

The logo for the Thomas Jefferson Institute, featuring the name "Th. Jefferson" in a red, cursive script.The logo for the Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy, featuring the name in a red serif font above a faint illustration of a classical building with columns.

December 17, 2019

Dear Public Policy leader,

Today the Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy joined with 17 other state and national organizations in an open letter (available [here](#)) voicing deep concern about a new carbon tax proposed by the so-called Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI), whose purpose is to reduce global warming.

Designed to discourage and eventually eliminate the use of fossil fuels, TCI will start with a 10-cent per gallon gas “carbon” tax hike that will rise in future years. In one state, this will rise to \$3.00 per gallon. This new carbon tax is intended to drive down use of gasoline and diesel fuel. When it does, it will also reduce money set aside for road repair, safety and new road construction. TCI will hurt lower-income and rural residents much more significantly than their higher-income suburban or urban peers, will raise business costs significantly, and increase municipal budgets for snow removal, school buses and trash collection with vehicles all requiring fuel to operate.

The Institute has prepared a Legislative Analysis of the TCI proposal (available [here](#)). Major findings are:

- Virginia needs \$5.2 Billion to get structurally deficient roads up to only “fair” condition and \$7.9 Billion to get structurally deficient bridges into no better than “fair” condition. The Virginia Department of Transportation highway construction budget is \$2.8 Billion per year. Under TCI, the revenue used to support this budget would be eliminated.
- The TCI carbon tax will not go toward meeting road or bridge needs, necessitating significant additional road tax increases or some other means to offset these losses.
- Virginia’s participation in TCI will have no impact whatever on global warming. Eliminating use of gasoline and diesel fuels in Virginia would decrease global temperatures by year 2100 by about 0.0015 degrees C, (0.0026 degrees F).

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David W. Schnare".

David W. Schnare  
Senior Fellow,  
Energy and Environmental Stewardship