## Urban Mass Transit Negative

[\*\*\*Disad links\*\*\* 2](#_Toc328206886)

\*\*\*[Counter Plan Mechs\*\*\* 6](#_Toc328206887)

\*\*\*[Solvency Answers\*\*\* 14](#_Toc328206888)

\*\*\*[Advantage Answers\*\*\* 24](#_Toc328206889)

# \*\*\*Disad links\*\*\*

## Politics helpers – Highway lobby powerful

**Highway lobby exerts significant power over politicians interests.**

Mark **Robinowitz**. Peak Traffic: Planning NAFTA superhighways at the edn of the Age of Oil Part one, From the Wilderness.com. **2006** http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/051006\_peak\_traffic.shtml

Highway construction is a key part of the wealth-transfer scheme called “the economy.” Road expansion unites powerful interests, including real estate speculators, developers, road construction, sand and gravel mining, and lending institutions. In most communities in North America, these elites are the financial sponsors of local politicians who make zoning and planning decisions to build new highways and the associated development.

**Highway lobby stronger than Transit Lobby**

**Zasloff**, Jonathon. "The Reality-Based Community." Can the Highway Lobby Be Beaten? Â«. Samefacts.com, 28 Jan**. 2009**. Web. 22 June 2012. <http://www.samefacts.com/2009/01/energy-and-environment/can-the-highway-lobby-be-beaten/>.

Apparently some transit will survive in the stimulus, and that’s a good thing. But it’s not nearly enough, and remember, this thing still has to pass the Senate, which is even more tilted toward rural interests. Consider the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on transportation, which includes Robert Byrd, Byron Dorgan, Pat Leahy, Tim Johnson, and Tom Harkin–all of whom will fight against it. And Dianne Feinstein, who can always be counted on to sell out her constituents. And then the Republicans, who rely on rural votes and detest cities in any event. That’s a very formidable combination.

More importantly, though, it’s less a matter of personnel than of the way in which lobbies are structured. Yesterday here at UCLA Law School, we had a symposium on SB 375, California’s landmark smart growth bill. Although hailed around the world as the start of new planning thinking, it’s important to realize that it nearly didn’t pass–Schwarzenegger came very close to vetoing it.

Why? The highway lobby hates transit and smart growth. It nearly persuaded Arnold to deep-six the thing, even though he claims that he wants vigorous action on climate change. And think of who was in favor of SB 375: it was endorsed by the environmentalists, the housing lobby, the builders’ lobby, and most of the labor unions in the state. It still nearly lost, and then it passed only after getting watered down at the last minute. The highway lobby is that powerful. Transit advocates need to assembly a lobby that can at least be in the same ballpark with highways. And so far, we haven’t. One environmental advocate explained to me that the “operating engineers” — the guys who drive the bulldozers — usually give candidates of both parties between $3-4 million per election cycle just in California. The highway contractors have locked down legislators throughout the state and the nation. The building trades prefer highways to transit because they believe (I don’t know whether it’s true) that there are more jobs doing rebar than building rail. Local transportation agencies ally closely with them because they dole out the cash, giving them political power. And all of this is exacerbated by timing: because the nation has not committed to transit, the transit contractors are not anywhere near as powerful as the highwaymen. That’s the old LBJ formula: you give someone a subsidy, they make money, they contribute to your campaign, you win, and then you give them more subsidy. Transit folks have not gotten on that gravy train — er, highway — yet.

## Politics Links

**Plan is politically controversial – previous debates prove**

Yonah **Freemark** (editor for the Transportation Politic) “Time to Fight” **February 6 2012** http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/02/06/time-to-fight/

Actions by members of the U.S. House over the past week suggest that Republican opposition to the funding of alternative transportation has developed into an all-out ideological battle. Though their efforts are unlikely to advance much past the doors of their chamber, the policy recklessness they have displayed speaks truly poorly of the future of the nation’s mobility systems.

**Transit spending unpopular – Republicans.**

**Reuters,** June 7 **2012.** “Boehner floats six-month transport funding extension” http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-06-07/news/sns-rt-us-usa-infrastructure-boehnerbre85617l-20120607\_1\_highway-bill-short-term-extension-boehner-and-senate-republican>//jt

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Signaling that hopes for a deal on a transportation construction bill may be fading, U.S. House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner on Thursday floated the idea of a six-month extension of current funding to push the issue past the November elections. Boehner told reporters that if House and Senate negotiators fail to agree on new long-term funding by June 30, when the latest stop-gap authority for road, bridge and rail transit projects expires, he would not want another short-term extension. "Frankly, I think if we get to June 30, there would be a six-month extension and move this thing out of the political realm that it appears to be in at this moment," Boehner said. The fight in Congress over the transportation bill is one of several being waged between Democrats and Republicans on high-profile issues, with each side trying to gain the upper hand in their bids to win re-election on November 6. The highway bill is particularly important as it would authorize major job-creating construction projects across the United States at a time when the economic recovery is losing steam and jobs are the top issue for voters. Democrats stepped up their accusations that Republicans were "stalling" the transport measure and other jobs-focused legislation in an effort to keep the economy weak and undermine Obama's re-election hopes. "For months the congressional Republicans have worked against any piece of legislation that might create jobs or spur economic growth," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said on the Senate floor. "Congressional Republicans' No. 1 goal isn't to improve the economy or create jobs, it's to defeat President Obama," added Reid, a Democrat.

## Politics Links (2/2)

**Mass transit unpopular with Republicans.**

**McCollum** May 28. **2012.** Congresswoman Betty McCollum, posted as a press release on her online office at < http://mccollum.house.gov/press-release/mccollum-urges-rejection-proposed-republican-budget-cuts-minnesota-highways-bridges>//jt

Congressional Quarterly's House Action Report yesterday described the House GOP budget resolution for Fiscal Year 2013 (H. Con. Res. 112) as recommending "the termination of funding for high-speed rail projects, reductions in Amtrak funding and the elimination of the New Starts and Small Starts programs in the Federal Transit Administration." CQ further explains that the Republican House Majority "argues that mass transit projects are local, not national, and should therefore be funded at the local level." For Minnesota, Republicans in Congress are proposing to shift the entire burden of financing mass transit construction onto the state and localities. There is no guarantee – or even commitment – in the Republican budget to provide promised federal transit funds to allow completion of the construction of the Central Corridor LRT. The GOP budget would shift 100% of transit funding onto the state and local governments for the following projects: • Southwest Corridor • Gateway Corridor • Bottineau Corridor • Robert Street Corridor • Riverview Corridor • Rush Line Corridor.

