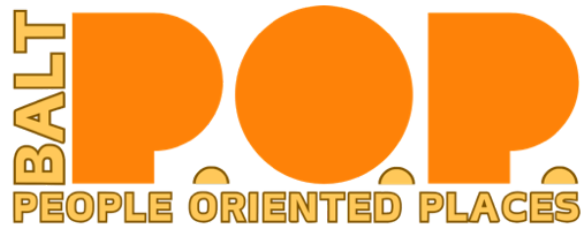


Bill: HB1457

Bill Title: Alternative Fuel, Fuel-Efficient, and Electric Vehicles - Highway Use Fees

Position: **Favorable with Amendments**



Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

As a group which views automobile-centric transportation and land use as begetting a fiscally-unsustainable and people-hostile development pattern, we support HB1457.

This bill allows for the owner of a vehicle to pay a mileage-based user fee in lieu of the proposed highway use fee. It makes sense that a user's share of the cost of maintaining our highway system should be closely-tied to their direct usage of that system. Basing that usage on their vehicle miles traveled (VMT) makes sense.

With a user's fee tied to their miles traveled, the user will then be compelled to make attempts to limit their miles traveled, simply in an effort to save money. This is behavior that we should be encouraging, as our cultural tendency to depend on an automobile to get everywhere comes with many downsides, both personal and externalized.

That being said, we are very concerned with the bill's provision that the mileage-based user fee paid by a motor vehicle owner may **not** exceed the annual highway use fee that the owner would have otherwise paid. The drivers who are most likely to embrace a mileage-based fee are those who drive **less** than most. Offering this option to them makes sense, as they will put less wear and tear on our roadways and place fewer vulnerable road users at risk.

However, with a mileage-based user fee cap available, high-mileage drivers who opt for the mileage-based user fee would be able to put **greater** wear and tear on our roadways and place **more** vulnerable road users at risk - with impunity. This isn't an outcome we should allow.

The potential opportunity for a driver to save money by opting for the mileage-based user fee should serve as enough motivation to encourage adoption. Going beyond it to provide a cap to ensure those savings, in a way that comes at the expense of the rest of us, is a bad idea. We can see such a cap provided as a **one-time** courtesy to each driver, but not in perpetuity.

We hope the committee finds these points helpful and convincing and we urge its members to **vote in favor of HB1457, with our suggested amendments**. Thank you for your efforts and the opportunity for us to testify on this legislation.

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