

Letter: Ehlers Says Duff Helped Finance Study of Mileage Tax He Says He Doesn't Want

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To the editor:

Sen, Bob Duff has become a politician with many opinions on the key issues affecting the families he claims to represent in Hartford. Nowhere is that more evident than with a new proposal that would slam all Connecticut drivers with a mileage tax.

Anyone who follows Connecticut politics has heard a lot about this new tax from their elected officials. Without the doublespeak from career politicians, the mileage tax is exactly what it sounds like — the state of Connecticut taxing you for every mile that you drive in your car, using your odometer and other information to track you.

When I learned about this special Orwellian kind of desperate money-grub, I bet my reaction was similar to yours and other people who drive on Connecticut's highways daily; with initial bewilderment, then shock, and outrage.

We already have the highest gas tax per gallon in the country. More people leave Connecticut than any other state in the union and this is how the Democrats in Hartford respond?!

To be fair, many of our local representatives have condemned this tax. Good ol' boy, Sen. Bob Duff, Dan Malloy's best friend in the Senate for tax hikes, did say he does not support the mileage tax. In a statement, Leader Duff said the Senate would never advance the proposal and then accused concerned Republicans of "fear-mongering."

"Case closed," Duff said, smugly.

Okay, Bob, but there's a problem with that: Why did you set aside \$300,000 in the budget that you greased through the state house for studying a mileage tax? There's no hiding this from your constituents.

Connecticut is in the midst of a fiscal catastrophe and Norwalk and Darien just saw crucial state tax dollars carved out of its education budget. You and Dan Malloy chose to use \$300,000 to study a mileage tax that supposedly no one wants instead of relieving Norwalk and Darien schools. This is a fact.

Let's be serious — Bob Duff is no backbencher in Hartford who keeps his head down and spends all of his time high-fiving fifth-graders who visit the Capitol — he's the Senate majority leader.

Don't tell me and other terrified parents in this district to pay no attention to the tax money that is being spent on studying how the state can charge us for dropping our kids off at school and then driving to work!

It's deceptive, it's manipulative, and it's exactly what people are fed up with in politicians. Bob Duff has made his political career telling his constituents he's doing one thing, while doing the opposite in the service of Gov. Malloy.

He claims he supports health care while cutting millions to our hospitals, shifts the tax burden to local towns by cutting aid and now saying the mileage tax is a pipe dream while allowing Gov. Malloy to "study it."

We can do better this fall. We do not have to live this way. At the very least, we need someone in Hartford who will be candid about what government's role in our lives should be. I'm not a politician. If you've met me, you know that I'm not afraid to speak my mind for what I think is right and ask questions when I do not know the answer. You can bet I will never ask motorists to pay more for the privilege of driving to work so they can pay taxes.

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If I'm elected to replace Bob Duff in the state Senate, you will always know where I stand on every issue and what I plan on doing. I will NEVER doublespeak, hedge, equivocate, or dodge.

Greg Ehlers