



Committee Secretary
Transport and Public Works Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Sir/Madam

This inquiry will be quite illuminating. I am surprised either side of politics supported it. My recollection is that Labour extended the use of tolls on the Logan Motorway. The LNP removed the tolls on the Sunshine Coast as a bit of pork barrelling and essentially converted the ICB to a toll road by increasing the charges on the other tunnels in return for Transurban upgrading that bottle neck.

I am generally in favour of 'user pays' for our road infrastructure. My concern is how inconsistently tolls are applied and the inequity in current tolling arrangements. Why is it only the people in and around Brisbane that have to pay for their road infrastructure through tolls? Fundamentally we should be looking to have the people who benefit from infrastructure pay for that infrastructure - that extends beyond the road users.

The following points are relevant for the committee:

1. New infrastructure (including roads) should be funded by the people who benefit from the infrastructure. Surely no one would argue with that. Toll roads collect money from road users, but toll road users are not the only beneficiaries. For example, drivers using Milton Road benefit from reduced congestion as a result of Legacy Way. Land taxes and/or congestion taxes could be used to subsidise the toll prices and public transport fares (Transurban could further lower the toll because of increased usage).
2. The current toll roads penalise people for avoiding the CBD. People who work in the CBD have plenty of choices to access the CBD. Almost all public transport, especially trains, bring people from the suburbs into the CBD. People working in the CBD should be encouraged onto public transport – through lower fares and better services.
3. The current trend to 'de-centralise' working locations will increase congestion. Few people use two modes of public transport for their journey to or from work. They will more likely drive to work instead of changing trains or going from a bus to a train. Too often we are told de-centralisation will reduce congestion but the evidence shows the contrary, especially for businesses that move from the CBD to another location.
4. Stamp duty is a huge impediment to people moving closer to work/school locations. Replacing stamp duty with other, more efficient, taxes will make it easier for people to move and reduce congestion. Maybe we just need to use the existing infrastructure better.

I hope the committee will do more than tinker at the edges and simply create the appearance of action.

Regards

Ian McNab