

From: June 28-29, 2022 Board Meeting – Public Comment
To: Meeting Info
Subject: [External] June 28-29, 2022 Board Meeting – Public Comment
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PUBLIC COMMENT

From: Jamie Shepherd
Agenda Item: AA1. FY 2022-23 Private
Railroad Car Tax Rate
Meeting Date: 7/26/22

Name: Jamie Shepherd

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Agenda Item(s):

AA1. FY 2022-23 Private Railroad Car Tax Rate - Report on the tax rate applicable to the 2022-23 Private Railroad Car Tax Assessment

Comment:

The tax rates for private railcars are indefensibly low. It looks like they're all getting a nearly free pass with 1% rates. The revenue generated for the state treasury is so small in comparison to other revenue streams (that this body doesn't set) that it's laughable so much time and energy goes into this one agenda item. For all that went into preparing these rates you might as well triple them. At 3% you'd bring in three times as much revenue, the public wouldn't notice—I'm probably one of the only comments—and you would eliminate the appearance of private railcars getting a sweetheart deal. The infrastructure on which the cars travel may have been privately built but the right of way through which they travel is public, and the nuisance of their excessive noise and the pollution from their locomotives is publicly felt. Furthermore there should be an additional tax on refurbished Pullman luxury cars used for private transport because their existence is only due to excess consumption, rather than economical need, and as a matter of good public policy, luxury items should have an extra tax on their value for the revenue it would generate without materially affecting the market for these items. (Billionaires will still buy refurbished Pullmans even with an annual 5% tax.)

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