

Rep. Opsommer offered the following concurrent resolution:

House Concurrent Resolution No. 14.

A concurrent resolution to memorialize Congress to oppose any move towards the implementation of a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) tax system, including any requirements for tracking devices as standard equipment in the vehicles of United States citizens.

Whereas, In an effort to generate revenue streams for the federal Highway Trust Fund and the nation's surface transportation needs, the National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission has formally recommended the creation of a VMT taxation system to either complement or replace traditional gasoline or other energy-based taxation methods. An onboard device would keep track of both how many miles are traveled and where the vehicle is operated. A tax would be generated based on the amount of miles driven, the roads used, and, potentially, the time of day. This would essentially turn the entire federal road system into an electronic toll network; and

Whereas, In order to implement a VMT tax system, federal bureaucrats and international stakeholders would establish guidelines for standard wireless equipment in future automobile designs. Such discussions have already begun with Canada under the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP), as well as between the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, and other stakeholders, in regard to the Vehicle Infrastructure Integration (VII) program. These safety-related initiatives should not be co-opted to advance the adoption of VMT automobile equipment; and

Whereas, The implications of such a system would strain too far the advancement of efficiency at the expense of privacy and liberty. When taken in conjunction with other proposals, including wireless devices in Enhanced Driver's Licenses (EDL), GPS-based car insurance rates, and advanced paperless registration verification systems that would track drivers, their cars, and their real-time driving habits, a VMT tax system that mandates standard wireless automobile equipment would be both costly and intrusive to consumers and their right to travel; and

Whereas, Citizens would not be able to adjust their driving habits as easily as the Commission's report finds they will. Employers will not automatically adjust required work hours or allow employees to telecommute. This will create a situation where taxpayers will be forced to pay additional high toll rates to drive on public roads they have already paid for; and

Whereas, The federal government has not only proposed a federal VMT tax scheme, but is also interested in seeing states create local VMT tax schemes, and is discussing federal funding for states which participate. This is inappropriate, as Michigan has been a donor state for federal transportation dollars for many years. Michigan has, in effect, subsidized transportation projects in other states to the detriment of our state infrastructure and in disproportion to our contribution to the national economy. In recent years, Michigan has received federal transportation dollars at levels between 87 and 92 percent of the share of the tax revenue that the state generates for the federal Highway Trust Fund. If Michigan received 100 percent of the share it contributes, the state would potentially receive an additional \$100-150 million each year. The federal government should therefore not be using scarce federal transportation dollars to finance state VMT pilot projects. If additional federal transportation money is available for states, none should be used for pilot projects in other states until Michigan's donor status has been rectified; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That we oppose any move towards the implementation of a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) tax system, including any requirements for tracking devices as standard equipment in the vehicles of United States citizens; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the head of the United States Department of Transportation.