped. The cost of this mission is significant. In line with sound economic principles, the cost of this service could be incorporated into the price of oil through a tax yielding an offsetting amount of revenue. An oil tax would be more broadly based than taxes on specific transportation fuels. An oil tax, as opposed to taxes on just gasoline and diesel, would spread the burden of environmental and national security costs across all consumers of petroleum products, including home heating oil and petroleum coke. A tax imposed on all oil products ensures that tax policies do not distort the development of new technologies by encouraging the substitution of other refined oil products for diesel and gasoline.

## Oil Dependence NB Impacts for Gas/Oil Tax CPs

### Oil Dependence Laundry List: Econ, Terrorism, Conflict

#### Oil dependence kills the economy, funds terrorists, and increases international conflict.

Crane, Burger, and Wachs 11 (Keith, director of the Environment, Energy, and Economic Development program at the RAND Corporation, Nicholas, and Martin, senior principal researcher at RAND, professor at the Pardee RAND Graduate School, formerly served as director of the RAND Transportation, Space, and Technology Program, RAND, nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis, “The Option of an Oil Tax To Fund Transportation and Infrastructure”, RAND Corporation, March, <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP320.pdf>) DMD

Macroeconomic Disruptions and National Security. Consuming oil creates or exacerbates economic and political threats to U.S. national security. In addition, there are costs related to maintaining military forces to reduce these risks to U.S. security. 13 Consumption of oil creates two major economic risks to the United States. One, an abrupt fall in the global supply of oil would result in a surge in the world market price. Because refined oil products are an important input to economic activity in the United States and a sharp price increase disrupts U.S. economic activity, several economists argue that past price surges precipitated economic recessions (Brown and Huntington, 2010). A surge in oil prices triggered by instability among oil exporters or an embargo would threaten U.S. security through the economic disruption it would entail. Two, because the United States is a net importer of oil, large increases in U.S. consumers’ oil payments associated with shifts in oil prices—or because of deliberate reductions in supply by major exporters—result in a shift in the terms of trade, reducing the value of U.S. income and assets. Although economic in nature, a large shift in payments reduces resources within the United States to pay for the Department of Defense, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and other efforts to make the United States secure. Oil consumption, especially of imported oil, has been linked with multiple political threats to U.S. national security. these include the following: • the potential of major oil exporters to manipulate exports to influence other countries in ways inimical to U.S. interests • the potential for competition for oil supplies to exacerbate international tensions or disrupt international oil markets • the effect of higher revenues from oil exports on the ability of “rogue” oil exporters, such as Venezuela and Iran, to thwart U.S. policy goals • the potential role that oil export revenues can play in supporting terrorist groups. Among these linkages, embargoes on exports of oil (and natural gas) have been unsuccessful in changing policies of nations that were targeted by an embargo (Crane et al., 2009). As long as oil is a globally traded commodity, oil-exporting nations cannot successfully target specific countries because importers can purchase alternative supplies on the global market.

### Oil Dependence => Terrorism

#### Oil dependence funds terrorism- only decreasing demand solves.

Appleby 10, (Andrew D., a member of Sutherland’s Tax Practice Group, focusing his practice on state and local tax matters, as experience in many areas of multi-state taxation, including income, franchise, sales and use taxes, Graduate Tax Scholar fellowship program at Georgetown University Law Center, “SYMPOSIUM: TRANSPORTATION ENERGY POLICY IN NATIONAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: A NEW BEGINNING?: PAY AT THE PUMP: HOW $ 11 PER GALLON GASOLINE CAN SOLVE THE UNITED STATES' MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES”, Cumberland Law Review, 40(3)) DMD

