



88th Legislature: They came for our cars

The Left's anti-car push & how Texas

Republicans enable it

Freedom to Travel Under Assault

Unbridled toll taxes were the problem, but now...

- California-style 'road diet' being imposed in every corner of the state.
- Radical environmental agenda driving these anti-car policies.
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) initiatives being forced into transportation decision-making.
- Systematic effort to shrink auto capacity and make driving miserable enough to get you out of your car.



VISION ZERO Climate Plan: Houston's plan to FORCE a 'road diet'

- To force drivers out of their cars and into mass transit.
 - Nanny state big government policies of California and New York made it to Texas through our big city mayors.
- Created by Swedish activists trying to impose a socio-political ethic in transportation.
- The UN adopted it under its sustainable development agenda and globalists are pushing it into every city in the US.
- Tied it to social justice and public health to further regulate, lobbying to tie all future increases in road funding to mass transit to divert road taxes to transit.

VISION ZERO continued

Houston's Vision Zero includes:

- Widening sidewalks by 50 miles per year.
- Increasing bike lanes by 25 miles a year.
- Slowing speed limits within city limits by lobbying the state to reduce the default speed limit on city residential streets to 25 miles per hour and on all other city streets to 30 miles per hour.
- Narrowing streets and lanes available to cars to deliberately slow traffic to force drivers to leave their cars and use mass transit.



VISION ZERO

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner admits:

"When the buses and the trains are going faster than the cars and the trucks, people will exit the cars and the trucks and use the buses and the trains."



Austin Climate Plan

"We created the plan through the lens of racial equity."



Austin's Climate Plan

Austin's CAP strategy #4 reveals the goal is to encourage car-free transport:

"Support locally initiated community events that are car-free and expand 'Slow Streets' programs..."

• In its bicycle policy advocates traffic-calming, which is code for barriers to driving:

"These local, neighborhood streets ... can be further improved for people through measures such as

traffic-calming."

Traffic calming = slower cars

 The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines the objective of traffic-calming as lowering speeds:

"These objectives are typically achieved by reducing vehicle speeds."



15 Minute Cities

- Govt-forced isolation inside cities, claiming everything you need must be within 15 minutes
 of your house. Modeled after Paris.
- Use Climate Plans to enact their radical anti-car ideology.
- Will use mileage or 'congestion' tax to keep you within their designated 'Sustainable Travel Zone' (STZ).
- Proposed in Cambridge, England: £5/cars, £20 for vans, £50 for trucks between 7 AM 7 PM.
 - >> Why? Special interests want to use the new tax to build an 'efficient' bus service.
 - >> Purpose: "To encourage people to switch from car to frequent, reliable public transport."
- Tax auto users to pay for transit users.

Anti-car = Anti-human



What's involved?

 A report by MoveBuddha compares data from 78 large U.S. cities on metrics like "bike and walk scores, access to dining, safety, child care, schools, medical facilities, and more."

Which U.S. cities rank at the top for conversion?

Miami, San Francisco, Pittsburgh

- Cities would need to adhere to New Urbanism.
- Criticism of the report is it <u>removed</u> accessibility to transit in scoring.

SOURCE: "Study Ranks U.S. Cities by 15-Minute City Potential," by Natalie Bicknell, *The Urbanist*, August 16, 2021

Pandemic launched 15 minute cities

Pandemics are tragic and scary. However, they often <u>highlight</u> opportunities to meaningfully improve <u>urban living</u> for individuals and the community...

...Today, many city planners and dwellers are drawing from lessons learned during COVID-19 to design new urban landscapes. Ideas range from streets transformed into pedestrian promenades to digitally optimized town centers.

One popular concept hailing from Paris is the 15-minute city.

It's a city in which, wherever you live, everything you need is located within a 15-minute walk or bike ride away.

