

Wolfe, Amanda

From: Stu and Sarah Strickland
Sent:
To:
Subject:

Stuart M. Strickland

Though there is much to say, I will be brief. I speak as a multi-modal (bus-bike-car) commuter. We are trying to find solutions to two funding problems, not one. Public transit cannot receive any funding from taxes on fuels or from license or registration fees, as per the Pennsylvania Constitution, Article VIII, Section 11A. Therein, however, lies the solution to highway and bridge funding. That is what those taxes are for.

By my calculation, with roughly 8 million registered vehicles in PA and a \$240 million annual need, the highway/bridge need could be met by raising the annual registration fee from \$36 to \$66. The GOP will simply have to eat its words on not raising taxes or fees, as there is no other responsible way to make up that much money. Maybe they can close roads and bridges, or maybe they can put PennDOT under the same scrutiny and squeezes that transit agencies have been subjected to for years, but I doubt it.

Transit is a tougher nut to crack. One good thing that did come out of Act 44 was responding to the objections of anti-transit legislators by causing PAT and SEPTA and other transit agencies to reinvent their systems, to be more responsive, to clean up their act, so to speak. They did that. Now it's Harrisburg's turn. Just fund it properly, as we pro-transit people have been saying all along. My preference is through a Vehicle Miles Traveled tax. This is inherently fair and self-balancing, as the more vehicle-miles are traveled in any area, the more transit is needed in that area. I believe it is also within the constraints of Article VIII.

In finding fixes to two problems, let's not try to fix three. Stop building new roads that we have to maintain! In particular, kill and keep killed any hope of funding the Mon-Fayette/Southern Beltway project. On the other hand, please *do* find the puny amounts of money for improvements to bicycle and pedestrian projects which would lessen our need for primarily car-only infrastructure.

In closing, it is simply good public policy to turn away from a cars-first and cars-only mentality. Instead, adopt this approach: **Fix it first, drive it last.**

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Stuart Strickland

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