# Counter Plan Mechs

## Privitization CP

### Mass transit is not working now, private sector would be able to do so more efficiently.

Clifford **Winston** September 29, **2010** The Private Sector Can Improve Infrastructure with Privatization not a Bank http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2010/09/29-infrastructure-privatization-winston

The notion of an “infrastructure bank” seems to be gathering steam among the cognoscenti as an effective way to put our long-term economic recovery back on track. Creating an infrastructure bank would be a nice coup for the Obama administration because it would reinforce its strategy of massive spending to solve the nation’s economic ills while simultaneously enlisting the participation of Wall Street and the business community. Unfortunately, an infrastructure bank would be compromised by the same political pressures that our current transportation system faces, and it would also fail to address the most glaring problems with the nation’s infrastructure. The Administration could improve the nation’s infrastructure—and also improve its standing with Wall Street and the business community—by selling some roads and airports outright to the private sector. Privatizing infrastructure would also help cut the federal deficit by raising revenues and reducing expenditures. The bank’s funds would consist of private capital and general funds, which would allegedly be allocated by an appointed Board to projects that meet national economic objectives instead of local political objectives. Really? Why would state and local sponsors bring candidate projects to the bank unless they thought they could apply political pressure to get their projects approved? Would Florida stand by while California got funding for a large project and it got nothing? And is it plausible to believe that states and cities would support allocating public funds primarily on the basis of maximizing private investors’ returns? Do governments often think that way? Moreover, even if an infrastructure bank existed, it would not address the public sector’s inefficient pricing, investment, and production policies. Consider highways, airports, and urban transit. Motorists and truckers pay a gasoline tax but they are not charged for delaying other vehicles on the road; truckers are not charged for damaging pavement and stressing bridges; aircrafts pay a weight-based landing fee but they are not charged for delaying other planes that want to takeoff or land; and bus and rail transit users pay fares that only cover a modest fraction of operating costs and no capital costs—in fact, some, like federal employees, obtain subsidies to ride completely free. Prices that are set below costs send the wrong signals for investment by justifying expenditures to expand a crowded road when the problem would be fixed by simply charging peak-period tolls. The bank may try to force states and cities to consider pricing options but politicians have made it clear that they prefer to spend money on their constituents, not to charge them a user fee. The way we waste money on our transportation infrastructure is appalling. Road pavement is not built thickly enough to minimize the sum of maintenance and up-front capital costs. The cost of highway projects is inflated by Davis-Bacon regulations that require labor to be paid at the prevailing union wage rate in a metropolitan area, and by cost overruns that occur because the bidding process selects the firm that is the lowest-cost bidder even though those costs do not tend to end at the bid thanks to renegotiable (mutable-cost) clauses in the contract for underestimated project expenses. Boston’s Big Dig, which came in at a large multiple of the bid price, comes to mind. Airports are a nightmare because they take several years to add runways thanks to opposition from local residents, environmental groups, and regulatory hurdles such as EPA environmental impact standards. And building a new large airport from scratch is basically impossible for the same reasons. Only one has been built over the last 35 years. Mass transit—busses, subways and trains—run too many schedules that make little sense, which is why on average, most buses and subways fill roughly 20% of their seats—and routes don’t change even if population centers shift. At the same time, the cost of providing transit service is inflated by regulations such as “buy American” provisions that mandate that transit agencies first offer contracts to domestic producers instead of seeking the most efficient suppliers of capital equipment. Other perverse incentives include giving extra federal dollars to transit agencies to replace their capital stock prematurely rather than maintaining it efficiently. And it is basically impossible to lay- off or fire a transit employee because to do so could result in severance packages that approach $400,000 per worker. An infrastructure bank would do nothing to address those inefficiencies. And if an infrastructure bank is going to be funded by outside institutional investors, why not allow the private sector to have a greater stake in infrastructure performance by selling them ownership? Privatization of the system would have at least three positive effects. First, private operators would have the incentive to minimize the costs of providing transportation service and can begin the long process of ridding the system of the inefficiencies that have developed from decades of misguided policies. Second, private operators would introduce services and make investments that are responsive to travelers’ preferences. Third, private operators would develop new innovations and expedite implementation of current advances in technology, including on-board computers that can improve highway travel by giving drivers real-time road conditions, satellite-provided information to better inform transit riders and drivers of traffic conditions, and a satellite-based air traffic control system to reduce air travel time and carrier operating costs and improve safety. The technology is there. But it hasn’t been deployed in a timely fashion because government operators have no incentive to do so. The private sector does. The major and legitimate concern with privatization is that private firms would be able to set excessive prices and drastically cut service because they face little competition or that they might experience serious financial difficulties. Thus, experiments are needed to provide evidence on the intensity of various potential sources of competition, firms’ financial performance, and the evolution of capital markets to fund a privatized system. Congressional legislation for airports and highways has included funding and tax breaks to explore privatization, so the idea of experiments is not new (nor is the idea of private infrastructure in most parts of the world). Supporters of an infrastructure bank claim it would treat infrastructure like a long-term investment, not an expense. Yet, unlike privatization, a bank would do little to curb wasteful expenses. The case is not difficult to make: the country would clearly benefit from a policy that has great potential to spur innovation and growth and has the added bonus of budgetary relief. Privatization, instead of a bank, is the real long-term solution to the nation’s transportation infrastructure problems.

### Private agencies are effective at filling any gaps in mass transit in urban areas.

Adie **Tomer,** Elizabeth **Kneebone**, Robert **Puentes**, **and** Alan **Berube** Missed Opportunity: Brookings Institute, **May 2012** Transit and Jobs in Metropolitan America http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2011/5/12%20jobs%20and%20transit/0512\_jobs\_transit.pdf

Public transit is not necessarily the best or only answer for increasing job access in some communitiesand metropolitan areas. To fill gaps in the metropolitan network, some large businesses andconsortiums of private sector entities provide company-owned or company-contracted services toget workers to jobs. The services are usually from designated stops in the metro area in which theiremployees live or from the nearest transit station to their offices. In the Puget Sound region, probablythe largest such service—Microsoft’s Connector—runs over 15 routes and 55 buses equipped with Wi-Fi,bike racks, and power outlets serving over 3,000 workers each day. Google runs an extensive bus servicein the San Francisco Bay Area.77 Plans for other privately run routes to fill the gaps in bus networksare underway in metropolitan Atlanta, Pittsburgh, New York, and other areas.

### The only reason public transportation is effective at all is because of an initial investment by the private sector. The private sector does it cheaper and more efficiently.