The vast majority of Americans -- including politicians -- underestimate the severity of our national security threat attributable to foreign oil dependence. Foundationally, Americans continue to overlook that we are financing both sides of the "War on Terror" through our gasoline consumption and subsequent wealth transfer. [n44](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n44) Through our purchase of oil, the United States transfers "an enormous amount of wealth" from our own pockets to those of autocratic and adversarial regimes, thereby damaging the United [\*11] States economy. [n45](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n45) Essentially, when the United States transfers its wealth to oil exporters, "oil exporters get rich and Americans lose jobs." [n46](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n46) Beyond the economic effects, the transfer of United States wealth to hostile nations indirectly funds terrorism and its ideological support. [n47](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n47) The United States depends on several countries in the Middle East, Africa, and South America for oil. [n48](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n48) Virtually all of these countries are governed by regimes that are hostile -- often openly and explicitly -- to the interests of the United States. [n49](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n49) Former CIA Director R. James Woolsey predicts that our war with several Middle East Islamist totalitarian movements will last at least forty-five years. [n50](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n50) As a point of reference, the seemingly endless Iraq War began only six years ago. [n51](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n51) Because the United States' wealth transfer indirectly funds terrorism, the "best and perhaps only way to cut terrorist funding is to stop the cash flow to supporters." [n52](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n52) The [\*12] United States has the ability to eliminate many hostile nations' power by eliminating oil demand. As former Saudi oil minister Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani recognized, "the Stone Age did not end for lack of stone." [n53](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1341194497540&returnToKey=20_T15036087965&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.74555.20439212737" \l "n53)

## Public-Private Partnerships CP

### Public-Private Partnerships Solve Road Funding

#### P3s solve for infrastructure funding to maintain and update the transportation system.

Samuels 11 (Peter Samuels, Toll Road news editor, “Alternatives to MBUFs, VMT fees, national tolls - devolution, privatization”, <http://www.tollroadsnews.com/node/5459> August 31 2011)

**Another approach to improved road funding and performance is privatization, or as it is called in more polite company 'public private partnerships'** (PPPs or P3s). That of course enables us to tap investors and for-profit business management incentives to build, own, operate, and toll (BOOT) roads under longterm lease and concession agreements. A certain amount of this is already being done in various states - Texas is the leader. The most vigorous and detailed exposition of the case for P3s is put by Richard Geddes, a Cornell University economist in a recent book "The Road to Renewal: Private Investment in U.S. Transportation Infrastructure" published by the American Enterprise Institute: "**Large-scale private investment in transportation infrastructure has the potential to thoroughly revitalize America’s highway, bridge, tunnel, port, and intermodal systems, which are in desperate need of expansion, renovation, and repair.** **The dire fiscal condition of many states and localities means that fewer public dollars are available for infrastructure, making private investment especially timely. Private investment not only injects vast amounts of capital into transportation system maintenance and expansion, but also introduces the sharp, focused incentives that are necessary to operate, upgrade, and expand key facilities efficiently**." Also: "While PPPs are often—and justifiably—promoted for their ability to tap new pools of capital that can be used to renovate existing facilities and construct new ones, and for their ability to assume risk, **the effect of private participation** on the incentives of facility operators…**create social benefits such as the rationalization of transportation investments and the provision of information about the true value of transportation facilities.** **It is thus not only new capital investment and risk assumption, but also the associated high-powered incentives that have .. the potential to rejuvenate America’s beleaguered transportation sector**…(T)hey inject fresh competition into a range of transportation activities. Competition is a powerful force for promoting social welfare, since it encourages firms to operate efficiently, to focus on customers, and to adopt new technologies rapidly. PPPs already benefit motorists, taxpayers, and investors by allowing competition in several dimensions of transportation provision, such as facility design and construction." On loss of public control: "PPPs are, for example, sometimes charged with creating a loss of public control over critical transportation assets. But control under a PPP approach must be assessed relative to the public’s control under a traditional procurement approach. By incorporating detailed, transparent, and enforceable contracts, well-executed PPPs in fact improve public control over transportation facilities." On political direction of funding as compared to market direction: "As the numerous earmarks in the (last) highway reauthorization bill suggest, much of America’s federal transportation spending today is directed by political calculations rather than by benefits to motorists and taxpayers in their capacity as investors. The PPP approach allows capital to flow to those investments that transportation customers—motorists—value most highly. **Returns on investment are highest on the facilities that motorist-customers use the most, and private participants will seek those returns. Competitively provided capital, taking prudent risks, will result in project choices that are based more on economic value and less on politics."** Private risk capital has played a central role in infrastructure: "Risk-taking private capital played a critical role in constructing America’s railroads, electric grid, waterworks, and Internet network. It was central to building our road, bridge, and canal systems in the nineteenth century. **A vast global supply of capital is ready today to invest in U.S. infrastructure, and the need for that investment is overwhelming. It is time to develop the policy framework to allow private capital to expand and renovate America’s surface transportation system in the twenty-first century."**