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**From:** John Reilly [jjreils@attglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 08, 2009 8:58 PM  
**To:** Paananen, Ron; White, John; Van Ness, Kristy (Consultant); Grotefendt, Amy  
**Subject:** Fw: In the Ballard News Tribune

[FYI in case you haven't seen this](#)

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### **The people have said 'no'**

By [Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson](#)

April 6, 2009

[Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson](#)

I have a confession to make. When I was a freshman legislator in 1995, and thrilled by a terrific season of Mariner baseball, I voted for the bill that funded the new stadium.

You may remember that the people had narrowly defeated a tax package for the stadium. However, the Mariner's legislation, which I supported was based on a different tax package, one that was mainly paid by those who went to the games, and by out of town visitors. I naively thought that the voters would embrace the new and different revenue plan. Wow, was I wrong!

That lesson has stayed with me for almost 15 years now and it is one that I recall when thinking about how to vote on the Viaduct replacement proposal (SB 5768).

This legislation calls for the replacement of the elevated viaduct with a costly proposal favored by a group of stakeholders—a bored tunnel. It was only two years ago (March 2007) that the people of Seattle voted by 70 percent to oppose a tunnel. That is a supermajority of opposition in anyone's book.

Now it is true that the bored tunnel is located farther away from the waterfront and is a different and improved design from the rejected cut and cover tunnel along the waterfront. It also has the significant advantage of resulting in very little disruption to the waterfront business community, compared with the other options considered.

Still, that lesson from the Mariner's vote comes rolling back to me. The people have very clearly said NO—they do not want a tunnel.

There are other concerns that make the bored tunnel problematic. The entrance and exit point for the viaduct replacement is eliminated for people in Magnolia, Ballard, and parts of Queen Anne. It is replaced by two unsatisfactory options, one that will use Mercer Street, and the other that add 25,000 to 35,000 vehicle trips daily to Alaska Way. That is the same Alaska Way that the city says will have at least 24 stoplights.

These unsatisfactory options will have consequences. For local residents, they will mean longer commutes and more time away from families. For our community businesses, such as Ballard Oil, they will make it a little harder to get products to customers or to bring customers to local stores. That's why I, along with Rep. Reuven Carlyle, am working to try to solve some of the access issues for our constituents.

Finally, the people of Seattle will bear a hefty tax burden. The city says it will contribute \$957 million to the project. Our vehicle license fees will increase by twenty dollars; our parking tax will increase by ten percent. Utility fees will increase by two percent. Property owners close to the viaduct will likely be assessed additional taxes.

Safety demands that we act now, and move forward on the Viaduct replacement, and the bored tunnel proposal is

moving forward with what appears to be unstoppable momentum. However, I believe we are being presented with the wrong option and that is why I intend to stand with the people who voted NO on the tunnel. I will vote against SB 5758.

My vote will not stop us from moving forward with the tunnel, but it will symbolize my concerns that we are not listening to the preferences of the majority of voters in Seattle.

When I think back to my Mariners vote in my first year as your representative, I wish I had listened more carefully to what people were really saying with their votes. I wish the legislature would listen more carefully to Seattle voters now.

*Mary Lou Dickerson is a representative in the Washington State House of Representatives for the 36th District (Ballard, Crown Hill, Magnolia, Queen Anne).*