**Smith 2010** The problem with “public” transportation By Stephen Smith, on December 16th, 2010 http://marketurbanism.com/2010/12/16/the-problem-with-public-transportation/ Market Urbanism Urbanism for Capitalists / Capitalism for Urbanists Stephen is a writer for forbes.com

The biggest problem here is the conflation of “public transit” with “mass transit.” When New York’s rail lines were first built, they were private enterprises, not public ones. And Benjamin Kabak doesn’t explicitly say it, but when people talk about a city’s “forefathers,” they’re almost always talking about lawmakers. And in the late 19th and early 20th century, when New York’s massive transit networks were being built, lawmakers did pretty much everything they could to stifle the budding transit market – the idea that any of them had any “forethought” is absurd. But secondly, Benjamin Kabak’s reverence for New York City’s subway system ignores the far more important contributions to the city made by streetcar and elevated train lines. As I’m learning in Robert Fogelson’s Downtown, NYC’s publicly-built subways paled in comparison to the privately-constructed elevated trains and streetcar networks that crisscrossed the five boroughs. Even today, NYC buses, which mainly run along the old streetcar routes, have twice the ridership of the Subway. And although the Subway was heavily subsidized by the government, the truth is that it was a very expensive and ineffective replacement for elevated trains, which are just as fast as subways, and far cheaper to build. The els were quite profitable and transit companies were eager to build them, but the NIMBY interests didn’t like the noise they made and the city resented the limited role that it had in the lines. In fact, it was the city holding out for a subway and the massive spending binge it took to finally build it that contributed to mass transit’s insolvency – a trend which continues unabated today. If the city hadn’t insisted on the unsustainable luxury of forcing all rapid transit underground (a theme I hope to explore more deeply in the future), then Second Avenue, and a whole bunch of other streets, would have gotten rapid transit a century ago. (And I won’t even get into the fact that much of the NYC “Subway” is actually repurposed old private elevated lines.) So, in sum, there are very good reasons for even the staunchest transit advocates to have a “love-hate relationship with [...] public transit.” Back around the turn-of-the-century, during transit’s heyday, it was widely acknowledged that municipal ownership would be a disaster. Now that these predictions have panned out, it’s time for liberals to acknowledge the truth: public transportation sucks, and the only reason it’s still halfway decent today is because of the investments made by private companies a century ago.

### Private sector is willing and able to participate in urban mass transit development.

**BAF, 2011** Transportation Infrastructure Report 2011 Building America’s Future Falling Apart and Falling

Behind Building America’s Future Educational Fund Building America’s Future Educational Fund (BAF Ed Fund) is a bipartisan coalition of elected officials dedicated to bringing about a new era of U.S. investment in infrastructure www.bafuture.com

In a time of budget cuts and belt-tightening, other countries are relying on innovative financing mechanisms that leverage private dollars to meet their investment needs. These financing mechanisms have also introduced performance standards and accountability requirements into the planning process.

Private sector investors are ready and able to invest in infrastructure. Over $180 billion in private equity and pension fund capital focused on infrastructure equity invest¬ments is available around the world, waiting for worthy public works projects to get off the ground. Elsewhere, infrastructure projects generate dependable, low-risk revenue for private investors through tolls and ticket fees. But the U.S. has not fostered an environment in which the private sector will step in to help finance the large-scale infrastructure projects we need.

### Private entities can solve and avoid politics / spending.

Donna **Cooper** February **2012** Meeting the Infrastructure Imperative An Affordable Plan to Put Americans Back to Work Rebuilding Our Nation’s Infrastructure http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2012/02/pdf/infrastructure.pdf

Private investors have partnered with state or local governments to build roads, expand highway systems, and build or repair bridges. Typically in this case the private investor pays the public entity upfront an estimated market value for the transportation asset, and then is required under an agreement to cover the cost of improving the asset. In addition, these agreements permit the investor to charge tolls or receive dedicated tax payments while also establishing clear maintenance requirements. Investors enter into these agreements where the tolls or dedicated taxes are projected to cover all costs and profits and are most attractive to investors when the level of earnings has the potential to exceed projections. Federal credit subsidies lower the overall project costs, which in turn reduces the pressure on tolls and/or dedicated taxes, which then has the positive results of making a project more politically and financially feasible.

### Privatization has worked in the past – i.e. “streetcar suburbs”

Sarah **Goodyear** Monday, May 17, **2010** The Potential for Private Investment in Transit

http://streetsblog.net/2010/05/17/the-potential-for-private-investment-in-transit/

An old streetcar line built by a private developer in Richmond, Virginia, around the turn of the last century. (Photo via North Richmond News)Could private developers be the key to developing the nation’s transit infrastructure? That’s the question that has engaged many members of the Streetsblog Network over the weekend. The catalyst for what has become a very lively discussion was an article by Christopher Leinberger on the Atlantic’s website, part of their month-long "The Future of the City" special report. Leinberger suggests that we might look to an earlier model of financing for mass transit — one in which real estate developers pay to build not only housing, but also rail lines to serve those new neighborhoods. It worked in pre-World War II America, Leinberger notes, creating the "streetcar suburbs" that later were rolled over by federally funded highways and the sprawl they enabled.

**Urban transit is the most expensive way of moving people in the US; pollute more; and would be better solved by privatization.**

Randal **O'Toole** is a senior fellow with the Cato Institute,Washington, D.C, and author o/Gridlock: Why We're Stuck in Traffic and What to Do About It USA Today Magazine

Date: March 1, **2012** “Get Transit on Track”

The results have not been pretty. Since 1964, worker productivity— the number of transit trips carried per operating employee—has fallen more than 50%. After adjusting for inflation, operating costs per rider nearly have tripled, while fare revenues have increased by a mere eight percent "It's uncommon to find such a rapid productivity decline in any industry," observed Lave. Today, urban transit is the most expensive way of moving people in the U.S. Airlines can transport individuals at a cost of less than 15 cents per passenger mile, barely a penny of which is subsidized. Driving costs less than 23 cents per passenger mile, which also includes about a penny of subsidy. Socialized Amtrak, however, costs close to 60 cents per passenger mile, about half of which is subsidized, while urban transit costs nearly one dollar per passenger mile, with fares covering only 21 cents and subsidies paying the rest i These horrendous flnancial results are obscured by the n'lountains of propaganda issued by the Federal Transit Administration, individual transit agencies, the American Public Transportation Association, and various other transit advocates claiming transit saves people money, conserves energy, and protects the environment In fact, it only saves people money by imposing most of their transport costs on other taxpayers— nor is transit particularly enei^gy efficient or environmentally friendly, as a majority of transit systems use far more energy and pollute far more per passenger mile than the average car. Further, dependence on tax dollars makes transit agencies especially vulnerable to economic downturns, because the sources of most of their operating funds—generally sales or income taxes, but, in some cases, annual appropriations from state legislatures—are highly sensitive to the state of the economy. Sales and income taxes are particularly volatile, while property taxes are less so. Yet, property taxes provide only about two percent of transit operating funds, while sales and income taxes supply more than one-quarter of operating funds. Privatization of public transit systems would solve ail of these problems. Private operators would have incentives to serve customers, not politicians, with cost-eflècdve transport systems. The few examples of private transit operations that can be fotind show that private operators are more efficient and can offer better service than govemment agencies.

