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WORLDNETDAILY EXCLUSIVE

LIFE WITH BIG BROTHER

Congressman wants government GPS in cars

Proposes mileage-based gas tax that would monitor travels

Posted: August 05, 2009
10:07 pm Eastern

By Bob Unruh
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Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore.

An Oregon congressman says he wants to test having a government GPS unit in every car so a tax could be imposed on the miles driven.

The proposal, H.R. 3311, which calls for a test [project](#) costing \$150 million-plus, was introduced by [Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore.](#)

"Oregon has successfully tested a Vehicle Miles Traveled fee, and it is time to expand and test the VMT program across the country," he said in a statement on his

website. "A VMT system can better assess fees based on use of our roads and bridges, as well as during times of peak congestion, than a fee based on [fuel consumption](#)."

"It is time to get creative and find smart ways to rebuild and renew America's deteriorating infrastructure," he said.

His plan calls for the Department of the Treasury to study the idea with test GPS-equipped car projects in every state.

(Story continues below)



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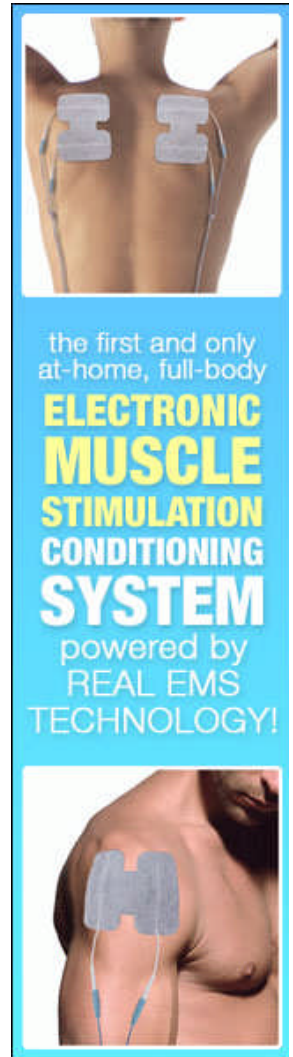
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Blumenauer said the Oregon test "charged drivers for the number of miles they traveled rather the fuel they consumed. The test was convenient for drivers, protected personal privacy, and proved to be easily administrable."

In a [WND column](#), however, Henry Lamb raised several concerns unaddressed by the congressman.

For example, what other applications would there be for a GPS unit attached to each car in the nation?

What about "shutting down the vehicle when its allotted emissions cap had been reached."

"Why not?" Lamb wrote, "The current cap-and-[trade](#) bill would limit industrial emissions and force each [business](#) to pay an extra tax for the privilege of emitting additional carbon dioxide. Why not arbitrarily assign a weekly or monthly cap on auto emissions and shut down the vehicle when that limit is reached? The new Global Positioning Satellite device would have that capability.

"Every American ought to be outraged that such a system is even contemplated," he continued. "This system is the tool that makes slaves of every person who depends upon a vehicle. Every person should consider just how his life would be changed if he were required to get approval from the federal government to start his car."

Lamb said shutting down a vehicle would be among the less intrusive possibilities.

"The proposed GPS road tax system could easily be programmed to listen to and record conversations inside any vehicle. It could stop a vehicle, lock the occupants inside and notify the 'jack boots' that the occupants were en route to a tea party," Lamb wrote. "We would hope that the federal government would never sink to the level of paranoia that gripped Nazi Germany. But then, we also hoped that the federal government would never sink to the level of labeling legal, peaceful assemblies, such as the recent tea parties, as gatherings of potential terrorists."

According to a report at [Landlinemag.com](#), the bill does not call for a removal of the "fuel tax" if a [mileage](#) tax is established.

"The current system of levying federal taxes on trucks is as discriminatory as it can be to small business, and harmful, but there are



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lots of unanswered questions with a VMT," Todd Spencer, vice president of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, told the magazine.

"And those questions need to be resolved before we start launching down that path," he said.

The bill, introduced July 23, has been assigned to the House Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation.

It states the subjects that need to be evaluated include "ease of compliance," "public acceptances," and "geographic and income equity."

The Cleveland Plain Dealer reported besides Oregon's test project, several other states also have considered checking out the idea.

Under the Oregon plan, a dashboard display, a GPS receiver and antenna, [mileage](#) counter and a radio were built into several hundred cars. When a driver pulled up to a pump at a specially equipped gas station, a radio sent information about the car's travels to the pump.

It was programmed at that point to remove the gas tax and add the [mileage](#) tax.

On the Cleveland newspaper's forum page, there was alarm over the potential.

"Are you people convinced yet that it's time to grab the pitchforks and head for the castle?" wrote a participant.

Another expressed frustration.

"I purchased a small car last spring because gas prices were on the rise. This small car averages 43 mpg. This saved me a lot of money when gas prices hit \$4.00+/gal. The car also has the smallest carbon footprint of any non-hybrid vehicle being produced today. The small carbon footprint helps save the [environment](#). I travel 100+ miles/day. The government encourages us to use [less gas](#) to help the country become less dependent on foreign oil. The people are doing what they want by driving less or driving more fuel efficient vehicles. Of course gas tax revenues are going to decrease. And now they are thinking about a [mileage](#) tax because people are doing what they want.....they can't have it both ways..."

Transportation officials in the Obama administration have downplayed the idea for now.



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Bob Unruh is a news editor for WorldNetDaily.com.



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