Joe Robinson, MoveBuddha Report, 12/08/21







CHARGE BY MILE TAX

HEADLINE: Infrastructure Bill Gives Feds Go-Ahead to Test Taxing Every Mile Americans Drive

- Pilot program to demonstrate & gain acceptance for a national motor vehicle per-mile user fee. To spend \$10 million/yr through 2026.
- Require the Treasury Department to establish a mechanism to collect motor vehicle per-mile user fees from the participants.
- Must retain House Ways and Means power to tax, not cede it to DOT bureaucrats!

Source: Epoch Times, 8/3/21

Track your carbon usage

HEADLINE: Americans Likely to Be Tracked for CO2 Emissions Under SEC's New Climate Rule

By Harry Lee, *The Epoch Times*, July 24, 2022

- Consumer group warns our CO2 emissions data will be collected and reported to the government in the near future based on new SEC rule.
- Requires these companies to estimate the carbon output of the use of their product by the consumer.
- "Let's say you bought an internal combustion engine lawnmower. The lawn mower company will need to know how many times you mow your lawn...And so you could see how this starts to <u>lay the groundwork for scoring actual individual people's</u> <u>activities</u>."

Track your carbon usage

- The proposed rule is an ESG-style policy and ESG scores are "similar" to China's social credit scores.
- China's social credit system is notorious for quickly advancing from a banking and financial credit rating tool to a comprehensive government surveillance system.





Track your carbon usage

- A FICO analyst, Doug Craddick, predicted that in 2022 "there will be an increased focus on developing new data assets such as individual carbon profiles." FICO is a consumer credit rating agency.
- "Over the longer term, we expect that ESG and climate risk evaluations will become an integral element of credit risk and affordability assessments," added Craddock.
- "I think it is highly likely...you're going to see financial institutions start to use a personalized social credit score of some kind to make decisions about things like your access to loans, your interest rate, or whether you're eligible for insurance coverage," — Justin Haskins, director at The Heartland Institute.

Remote KILL Switch in Cars

HEADLINE: Joe Biden is Threatening our Freedom of Movement

- Biden Infrastructure Bill includes a remote KILL switch in all cars after 2026.
- Automotive-related freedoms, including access to fuel, allow us to be **free to move** without the permission of silicon valley and the federal government.
- These corporations can *prevent you from using your car*. (Ford already exploring to repossess cars, *NY Post*, March 3, 2023)
- These kill switches will have a "back door" that allows government agencies to shut your vehicle off remotely as well.

(SOURCE: Russell, Levi, 'Joe Biden is Threatening our Freedom of Movement,' Real Clear Energy, May 10, 2022)

Right to Repair

HEADLINE: Family learns unforgettable lesson when electric vehicle battery suddenly dies, replacement costs more than the car

By Chris Enloe The Blaze July 18, 2022

- Family spent \$11,000 on a used electric vehicle, a Ford Focus, a 2014 with 60,000 miles on the odometer.
- Stopped working. Dealer tells them replacement battery cost \$14,000.
- Worse, they <u>no longer make that replacement battery</u> (in 2022, vehicle only 8 yrs old). Offer them \$500 to take it off their hands.



Right to Repair

HEADLINE: The Era of 'the Car You Own Forever' Is Coming to an End

By Mike Spinelli MSN.com April 29, 2022

- ·Honda announced it's changing to selling you software, not just hardware.
- •Part of its recurring revenue strategy.

 What he calls: '...the transition from being <u>low-margin manufacturing businesses</u> to high-margin software businesses.'
- "...Apple's stock shot up as **recurring revenue** grew from zero to a quarter of its income, and the company plans to integrate **subscription services** even more broadly into its **hardware portfolio**. In the auto industry, a similar shift from a reliance on <u>one-time vehicle sales to consistent</u>, <u>predictable aftersales earnings</u> that extend into the future will coincide with the advent of the 'software-defined car.'"



Right to Repair

- Levi Russell, professor of Applied Economics, says repealing the remote kill switch and protecting right to repair are crucial for property rights and freedom to travel.
- Planned obsolescence of vehicles, like your computer or iPhone, except now you've paid tens of thousands for the vehicle, and <u>either a corporation or govt. can stop you from using it.</u>
- Internal combustion vehicles, so far, are <u>free of the sorts of nanny state controls</u> that are **standard** on electric vehicles.
- Right to Repair is a critical component of our ability to maintain freedom of movement.
 - >>Ensures that we are able to hire independent professionals to repair our vehicles and other products rather than being forced to pay astronomical prices to manufacturers.

