



September 16, 2015

Road Charge Technical Advisory Committee
California Transportation Commission
1120 N St, MS-52
Sacramento, CA 95814

Chair Madaffer and Members of the Committee:

The Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities (CRTP) is a new organization whose mission is to promote transportation solutions that protect and support a healthy environment, healthy people, healthy communities and a healthy economy on the North Coast. Regarding the possibility of a new road charge revenue-raising system for California, we submit the following comments:

- (1) We are keenly aware that the revenue currently raised to support maintenance and repair of our roads and bridges is not sufficient to adequately achieve that purpose with respect to existing infrastructure. We support responsible revenue raising to ensure that existing infrastructure is maintained and repaired as necessary.
- (2) The gas tax is a potentially powerful disincentive for fossil fuel use in transportation, and the climate crisis demands that we reduce such fuel use quickly and dramatically. We have serious concerns about moving away from a gas tax and thus removing this disincentive for fossil fuel use.
- (3) We have further reservations about the road charge concept because it has the potential to unfairly penalize people living in rural areas such as the North Coast. In these areas, many people must travel longer distances than their counterparts in metropolitan areas and have fewer alternative modes of transportation. Furthermore, many residents of the North Coast are conscious of the problems of fossil fuel use and—despite their longer required transportation distances—have made personal efforts to address the issue by switching to electric or alternative-fuel vehicles. These actions should be encouraged, not penalized.
- (4) Regardless of how revenue is raised, we believe it is clear that there will never be a long-term surplus of transportation dollars. Thus, while paying appropriate attention to new revenue raising measures, we must also not neglect to consider the other side of the infrastructure equation. We believe it is necessary to stop or dramatically scale back the building of new infrastructure that will require more extensive maintenance and repair and focus instead on repairing and maintaining the infrastructure we already have.



(5) When we do build new transportation infrastructure, we must consider which types of users that infrastructure is designed to support. Both fiscal responsibility and urgent environmental imperatives demand that we abandon the car- and truck-centered infrastructure ideas of the last century and instead begin designing our infrastructure to support modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling and public transit, as well as short sea shipping for freight where feasible. This kind of infrastructure is almost always cheaper to build, cheaper to maintain, and environmentally superior.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara Kennedy
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