



Press Release
The Sustainable Energy Forum Inc
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Government Confused Over Transport - Sustainable Energy Forum

The Government doesn't know which way to jump on transport, says Tim Jones, Convenor of the Sustainable Energy Forum. "For years, the Sustainable Energy Forum and other groups have been warning that much higher fuel prices are on the way. The Government has chosen to ignore this advice, and now that high prices have arrived with a vengeance, the Government is becoming increasingly confused."

"This week, we've seen the Government make a positive move by buying back the rail and ferry networks, then undo all the good work by putting the skids under regional petrol taxes and delaying the entry of transport fuels into the proposed Emissions Trading Scheme by two years."

"Auckland was going to use the regional petrol tax to electrify its rail system, thus providing the sort of alternative to private road transport we need now more than ever. It would be a tragic irony if the Government's petrol tax move ended up making us even more dependent on oil for transport. And as for the ETS move, it's a crude piece of political opportunism that weakens the Government's supposed climate change flagship policy but will barely be noticed by motorists as petrol prices continue to rise."

"The latest report is that officials are looking at reducing the open road speed limit. This would be another good move, provided it is enforced, as lowering speed is the most effective immediate way to reduce both transport emissions and fuel use per kilometre. Doing so will help to increase road safety as well."

"But good moves mixed with bad ones aren't enough," Tim Jones says. "The Government, local authorities, and transport planners must face up to the new reality. The International Energy Agency's Chief Economist [now admits](#) that we are facing a world oil supply shortage. The urgent priority for New Zealand's transport policy is to lessen our dependence on oil and our shockingly high transport emissions. What we need is coherent transport policy designed to address these issues, not contradictory policies made on the hoof."

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