## States CP

### States CP solvency – states and localities encourage more effective spending

Edward **Glaeser** (professor of economics at Harvard) “Spending Won’t Fix What Ails U.S. Infrastructure” February 13**, 2012** http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-02-14/spending-won-t-fix-what-ails-u-s-transport-commentary-by-edward-glaeser.html

DE-FEDERALIZE TRANSPORT SPENDING: Most forms of transport infrastructure overwhelmingly serve the residents of a single state. Yet the federal government has played an outsized role in funding transportation for 50 years. Whenever the person paying isn’t the person who benefits, there will always be a push for more largesse and little check on spending efficiency. Would Detroit’s People Mover have ever been built if the people of Detroit had to pay for it? We should move toward a system in which states and localities take more responsibility for the infrastructure that serves their citizens.

### States and local governments are in the best position to fund mass transit.

Jeff **Rosen** Partner, Kirkland & Ellis LLP June 17, **2009** 5:25 PM http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2009/06/is-it-time-for-the-feds-to-fun.php

The issue here is not whether transit is worthwhile in various cities, or even whether it warrants additional funding to enable greater use, but whether more federal funds should be given to transit agencies as local operating subsidies. But consider:The proposed source of such federal funds, the highway trust fund, is facing a shortfall already.The proposed use of funds is one that is basically local. Approximately 40% of all transit riders in the U.S. are in one city—New York. And transit riders do not pay the gas tax or otherwise fund the highway trust fund, unlike drivers of cars.Where additional expenditures for transit are warranted, state and local governments are in the better position to decide such spending, with funds from their own taxpayers and system users. Not only is that more efficient, but it provides more accountability and transparency than a situation where the spending is done by state political officials but the taxing (or borrowing) is attributed to the federal government. Why should residents of a state want their tax dollars sent to Washington, D.C. to be forwarded back to government authorities in their own state to spend with federal “strings” attached?Finally, it is often true that state and local governments have tight budgets and scarce resources. But the federal government’s fiscal condition is no better. The Obama Administration expects to run a record budget deficit of approximately $3 trillion for its first two years. We want good transit systems as part of our overall transportation system, but should we significantly expand the federal role to address local operating budgets? Perhaps there are special situations that might warrant exceptions, but in general, where local transit operations need more funding, the pragmatic response is that it should remain incumbent on responsible state and local officials to devise the necessary funding and spending solutions.

### Mass transit funding should not be done by the federal government, but rather is a responsibility of states and locales.

Bob **Poole** Director of Transportation Studies, Reason Foundation, June 2 **2009** http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2009/06/is-it-time-for-the-feds-to-fun.php

At a time of unprecedented federal deficits, the idea of expanding the federal government’s spending into what is basically a local issue requires a very high level of justification. The others who have posted on this blog, arguing in favor of federal funding for transit operating costs, have failed to meet that standard.Merely desiring federal money and having something nice to spend it on is hardly a justification. Not when, according to the Government Accountability Office, “the federal government’s financial condition and fiscal outlook are worse than many may understand. Specifically, the federal budget is on an unsustainable path—raising questions about whether people should assume federal funds will be available to help solve the nation’s current infrastructure challenges.” (GAO-08-763T, May 8, 2008)Recently-retired Comptroller General David Walker devoted much of his energy in recent years to calling on the nation to rethink the role of the federal government. A sensible rethinking should ask which functions are truly national in scope, such that they serve all Americans and can best be carried out at a national scale. National defense is one such function. The Interstate highway system is another.The federal government got into surface transportation funding in the 1950s on an interstate-commerce rationale. And indeed, it would have been difficult to build the nationwide Interstate system without the federal funding mechanism of highway user taxes that redistributed funds from high-traffic states to lower-traffic states for that specific purpose. But urban mass transit is a local and sometimes regional function. Its beneficiaries are primarily those who use it and secondarily those in that urban area who receive secondary benefits (such as slightly less traffic congestion and miniscule improvements in air quality). There are no national benefits.And it’s not as if no other means of transit funding are available. Local transportation sales taxes exist in a growing number of urban areas and are a robust funding mechanism. All of California’s urban counties have such “self-help” taxes, providing a larger share of their budgets than federal transit aid. There is considerable potential in real-estate value capture that very few transit agencies have even attempted to exploit.There are also perverse incentive effects when cities and their transit agencies can get “free” federal money. In a growing number of cases, when faced with the choice of a very costly light rail project or a far more affordable bus rapid transit (BRT) project, being able to get a large fraction of the cost as a gift from Washington biases the choice toward the more costly alternative. If the cost of the project had to be raised locally, there would be stronger incentives for cost-effectiveness to play a major role in such choices.Finally, there is the question of whose money it is. Currently, most federal transit funding comes from the transit account of the Highway Trust Fund. In other words, the source of that funding is motorists and trucking companies, paying what are supposed to be user taxes in order to have a high-quality highway system to use. Ever since the 1964 Urban Mass Transit Act, the fraction of highway user taxes that can be diverted to non-highway uses has been steadily increased. Yet study after study in recent years has documented the poor condition of our highways and bridges, and the horrible congestion plaguing urban roadways. Taking an even bigger slice of the pie for urban transit would condemn the vast majority of Americans—for whom cars and trucks are their only viable alternative—to ever-worsening highway hell.

# Solvency Answers

## Federal Gov Fails

### Federal government is inefficient at transportation policy and should maintain status quo funding levels.

**Council on Foreign Relations**, **June 2012**, (CFR, “Federal Transportation

Infrastructure Policy”) www.cfr.org/content/publications/.../Infrastructure\_Progress\_Report.pdf

The federal government is poorly designed for a coordinated infrastructure policy. Responsibility for highway and transit policy alone is split among seven congressional committees. The closest the country has come to a coordinated national infrastructure plan was the National Transportation Plan in the 1970s, and the idea sank fast. Washington shoulders a minority share of the nation’s transportation costs, or about 25 percent of total transportation costs and 40 percent of capital transportation costs.11 Infrastructure in the United States has traditionally been a state and local affair. With national leaders framing infrastructure as a larger national problem, it would appear that the federal government is gearing up for a greater role. But those ambitions are hitting up against the wall of fiscal austerity. Given political realities, the best outcome could be a continuation of present transportation spending levels. Deep cuts in spending are a possibility with a Republican-controlled House opposed to either additional taxes or increased debt. Advocates of infrastructure investment are faced with squaring the circle, of doing more with less.