SOURCE: Real Clear Energy.org, "Joe Biden Is Threatening Our Freedom of Movement," By Levi Russell, 5/10/22



Buttigieg's tone deaf

Can't afford gas or inflation?

Get an electric vehicle (\$40,000-\$100,000)

 Buttigieg wants to divert road funds to pay for high speed rail in TX (Houston to Dallas, boondoggle).

Wants to limit expansion of highways and force people into public transit where they can force vaccines and masks.



Buttigieg: 'Roads are Racist' Plan

- Buttigieg's **Reconnecting Communities** \$1 billion project aims to <u>reunify</u> <u>historically black neighborhoods divided decades ago</u> when the interstate highway system was developed and restore the civic pride that comes with safe and beautiful green spaces.
- The pilot program allows municipalities to apply for funding for:
 - Mass transit lines
 - Green spaces built on top of roadways, known as freeway lids or "caps"
 - Repurposing defunct rail lines
 - Possibly rerouting or partially removing highways.
 - >>Targeted areas include New Orleans, **Houston**, Tampa, and perhaps Nashville.

EV charge = 25 refrigerators

During House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee hearing July 19, 2022:

- Rep. Thomas Massie (KY) Got Buttigieg to admit he supports Biden's goal to have 50% of cars be EVs by 2030.
- In one year, that would increase the average household's use of electricity 25 times to charge their EV versus their refrigerator.

"Do you think it would strain the electric grid if every household plugged in 25 refrigerators?" Buttigieg forced to answer **yes**.

Massie cont., "We don't have the capacity to generate that much energy that we'll need to make this fantasy work by 2030."

Noted average household would have to use 4xs as much energy as they do on A/C for entire
year to charge two EVs.



Not enough power for EVs

Rep. Scott Perry (PA) - Revealed his average PA resident pays \$170/mo on electricity. To charge their cars, it would increase their bill by \$90-\$100/mo!

"Since 2010, U.S. has **closed 550 power generation stations**. Scheduled to retire another 17 GW of coal fired capacity by 2025...while at same time <u>increasing the grid requirements by 50%</u>. None of that works. Ghana is turning their lights out because they followed this model we're following right now."



Graves: Dems are lawless

• Rep. Garrett Graves (LA) - Authored the amendment to create criteria for allocating the highway funding in the Biden bill. Shocked to see Buttigieg replace his criteria with 'racial equity, climate change, and environmental justice' totally flouting the law.

"You guys are just deciding the priorities <u>not</u> actually <u>in the law</u>."



What does this all mean?

Threading the needle:

- 1. Using the **federal mileage tax**, they'll know where we go and how many miles we drive per month.
- 2. Through the carbon emissions reporting, they'll know how much 'carbon' we supposedly emit.
- 3. Through the kill switch and/or obsolescence of cars or their parts, they'll be able allocate you monthly carbon usage and when you go over your allotted amount, they'll be able to keep you from driving.



Plank to Preserve our Freedom to Travel

<u>Plank 63 - Freedom to Travel:</u> We oppose the Biden Infrastructure and Green Energy Plan that threatens our freedom to travel, <u>imposes a federal mileage</u> tax, as well as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) or other social justice policies on Texas taxpayers and drivers.

We oppose anti-car measures that <u>punish those who choose to travel alone</u> in their own personal vehicle, and oppose any measure to impose "**road diet**" mandates designed to **shrink auto capacity and/or intentionally clog vehicle lanes** to force deference to pedestrian, bike, and mass transit options (whose users do not pay gas tax).

We urge the Texas Legislature to protect drivers from these California-style, anti-driver policies in Texas.

Toll Road Plank

<u>Plank 65 - Toll Roads:</u> We believe that tolls should come off the road when the debt is retired, and if the debt is ever restructured or refinanced, the pay-off date needs to remain the same.

