

Given the unanimous scientific data that points towards the emissions of burning fossil fuels contributing to an ecological shift in our air quality, personal health, water quality, etc. Hampering any efforts to decarbonise our economy is tantamount to criminal neglect.

A bill such as those proposed by South Australia and Victoria that would see to tax electric vehicles (EVs) not only misses the fundamental idea of EVs, and thus shows the ignorance and arrogance of the government bodies proposing it, but also would hamper the uptake of such vehicles.

At present, the Australian fleet of EVs is less than 1%. Since Australia lacks any real infrastructure to support the recharging of these vehicles (outside what the private sector has installed), has zero local manufacturing of vehicles (either internal combustion or electric), and still has a hefty and illegitimate luxury car tax I question, again, the logic involved in creating another tax that:

- a. Is not based on the structure of an existing tax (Internal Combustion Engines are taxed per litre of fuel, not on how far they travel) and sets a dangerous precedent for future taxes.
- b. Is set to an arbitrary amount that is not consistent across states.
- c. Seeks to disincentivise people from choosing one particular propulsion method.
- d. Allows that tax revenue to be collected and allow it to fall into general revenue whilst claiming that it is because EVs do not pay a tax on fuel that is needed for the upkeep of roads and infrastructure.

To elaborate on the points above, when EVs become the bread and butter of personal transportation (at this point not even the minerals council with their hollow advertising and big oil can stop that trend) the policy will be shown to be damaging to the hip pocket of every Australian due to the lack of planning and foresight. It is common knowledge that those that are less well off economically live furthest away from major employment hubs and thus need to commute greater distances in order to collect what is laughably called a living wage. Furthermore, according to the 15th Annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey (2019), Sydney and Melbourne are already ranked amongst the 10 least affordable cities in the world. On top of the stagnated growth of wages that sees no signs of changing in the near future, how does the proposed EV tax in any way not disadvantage the same population already struggling amongst some of the most expensive cities in the world? A resident of Western Sydney, for example, is already surrounded by toll roads that hamper travel for those people. Take expensive and over-crowded public transport to work you say? The vast majority of tradies do not live or work in the Sydney CBD, nor do they start work at 9am like office workers, and in addition buses and trains are less frequent in the early morning. How is a tradesperson expected to take their tools on the train and bus?

I can completely understand the need to maintain roads and associated infrastructure - I personally have worked on the upkeep of this type of infrastructure. I can make some suggestions on saving the revenue (expected to be a mere \$1million) the South Australian treasurer suggested that would be made from taxing EVs:

- a. Look into the excessive amount of traffic lights at intersections, reworking the standard governing the placement and amount (Europe for example doesn't have as many double ups of lights, drivers are expected to sit back from the line far enough to see the light change)
- b. Enact better planning for future expansion of road networks.
- c. The Treasurer can take a small pay cut.

A complete reform in the way Australians are taxed on fuel and have the raised revenue actually go towards roads maintenance and construction by taking it out of general revenue would better serve the community. Why Australia is still engaged in a Luxury Car tax now with a proposed tax on that tax because Electric Vehicles are not equal as their ICE counterparts in regards to upfront cost, only further serves to muddy the water.

The lack of a clear direction is not just the fault of government officials on a state level. The lazy, lacklustre, misguided, arrogant, and ignorant direction given by the Federal Government is also partly to blame.

Globally banks are no longer funding coal projects and petrol refineries in Australia are closing.

If Scott Morrison can walk into the houses of parliament with a lump of coal and proclaim that coal is not something that should be afraid of and that it will form a part of Australia's future in so called "Low Emissions" energy, I question why the prop he used was coated so as to not get his hands dirty?

Dirty transportation is killing more people globally through ill health effects every year, take a sensible approach and seek to invite cleaner methods of transportation through smart taxation and incentives. It's time that the incentives that are given to the fossil fuel industry change hands.