### There is no hope for urban mass transit – too inefficient, expensive and wasteful – funding can’t solve.

Calvin **Thompson, 6/15** “Good News: Public Transit Is About to Collapse” Reason News

A bunch of public policy and urban policy analysts got together on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., yesterday to discuss the problems with urban transit. It’s no great secret that public transit is inefficient, expensive, and wasteful. In fact, American cities have spent nearly $100 billion building rails over the past 40 years, Cato Institute Senior Fellow Randal O’Toole reports, and average projects go about 40 percent over budget while dramatically underperforming on ridership and revenue. Yesterday at the Cato event, O'Toole analyzed a popular alternative to buses—streetcars—and concluded in his newest analysis that money would be better spent improving existing modes of transport, through things like street repair and traffic coordination. (O'Toole has written a series of policy analyses tearing various aspects of public transit to shreds.) The prospect of saving the system by handing major components of it off to private industry is appealing, but according to Florida State University's Sam Staley—a Reason contributor and one of yesterday's speakers—the entire transit model is so broken that even full privatization would not be enough to keep mass transit as we know it from spiraling into decay and financial ruin. He clarified after the briefing that even in the best of circumstances, mass transit only has about two decades left before it completely crumbles and burns. “There will be ashes,” Staley says. “There may even be some charred remains.” At this point, trying to open transit to competition may wind up harming the overall cause of privatization. Policy makers might even become more hostile to free market solutions, Staley says, if they witness an industry collapse just as free market solutions are finally implemented. The best hope for mass transit in the long term may be to wait out the inevitable crash, and then hope to find something useful among the charred remains.

## No Increase In Use

**Investing in mass transit hasn’t led to an increase in use**

**Heritage Foundation, 2007** (Wendell Cox, September 10, 2007, “Mass Transit: Separating Delusion from Reality”) http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2007/09/mass-transit-separating-delusion-from-reality

The diversion of federal road user fees to non-highway projects began in 1982; since that time, annual transit expenditures have doubled, after adjusting for inflation. Fair value would have been for transit ridership to double. It hasn't even come close. Today, annual miles of travel by transit are only 25 percent higher than in 1982. This means that, after adjusting for inflation and the increase in ridership, spending on transit by all levels of government is at least $15 billion more per year than in 1982-more than twice the amount being diverted at the federal level from fuel taxes paid by motorists.

The massive diversion of highway money to transit did not reduce traffic congestion or road use. In every one of the nation's urban areas with a population of more than one million (where more than 90 percent of transit ridership occurs), road use increased per capita and by no less than one-third. Even worse, peak-period traffic congestion rose by 250 percent.

**People prefer cars to mass transit**

John **Semmens,** February 13, **2003** (research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, “Public Transit: A Bad Product at a Bad Price”) http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2003/02/public-transit-a-bad-product-at-a-bad-price

The transit numbers tell a tale of inefficiency, inequity, and ineffectiveness. In no city is transit run on sound business principles. There is little effort to try to generate compensatory revenues from customers. Huge and unending losses are the result. Riders are asked to pay a pitifully small share of the costs. Modern urban travelers want convenience, comfort, and speed. The automobile best fits these requirements. This is why the auto is the choice for the overwhelming majority of urban travelers. The inconvenient, frequently uncomfortable, and slower transportation offered by public transit modes does not meet the needs of more than a small fraction of urban travelers. Given its inferior performance characteristics relative to other transit options, light rail is the most unappealing choice for trying to meet the needs of the small fraction of urban travelers who rely on public transportation.

**Investing in mass transit doesn’t work-multiple scenarios**

**Heritage Foundation, 2007** (Wendell Cox, September 10, 2007, “Mass Transit: Separating Delusion from Reality”) http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2007/09/mass-transit-separating-delusion-from-reality

Congestion has increased even in urban areas that invested substantial local revenue in transit improvements. Portland is a prime example. Located just a few miles downriver from Congressman DeFazio's district, Portland's leaders have embraced an anti-highway ideology on the assumption that they can get people to ride transit instead. Portland went so far as to cancel a freeway and use the money to build its first light rail line, which opened in 1985. The results have been dismal. A smaller share of people in Portland take transit to work today than before the light rail line (and the subsequent three other lines) was built. Portland's traffic congestion has increased at a rate well above the average for large urban areas. Few of the nation's largest urban areas have experienced so great an increase in traffic congestion. Minneapolis is another urban area where transit has failed to deliver. The urban area opened a 12-mile light rail line 2004, costing more than $700 million. The line diverted few people from using their cars, and traffic increased after it opened. The new ridership added to the transit system was less than the passenger volume on the one-third mile long I-35W before it collapsed. Of course, no one knows how much of this modest increase was due to the new light rail line and how much was due to exploding gasoline prices. In either event, the results have been negligible. Barely one percent of travel in the Minneapolis area is on transit. It seems that raising transit usage to a mere two percent would be a monumental challenge no matter how much money is spent. Congress has failed to make the connection between wasteful transit spending and inadequate roads and bridges. In Washington, where more money is the solution to every problem, Congress is breaking out the taxpayers' checkbook even before anyone knows why the bridge collapsed.

**Doesn’t solve congestion**

**No mass transit project has ever been the clear, direct cause of a reduction in traffic congestion.**

Jarrett **Walker,** 7-25-**10** what does transit do about traffic congestion? http://www.humantransit.org/2010/07/what-does-transit-do-about-traffic-congestion.html

Now and then, someone mentions that a particular transit project did not reduce traffic congestion, as though that was evidence of failure. Years ago, politicians and transit agencies would sometimes say that a transit project would reduce congestion, though most are now smart enough not to make that claim.To my knowledge, and correct me if I'm wrong, no transit project or service has ever been the clear direct cause of a substantial drop in traffic congestion. So claiming that a project you favor will reduce congestion is unwise; the data just don't support that claim.

**Mass transit has little effect on how much people drive in urban areas and is unlikely to reduce congestion**

Clark **Williams-Derry** on February 25, **2011** at 10:05 am Does Transit Really Reduce Congestion? http://daily.sightline.org/2011/02/25/can-better-transit-reduce-congestion/

I’m sure that there’s more literature on this issue, some of which finds stronger connections between transit and vehicle travel. But in general, based on what I’ve found I have to align myself with Anthony Brooks and transit planner Jarrett Walker, who both argue that transit investments have little impact on how much driving goes on in a crowded urban area. To quote Walker:To my knowledge…no transit project or service has ever been the clear direct cause of a substantial drop in traffic congestion. So claiming that a project you favor will reduce congestion is unwise; the data just don’t support that claim.

