

We the taxpayers, are already paying for maintenance of roads, highways and bridges through the taxes we pay. We pay ENOUGH taxes. A toll is simply another tax. Moreover, tolls will favor the people who have the most, and punish people who have the least, but who must still travel to get to work, or use as a part of their job. ODOT, and every other government agency, needs to learn to live within its means and its budget, just as the taxpaying citizens do.

The social engineering experiment must stop, and all government entities must look at the real reason we have congestion. There is simultaneously a belief in, and push toward, constant growth, and then attempts to treat the side-effect: congestion. If government earnestly wants to reduce or limit congestion, simply STOP encouraging and rewarding growth, despite the protests of developers and other financially interested parties. Don't erect 10-story buildings on Barbur Blvd. Don't put duplexes, triplexes, and four-plexes in single-family neighborhoods. That will do much more to reduce congestion than tolling roads. Since there is a limit to how many people can successfully, happily inhabit an acre of real estate without massive pollution, decimation of the natural environment, and big mental health problems, RECOGNIZE these limits and honor them.

If ODOT is going to engage in social engineering, it should be towards punishing taxes on ownership and use of giant oversize vehicles, and financial incentives for people who drive smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles. Registration fees should be based upon the overall size of the vehicle, the weight of the vehicle, and the fuel-efficiency of the vehicle---no other criteria necessary, and NO exceptions for special snowflakes. The bigger and less fuel-efficient the vehicle is, the more the owner should pay to register it. There should be financial incentives to own and operate hybrid and electric vehicles, not additional fees to punish the owners of these vehicles.

ODOT, just like other government entities, must develop a spine and say "no" to the big business organizations that want to continue to decimate the natural environment to enrich the executive officers of these companies, and to shift costs to the citizens of this country. ODOT, like other government entities, needs to represent the interests of all the citizens, NOT the interests of big business. Tolling does NOT help average citizens. It helps the trucking industry and businesses that feed it. Please wake up and smell the coffee before we descend into an irreversible totalitarian spiral whose edges around which, our government is circling.

Thank you,

K. Risch