Oppose -

- Public Private Partnership toll roads.
- Converting existing lanes into toll lanes.
- Taxpayer money subsidizing or guaranteeing toll loans.
- Any new hidden taxes, tolls, fees on driving/cars.

Support -

- Uniform, pro-taxpayer toll collection and billing process
- Cap on fines/fees.
- De-criminalizing unpaid toll bill.



Taxpayers FIRST

Top 3 priorities for the session were:

- REMOVE TOLL ONCE ROAD IS PAID FOR
- BROADEN TOLL COLLECTION REFORM
- PREVENT BIDEN MANDATES (LIKE KILL SWITCH & ROAD DIET) FROM TAKING EFFECT IN TX





What did we get?

Very little.

- No bill to stop remote kill switches.
- No bill to stop road diets.
- No bill to protect drivers' right to repair.
- No bill to take tolls off once the road debt is paid for
- No toll collections/billing reform, with the exception of immediately notifying drivers when problems with payment card (HB 2170).

Dem Committee Chair

- Democrat Terry Canales, chairs House Transportation Committee.
- His committee passed worst legislation in a decade. GOP Platform meaningless to him.

HEADLINE: Governor Abbott Calls For \$150 Million To Boost Rio Grande Valley Roadway Project

"Governor Greg Abbott today called on the Texas Transportation Commission and TxDOT to allocate \$150 million...to support construction of the International Bridge Trade Corridor (IBTC) project in the Rio Grande Valley. The IBTC is a proposed non-tolled, four-lane divided roadway...direct interstate access for several international ports of entry and expedite the movement of goods and freight through the border region."

SOURCE: Abbott Press Release, June 26, 2023

HB 2170 - No D or R help

The Back Story...

HB 2170 by Bobby Guerra (D-McAllen) was a huge missed opportunity.

How many times did we ask Guerra for help?

- As soon as his bill got filed.
- When his bill was heard in committee
- When his bill came to the House floor for a vote he refused any amendments to his bill.
 He refused to budge.
- When it went over to the Senate (Sen. Carol Alvarado carried it), asked to amend it in committee. Still no deal despite calls and pleas from ordinary Texans.
- When it came to the floor for a vote.

Not one Republican would bring any of these amendments to the floor for a vote in either chamber.

So the toll agencies have more power and sway than millions of Texas drivers.

Small Victories

- **SB 1017** (Birdwell) To protect our **right to own** & use a vehicle or any other machine with a **fossil fuel powered engine**. Keeps cities from banning gas powered engines.
- **SB 1860** (Hughes/Kolkhorst) To require legislature's approval of a city's climate charter before it can be put before the voters for approval.
- **HB 33** (Landgraf) Prohibits Federal overreach into Texas oil & gas production. Blocks state agencies from enforcing federal regulations that aren't also in state law.
- HB 4797 (Romero) To require all toll agencies, including private entities, to undergo training by TxDOT on how to properly weatherize roads. Remember the 133 car pile-up during Yuri? I-35 W in Ft. Worth was <u>NOT</u> properly treated to prevent ice build up by the private toll operator, Cintra left 6 drivers dead.

Small Victories

- **SB 505** (Nichols) To impose a \$200 (renewal) or \$400 (new) registration fee on Electric Vehicles.
 - >> Since EV users do not pay gasoline tax, EVs have been using Texas roads without paying for that road usage. This will require EVs to contribute to the State Highway Fund to ensure there continues to be sufficient funding for our state roads. Became law.
- **HB 3297** (Cody Harris) **Repeal of the vehicle inspection** for many vehicle owners. No longer a requirement to get your vehicle inspected, but must pay a \$7 vehicle inspection fee to the state.
 - >> Save the \$7 to vehicle inspection station & save the hassle of getting the inspection. Not until 2025!

