
From: Carpine, Joy
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2009 2:13 PM
To: Hopkins, David A.; Paananen, Ron; OClaire, Christina; Van Ness, Kristy (Consultant); Lenz, KaDeena (Consultant); Tobin, Victoria
Subject: Gregoire says car tabs not needed for tunnel project

http://blog.seattletimes.nwsources.com/politicsnorthwest/2009/02/02/gregoire_says_car_tabs_not_nee.html

February 2, 2009 1:50 PM

[Gregoire says car tabs not needed for tunnel project](#)

Posted by [Andrew Garber](#)

Gov. Chris Gregoire made it clear this morning that plans to replace the Alaskan Way viaduct with a tunnel are not tied to a proposal to increase King County car tabs to beef up bus service.

Legislative leaders in the state House and Senate say the proposed 1 percent motor-vehicle excise tax, or \$100 yearly on a \$10,000 car, would have a [hard time](#) making it through the Legislature this year.

"To the Legislature I say, separate it out from the tunnel because it doesn't have anything to do with the tunnel," Gregoire said at a news conference.

That's news to at least one advocacy group tentatively backing the tunnel because of the transit funding. "It's of concern that she's thinking about it in that way," said Bill LaBorde, a lobbyist for the Transportation Choices Coalition, a pro transit group in Seattle.

Last month, the proposal to increase funding for transit was presented as an important part of the tunnel package.

Gregoire, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels and King County Executive Ron Sims released a joint statement outlining an agreement they all signed on to.

"There are only four lanes in the bored tunnel and the plan includes a new stable source of transit funding that will help Metro make a vast increase in service, which will mean fewer cars on streets, less pollution and better traffic reliability for business and industry," Sims said in the statement.

Some advocacy groups said increased funding for transit was about the only thing they liked about the proposal. Transportation Choices has said its support for the tunnel hinged on the car tab passing the Legislature.

Gregoire agrees King County needs additional funding for transit, saying they don't have enough money as it is. "It's a huge problem," she said.

Still, the governor said, she considers funding for King County transit to be a separate issue from replacing the viaduct. "If the talk of the (excise tax) is an attempt to kill the tunnel," she said, "stop it."

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