**Public Transit doesn’t fix congestion – empirics.**

Wendell **Cox,** January 9, **2007** .principal of Wendell Cox Consultancy, a visiting fellow

Of the Maryland Public Policy Institute, a visiting professor at the

Conservatoire National des Arts et Metiers in Paris. Article from the Examiner.

WASHINGTON - Transit advocates must be elated. Voters in places as diverse as Seattle, Kansas City and Salt Lake City approved new taxes for transit improvements. No doubt the electoral victories depended on expectations that transit improvements would reduce traffic congestion, but nothing could be further from the truth. Traffic congestion and transit are completely different subjects. No level of transit investment, anywhere in the world, has materially reduced traffic congestion. In Washington, more than 100 miles of high-quality Metro has been built - more than in any world urban area over the past three decades except for Seoul, South Korea. Altogether, the miles of Metro built in Washington equal the total built in all of the other U.S. urban areas. Yet what about traffic congestion? Washington's ranks fourth in the nation, and could challenge number two and three - transit rich Chicago and San Francisco - at any point. Over the past 20 years, traffic congestion has nearly tripled, despite the miles built for and billions spent on Metro. Yet, transit advocates tell proverbial "stories from over the mountains," about successes achieved in other urban areas. Invariably, the transit "successes" never show up in overall urban area data. In fact, transit market share does not exceed 5 percent in any U.S. urban area except New York. Only a few exceed 3 percent, with "over the mountain" favorites such as Portland, Seattle and Denver, not among them. It would take a miracle of massive proportions to push transit to a 0.5 percent share in Salt Lake City and Kansas City. Further, no urban area - not in the United States and not in Western Europe - has plans to materially reduce automobile use or traffic congestion. (London charges peak rates to enter a certain zone, but it costs nearly $15. This would kill any U.S. business area where it was implemented, except possibly Manhattan.) The facts, however, do not keep transit officials from promising the impossible in their pursuit of more money. In the private sector, such behavior is subject to truth in advertising laws. In transit, it wins accolades. Why can't transit reduce traffic congestion? Geography. It can only effectively serve the urban core. For example, nearly 40 percent of downtown Washington commuters use transit for the work trip. However, downtown Washington accounts for less than 20 percent of the area's employment. More than 80 percent of destinations lie outside downtown and outside the ability of transit to compete. This is why the large majority of travel in all American and Western European urban areas is by car and why no hope exists for this situation to change. It is, as noted above, so hopeless that not even the planners can concoct a vision in which car travel would be reduced. At the same time, accompanying the mindless preoccupation with transit and its futility outside the urban core is a misunderstanding of the role the automobile has and will continue to play. Research indicates the superior mobility of the automobile is one of the reasons affluence has spread so widely in American and Western European urban areas. Around the country, programs to make available cars to low-income households are increasing their incomes by significantly increasing the geography of their job options. Anyone genuinely interested in solving the transportation problems of the modern urban area will do well to discard the rhetoric and focus on reducing congestion. The Governor's Business Council approach, recommended in Texas, sets a maximum congestion level based upon the Travel Time Index and then plans roadway expansion and traffic management strategies to make it happen. If we want to reduce traffic congestion, we need to focus on it as a goal and get beyond the hopeless ideology that has passed for transport planning in so many areas.

## Causes Terrorism

### Mass transit systems are very vulnerable to attack

Gary **Stoller** (reporter for USA TODAY) December 27, **2010** USA TODAY “Can trains, subways be protected from terrorists?”

The government's top security officials say they are upgrading subway and rail defenses against terrorist attacks throughout the country, but a USA TODAY examination finds gaping holes, including many that may not be possible to plug. The holes in security leave travelers more vulnerable on the more than 4 billion trips they take by subway and rail each year than in the sky, where airlines carried fewer than 700 million passengers from U.S. airports last year. Six terrorist plots targeting U.S. subway and rail systems have been exposed since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and the systems remain a target, transit authorities, security experts and members of Congress agree. An alleged plot to simultaneously bomb four Washington, D.C., Metro subway stations was foiled in October, and another plot to detonate explosives in New York's subway system was averted last year. Yet, as the nation debates the federal Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) stricter screening methods at airport security checkpoints, about 15 million passengers board subway cars and trains unscreened each weekday. "Mass transit systems are much less secure than the aviation sector or certain key government buildings," says Clark Kent Ervin, the Department of Homeland Security's former inspector general. And they'll likely remain that way, USA TODAY has found in its examination of rail security, which included an analysis of the National Counterterrorism Center's incident database and interviews with Congress, federal security officials, transit authorities, rail operators, independent security experts and passengers. The nation's vast network of more than 3,200 stations and more than 20,000 miles of track combined with the impracticality and cost of screening every passenger leave U.S. subways and rails exposed to the type of terrorist attacks 22 other nations have experienced the last five years. Having a secure network ultimately is the responsibility of the TSA, which is in the Department of Homeland Security. While the agency has imposed stringent screening of air passengers at the nation's 450 commercial airports, it says it has no similar plans for rail passengers. The TSA has largely left rail security to local governments, which USA TODAY finds often don't have the capability and money to make systems secure. Although TSA spends most of its budget on aviation security, protecting mass transit passengers will be as much a priority as protecting air travelers, John Pistole, the agency's administrator, said after taking charge in July. "We know that some terrorist groups see rail and subways as being more vulnerable, because there's not the type of screening that you find in aviation," he said. 'Vulnerable to attack' Although terrorists have yet to successfully strike, U.S. rail and transit officials know their systems are targets susceptible to attack. "Mass transit systems, by nature, are open systems and vulnerable to attack," says Lisa Farbstein, a spokeswoman for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. "The Metro system is no different, with multiple entrances and exits designed to move a large number of riders."

### Mass transit is an easy target for terrorism

**Council on Foreign Relations**, Jul 16, **2006** (Council on Foreign Relations, “Targets for Terrorism: Ground Transportation”) http://www.cfr.org/homeland-security/targets-terrorism-ground-transportation/p10198

Subway systems have relatively small enclosed areas that become packed with people at predictable times during the day. Also, air currents above ground, as well as those generated by the movement of trains through the tunnels, could spread germs or gases throughout a subway station and through ventilation systems to the streets above, leading to the infection of large numbers of people. Further, symptoms of exposure to some biological agents, such as the highly contagious smallpox virus, might not appear for a couple of weeks—long after victims had left the station and unknowingly infected many others. In the 1960s, the CIA and the U.S. Army conducted a test in which light bulbs filled with microscopic particles were dropped into the New York City subway system to measure the possible effects of a biological attack. The study revealed that a similar type of attack using a deadly disease agent such as tularemia would have infected as many as three million people, most of them above ground.