Small Victories

Continued **key transportation funding** that will prevent the need for more toll roads:

- **HB 2230** (Canales) Ensures revenue from oil and gas severance taxes (as approved by 80 percent of voters statewide in 2014) will continue. Extends Prop 1 funding from 2034 to 2042.
- SCR 2 (Nichols) Ensures that annual revenue from Prop 7 sales tax and vehicle sales tax provisions (approved by 83 percent of voters in 2015) will remain in place. Extends Prop 7 until 2039 (vehicle sales tax) and 2042 (sales tax).



What did they push instead? 'Woke'

- A state Mileage Tax (HB 3418-Canales)
- Extension of 50-yr private toll contract (SH 130) **ANOTHER 20 years (HB 2795**-Canales).
- Bills to intentionally slow down vehicles (HB 2224/SB 1663, HB 1885, HB 898)
- Divert road funds to environmentally friendly projects (parks, bikes, buses) (HB 1379-Ortega)
- Increase fees & penalties on driving/drivers (HB 898, HB 1855, HB 421)
- Giveaways to EV companies (HB 3014, SB 1364)



Mileage Tax = Toll for EVERY mile

WE STOPPED IT!

- HB 3418 (Canales) would have studied how to impose a state mileage tax.
- Required TxDOT to "submit to the legislature a report including: the
 feasibility of permanently assessing a vehicle mileage user fee; an
 evaluation of the impacts of a vehicle mileage user fee on the economy, the
 environment, and traffic congestion...& recommendations for legislation...
 to implement the recommendations."



Mileage Tax: What it really means

HB 3418 as filed wanted to:

"....Vary pricing based on the **time** of driving, type of public highway, proximity to transit, vehicle fuel efficiency, participation in car-sharing or pooling, or the <u>income</u> of the operator." (eventually 'income' removed)

From GAO Report: "Another type of **equity** is the **ability-to-pay** principle, where users who are more capable of bearing the burden of fees should **pay more** for the service than those with less ability to pay."

• **HB 3418** states: "Evaluate the enforceability of the vehicle mileage user fee and opportunities for operators to evade or manipulate the fee; and the impact of the vehicle mileage user fee on **equity**."

SOURCES: HB 3418 original text & GAO report on the Expanded Use of a Mileage Tax, published Nov. 2021

Mileage Tax = Carbon Tax

Mileage tax is a form of carbon tax.

 Government able to track & penalize drivers for driving 'too much,' at the 'wrong' time of day, or for actions they deem environmentally unacceptable, like choosing to drive when you live close to transit.



SH 130 Debacle

Both parties vehemently oppose Public Private Partnerships (P3s, known as CDAs in TX).

- HB 2795 would have extended this foreign-owned toll contract another 20 years (until 2062).
 - >>Why on a road that's already paid for (its debt was wiped out in bankruptcy court in 2017)?
- All to get a 'free' (to TxDOT, not drivers) direct connect route to SH 130 on I-35 built by the private entity.
 - >>Who benefits the most from a direct connect ramp onto a private toll road? The foreign company making bank on drivers, exploiting the relentless congestion on I-35.

SH 130 Debacle

- Bankruptcy court wiped out the previous owner's (Cintra-Zachry) debt, brought in Strategic Value Partners (SVP).
- The court kept contract in place & allowed this new company to continue collecting tolls until 2042.
 - >> Despite 160 pavement defects & 120 breaches of contract with the original developer, the House voted to continue this sort of road malpractice by awarding the new developer an additional 20 years!



Public Private Partnerships (P3s) = Public Money for Private Profits

- Taxpayers on hook for debt, unpaid tolls. Six P3s' debt totals \$19.3 billion.
- Charges toll rates as high as \$3/mile (North Tarrant Express & LBJ).

\$30-\$40 PER DAY

- Eminent domain for private gain
- Allows private corporations the power to tax.
- Non-competition clauses restricts expansion of free routes.
- Lowers speed limits on *FREE* routes to benefit the toll road.



