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## Mineta Transportation Institute Publishes Survey Results on “Green” Transportation Taxes and Fees

*Researchers Agrawal, Dill and Nixon found that a surprising number of Californians support a “green” concept for transportation funding.*

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**San Jose, Calif., September 29, 2009** – The [Mineta Transportation Institute](http://www.transweb.sjsu.edu) (MTI) has published Report 08-05, [“Green” Transportation Taxes and Fees: A Survey of Californians](#). This report explores public opinion on a new and promising concept – green transportation taxes and fees. These are taxes and fees set at variable rates, with higher rates for more polluting vehicles and lower rates for those that pollute less. The survey results show that the concept of green transportation taxes and fees strongly appeals to Californians.

“This approach adapts the traditional transportation finance system to achieve two critical public benefits at once – encouraging drivers to choose environmentally-friendly transportation options, and raising revenue for transportation programs,” said Dr. Asha Weinstein Agrawal, principal investigator for the report. She co-authored with Dr. Jennifer Dill and Dr. Hilary Nixon.

To test public support for green transportation taxes and fees, the authors conducted a random telephone survey of 1,500 Californians, asking their views on five hypothetical tax and fee options – a flat-rate and a green vehicle registration fee, a flat-rate and a green mileage fee, and a “feebate” program for new vehicle purchases under which more-polluting vehicles would be charged a tax, and less-polluting vehicles would receive a rebate.

The survey tested this in two ways – by testing support for the three hypothetical green transportation tax and fee policies, and also by comparing support levels for flat-rate versus green versions of two taxes. Majorities of the respondents supported all three green taxes and fees tested.

Another striking finding is that a diverse range of Californians supported the green fee concept. Support for the green taxes and fees held at 50% or higher across most population subgroups. Also, analyses comparing support for the green and flat-rate vehicle registration fee and feebate proposals confirmed that in every subgroup more people within that subgroup supported the green than the flat version of the two taxes tested.

The free document can be downloaded from [www.transweb.sjsu.edu](http://www.transweb.sjsu.edu). Click “Research” and then “Publications.” Scroll down to the report.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

### **Asha Weinstein Agrawal, Ph.D.**

Dr. Agrawal is Director of the MTI National Transportation Finance Center, and also an associate professor of urban and regional planning at San José State University. Her research and teaching interests in transportation policy and planning include transportation finance, pedestrian planning, and urban street design. She also works in planning and transportation history. She has a B.A. from Harvard University in Folklore and Mythology, an M.Sc. from the London School of Economics and Political Science in urban and regional planning, and a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley in city and regional planning..

### **Jennifer Dill, Ph.D.**

Dr. Dill is an associate professor of urban studies and planning at Portland State University, and the director of the Center for Transportation Studies at PSU. Her research and teaching interests focus on transportation and environmental planning, travel behavior, air quality, and transportation-land use interactions. Previously, she was an environmental and transportation planner for government and non-profits in California. She has a B.S. in environmental policy analysis and planning from UC Davis, an M.A. in urban planning from UCLA, and a Ph.D. in city and regional planning from UC Berkeley.

### **Hilary Nixon, Ph.D.**

Dr. Nixon is an assistant professor of urban and regional planning at San José State University. Her research and teaching interests in environmental planning and policy focus on the relationship between environmental attitudes and behavior, particularly related to waste management and linkages between transportation and the environment. She has a B.A. from the University of Rochester in environmental management and a Ph.D. in planning, policy, and design from UC Irvine.

## **ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE:**

The [Mineta Transportation Institute](#) (MTI) was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was reauthorized under TEA-21 and again under SAFETEA-LU. The institute is funded by Congress through the US DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and by other public and private grants and donations, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The US DOT selected MTI as a national "Center of Excellence" following a 2002 competition.

The Institute has a Board of Trustees whose internationally-respected members represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI's focus on policy and management resulted from a board assessment of the industry's unmet needs and led directly to choosing the San José State University College of Business as the Institute's home. MTI conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer focusing on multi-modal surface transportation policy and management issues. Visit [www.transweb.sjsu.edu](http://www.transweb.sjsu.edu)

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