## Causes Noise Pollution

### A study shows that mass transit generates extremely high levels of noise pollution. This causes many to prefer to take their car.

**Parker 2009** June 20, 2009 “Mass Transit Bad For Your Hearing” http://www.futurepundit.com/archives/006305.html Randall Parker, 2009 June 20 11:09 AM Energy Policy From FuturePundit Future technological trends and their likely effects on human society, politics and evolution.

Contrary to the view in some quarters that mass transit is an unalloyed blessing, buses and subways around New York City generate harmful levels of noise. Using sensitive noise dosimeters, the team of researchers, led by exposure scientist Richard Neitzel from the School of Public Health at the University of Washington and Robyn Gershon, DrPH, an environmental and occupational health scientist and faculty member at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, conducted hundreds of measurements of noise levels at platforms and stations, as well as inside of vehicles on New York City subways (MTA and PATH), buses (MTA), ferries (Staten Island), commuter railways (LIRR, SIRR and Metro North), and the Roosevelt Island tramway. The scientists found that on average, the MTA subways had the highest noise levels, at 80.4 decibels (dBA), followed by the Path trains, at 79.4 dBA, and the tram, at 77.0 dBA. The lowest average levels measured, 74.9 dBA and 75.1 dBA, were obtained from the LIRR and Metro-North trains, respectively. The very highest levels measured in the study were found on an MTA subway platform (102.1dBA) and at a bus stop (101.6 dBA). In contrast, the noise level of a whisper is 30 dBA, normal conversation is 60 to 70 dBA, a chainsaw is 100 dBA, and gunfire is 140 dBA. Regards bus stops: I go out for walks and hate to see a bus approaching. They are louder than just about anything else on the road. Plus, the older ones belch diesel exhaust smoke (the newer ones are built under a tougher regulations and are not as bad). Well, why can't they have better mufflers? Would effective mufflers really cost too much or weigh too much? Subways are the worst. Again, does it cost too much to make subway stations safe for human hearing? Imagine some corporation generated such noise levels without providing protection. It would get fined and sued. Why do government-owned mass transit systems get away with damaging hearing? In general, noise levels were significantly higher at platforms compared to inside vehicles for all forms of mass transit, except for ferries and the tram. The borough with the highest mass transit noise levels was Manhattan, followed by Queens and the Bronx. Major hubs were noisier than local stops and underground trains and stations were significantly louder than those aboveground. According to Dr. Gershon, of all mass transit, subways had the highest noise levels, with roughly half of the maximum levels exceeding 90 dBA. "At some of the highest noise levels we obtained (ex. 102.1 dBA on the subway platforms), as little as two minutes of exposure per day would be expected to cause hearing loss in some people with frequent ridership, based upon the International Organization for Standardization models for predicting hearing impairment from noise." Cars take you from where you want to start to where you want to end up. You can control who you ride with. You can choose a car with very good noise insulation and a quiet engine. Can can choose which music to listen to and do not need ear plugs to listen to it. Granted, you have to drive and pay attention to the road. Cars come with trade-offs. But given the advantages it is not surprising that most people choose to drive.

# Advantage Answers

**A2 - Sprawl**

### Plan can’t solve sprawl – has existed for years and transit doesn’t solve it.

Sandy Ikeda (associate professor of economics at Purchase College, SUNY), Urban Mass Transit Out of Suburban Sprawl The limits of planning. Posted June 22, 2010, www.thefreemanonline.org/headline/urban-mass-transit-out-of-suburban-sprawl/

Since at least the 1970s in the United States the idea has been to try as much as possible to substitute mass-transit for the private the car. To New Urbanists, for example, that is the key to solving a host of social ills including pollution, overcrowding, racial discrimination, oil-dependency, and alienation – all allegedly connected to the phenomenon of “sprawl.” (See, for example, the Charter of the New Urbanism.) I’ve been rereading Robert Bruegmann’s excellent book, Sprawl: A Compact History, in which he points out that “sprawl” dates back to the earliest cities. But in his discussion of the outward migration of urban dwellers, away from congestion and toward the delights of the country, it struck me that the great subway systems of the world, such as Paris Metro or the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in New York, were not originally intended to carry people from one part of the city to another, as they do today. Rather, the idea was to enable the working poor and middle class to move out of the central city, which in the case of New York was Manhattan, to the suburbs in what is today the outer boroughs of The Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens (all united, along with Staten Island, into New York City in 1898). The subway system, in other words, was explicitly intended to promote sprawl: low-density, unplanned, scattered development. According to Bruegmann: The Lower East Side of New York, for example, began emptying out rapidly after 1900 as soon as immigrants had accumulated enough money to allow them to get better housing in less dense neighborhoods farther afield. At first they walked over East River bridges to nearby communities like Williamsburg and Greenpoint in Brooklyn. Eventually, inexpensive public transportation allowed them to live much farther from their place of employment, for example, in northern Manhattan and the outlying boroughs. Significant expansion of the subway system ended well before it was taken over by the municipal government in 1940, by which time the city had reached its peak population and most of the area within it was developed and urbanized.

### Mass transit doesn’t resolve sprawl.

Sandy **Ikeda** (associate professor of economics at Purchase College, SUNY), Urban Mass Transit Out of Suburban Sprawl The limits of planning. Posted June 22, **2010**, www.thefreemanonline.org/headline/urban-mass-transit-out-of-suburban-sprawl/

The pattern that mass transit seems to have followed in New York (and probably London and Paris, too) has been initially to create clumps of sprawl radiating out along the various rail lines, which over time gets filled in by developers (such as Rego Park, Carroll Gardens, Inwood), raising population densities away from city center. Eventually what you get after all the filling-in of the earlier suburban sprawl is “urban” mass transit. But that wasn’t the original plan. Throughout the United States and elsewhere we see a similar evolution taking place today around freeways and interstate highways. On this see Joel Garreau’s 1992 classic, Edge City.