SLOW DOWN OUR CARS

- **HB 2224/SB 1663** (Hernandez/Alvarado) Would give cities unilateral power to lower speed limits on highways down to **20 MPH**, without a traffic or engineering investigation to justify it. Backed by environmental groups, passed the House & identical bill passed Senate, but neither bill passed both. **Failed to become law**.
- **HB 1885** (Canales) Allows TxDOT to 'temporarily' reduce the speed limit at least **10 MPH below the posted speed.** Fails to define 'temporary'—could last indefinitely. Ever experience inactive work zones for months and even years with lower posted speeds? Imagine that spread like a virus. **Became law**.



INCREASE PENALTIES/FEES

• **HB 898** (Stucky) - Mandate new criminal penalties & more than **double the fine** (to a minimum \$500 up to \$1,250) if fail to move over when passing police, fire, tow trucks, TxDOT and other road workers on the shoulder.

>> On a second offense resulting in bodily harm, conviction would be **state jail felony**. There's no room for discretion, it's **mandatory sentencing**. **Became law**.

HB 1855 (Goodwin) - Would **double traffic tickets** in any corridor TxDOT designates as a **'highway safety corridor**.' Remember, "safety" is the code word to enact draconian penalties on drivers and devise ways to **intentionally slow down cars**. This type of designation could easily be abused to become *punitive speed traps*. **Failed to become law.**

Meanwhile, the Texas House voted to de-criminalize marijuana & gambling.

INCREASE PENALTIES/FEES

HB 421 (Lopez) - To requires a **3-foot passing buffer** in order to pass cyclists or pedestrians, 6-foot buffer for anything over a light truck. You get a ticket if you don't!

- Vision Zero Texas directly testified in favor of it.
- When most city streets are 10 feet wide, most cars would <u>NOT</u> be able to pass cyclists or pedestrians without moving over.
- Effectively reduce auto lane capacity by an entire lane until the cyclist or pedestrian is no longer in the roadway.
- If you had the misfortune of driving on a one lane road, <u>you'd be stuck traveling</u> the speed of a bicyclist or pedestrian until the cyclist or pedestrian is no longer on the road.

Green Giveaways

- HB 3014 (Harris, Caroline) To repeal the vehicle inspection for EVs. NOTE: this passed before the regular vehicle inspection repeal passed.
- **SB 1364** (Alvarado)- To grant a **weight exemption** to EV trucks allowing heavier loads (up to 82,000 pounds compared to their fossil fuel powered counterparts who are limited to 80,000 pounds) on our highways.
 - >> This allows EV trucks to do more damage to Texas highways without having to pay an additional overweight truck permit fee. Currently the max weight is 80,000 pounds for all other trucks.

Why are we giving away green subsidies to EVs like the blue states do?



How did your reps do?

Download our Report Card at:

www.TexasTURF.org/reportcard

NOTE: Senator Sarah Eckhardt's <u>radical</u> climate bills littered the session.

SB 258 by Eckhardt would permit **home energy audits** that allow the climate 'police' to come after your old appliances and force our public utilities into some of their green energy mandates by 2030, including a new fee added to your energy bill. **Passed Senate**

HER OTHER BAD BILLS:

- SB 254 Double state gas tax.
- SB 255 Increase taxes on natural gas.
- SB 1942 Force all school buses to switch to EVs.
- ▶ SB 1311 Create EV Govt Council, provide taxpayer-funded charging stations across TX.



Report Card

Senator Lois Kolkhorst (SD-18) - Grade A++ Longtime champion!

Co-authored bill to require state to approve cities' climate plans.

• Rep. JM Lozano (HD-43) - Grade F

On Transportation Committee. Terrible voting record! Voted out all of these BAD bills, including mileage tax, P3 bill, slower speed bills, 3 ft passing buffer bill!

• Rep. Geanie Morrison (HD-30) - Grade F



What can you do? Get involved!

SPREAD THE WORD

Educate your community & sphere of influence. Use our Report Card on the 88th Session to hold lawmakers accountable.

Contact lawmakers. Join the fight next session to STOP this madness.

Sign-up for our Text Message Alerts

Text NOTOLLTEXAS to 94253

Sign-up for our email alerts at

www.TexasTURF.org







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