### Too late for mass transit to become an effective solution to sprawl and the environment.

Nathan **Edmonson,** Technology Cycles and US Economic Policy in the early 21st Century, **2012**, p. 140-1

Consider what the government’s expenditure options are. Infrastructure is a leading example. However, in a country that already has a very developed infrastructure, such as the United States, it is difficult to find a situation where infrastructure investment creates productive wealth much in excess of what preexisted. What about proposals to spend for public mass transit systems? The United States once had much better mass transit facilities than it presently has, but most of these were scrapped by 1960 in favor of the private automobile. Massive growth since then has been in the context of the automobile, and has resulted in what is known now as “urban sprawl”. Modern mass transit proposals are a really pathetic attempt to turn the calendar back because the payoff would require some very fundamental changes in population distribution. This time for mass transit investment to pay off can be reckoned, not in years, but in generations. Education is another object of government investment. This amounts to throwing money at a problem in the absence of knowledge of the causes of the problem. This shows up readily in interstate comparisons, in which there is a large variability in expenditures per public school pupil that has no correlation with educational results according to standardized test results.

**Too late to do anything about sprawl.**

Alyssa **Katz** American Prospect The Reverse Commute June 13, **2010** http://prospect.org/article/reverse-commute-0

Where you build houses affects where you build roads and where you build roads affects where you build houses, and that affects the environment," Frece says. "Until now we've been acting like those things are separate." That's exactly the problem. New measures to reverse the march of spraw may be too little, too late. It took seven decades and trillions in federal investment to create the sprawl that the Obama administration is now moving to brake. The first interstate highways rolled out in the 1950s with the present-day equivalent of $300 billion in federal \*\*\* funds. The suburban home industry was fueled by subsidies that today amount each year to almost twice HUD's entire budget.

## Pollution Impact defense

### Air quality is improving

**Hayward 4** (Steven F., Senior Fellow – Pacific Research Institute, Index of Leading Indicators, http://www.pacificresearch.org/pub/sab/enviro/04\_enviroindex/Enviro\_2004.pdf)

Average vehicle emissions are dropping about 10 percent per year as the fleet turns over to inherently cleaner vehicles, including modern SUVs. • Since 1985, nitrogen oxides (NOX) emissions from cars have dropped 56 percent and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are down 67 percent, according to the most recent EPA data. • Stories touting an uptick in ozone pollution are based largely on the .weekend effect,. a paradoxical situation in which the weekend drop in NOX emissions, from 10 to 40 percent, causes an increase in ozone levels. • Asthma rates in children under the age of five rose more than 160 percent between 1980 and 1994, while air pollution rates fell from 25 to 80 percent. Was 2003 the year we started losing the battle against ozone smog? That is what you would think if you read the media headlines. .Smog Woes Back on Horizon,. trumpeted an abovethe- fold Los Angeles Times headline in mid-July.1 .It.s One Smoggy Summer,. declared the Associated Press. And USA Today joined the chorus in October with .Smoggy Skies Persist Despite Decade of Work..2 Unfortunately, a reader of these articles will learn very little about what is behind the recent uptick in ozone levels. To the contrary, most media stories convey loads of misinformation. The USA Today story, for example, offers this explanation of stubborn ozone levels: .One likely reason why the smog isn.t lifting: Americans are driving more miles than they did in the 1980s. And they.re driving vehicles that give off more pollution than the cars they drove in the .80s. (emphasis added). USA Today needs a better fact-checking department.

### Global air pollution inevitable

**Watson 5** (Traci, Staff Writer – USA Today, “Air Pollution From Other Countries Drifts into USA”, USA Today, 3-13, http://www.usatoday.com/weather/resources/climate/2005-03-13-pollution-\_x.htm)

Americans drive imported cars, wear imported clothes and chug imported beers. Now scientists are discovering another, less welcome import into the USA: air pollution. Mercury from China, dust from Africa, smog from Mexico — all of it drifts freely across U.S. borders and contaminates the air millions of Americans breathe, according to recent research from Harvard University, the University of Washington and many other institutions where scientists are studying air pollution. There are no boundaries in the sky to stop such pollution, no Border Patrol agents to capture it. Pollution wafting into the USA accounts for 30% of the nation's ozone, an important component of smog, says researcher David Parrish of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. By the year 2020, Harvard University's Daniel Jacob says, imported pollution will be the primary factor degrading visibility in our national parks. While the United States is cutting its own emissions, some nations, especially China, are belching out more and more dirty air. As a result, overseas pollution could partly cancel out improvements in U.S. air quality that have cost billions of dollars.

## Environment Impact defense

**No extinction**

**Easterbrook 3** (Gregg, Senior Fellow – New Republic, “We’re All Gonna Die!”, Wired Magazine, July, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/11.07/doomsday.html?pg=1&topic=&topic\_set=)

If we're talking about doomsday - the end of human civilization - many scenarios simply don't measure up. A single nuclear bomb ignited by terrorists, for example, would be awful beyond words, but life would go on. People and machines might converge in ways that you and I would find ghastly, but from the standpoint of the future, they would probably represent an adaptation. Environmental collapse might make parts of the globe unpleasant, but considering that the biosphere has survived ice ages, it wouldn't be the final curtain. Depression, which has become 10 times more prevalent in Western nations in the postwar era, might grow so widespread that vast numbers of people would refuse to get out of bed, a possibility that Petranek suggested in a doomsday talk at the Technology Entertainment Design conference in 2002. But Marcel Proust, as miserable as he was, wrote Remembrance of Things Past while lying in bed.

**Environment is resilient**

**Easterbrook 95** (Gregg, Distinguished Fellow – Fullbright Foundation, A Moment on Earth, p. 25)

In the aftermath of events such as Love Canal or the Exxon Valdez oil spill, every reference to the environment is prefaced with the adjective "fragile." "Fragile environment" has become a welded phrase of the modern lexicon, like "aging hippie" or "fugitive financier." But the notion of a fragile environment is profoundly wrong. Individual animals, plants, and people are distressingly fragile. The environment that contains them is close to indestructible. The living environment of Earth has survived ice ages; bombardments of cosmic radiation more deadly than atomic fallout; solar radiation more powerful than the worst-case projection for ozone depletion; thousand-year periods of intense volcanism releasing global air pollution far worse than that made by any factory; reversals of the planet's magnetic poles; the rearrangement of continents; transformation of plains into mountain ranges and of seas into plains; fluctuations of ocean currents and the jet stream; 300-foot vacillations in sea levels; shortening and lengthening of the seasons caused by shifts in the planetary axis; collisions of asteroids and comets bearing far more force than man's nuclear arsenals; and the years without summer that followed these impacts. Yet hearts beat on, and petals unfold still. Were the environment fragile it would have expired many eons before the advent of the industrial affronts of the dreaming ape. Human assaults on the environment, though mischievous, are pinpricks compared to forces of the magnitude nature is accustomed to resisting.