

## C.E. Petit

I do not pretend to have current expertise in actual spending needs that are directly consistent with the restrictions on use of settlement funds. I recognize that the settlement funds are not general funds.

That said, there's one very obvious "tradeoff" that these funds enable: One of the main barriers to even nominal compliance with the McCleary ruling (an issue that I remember from the 1970s, when I was a student in a horribly underfunded school district near Seattle and was jammed into oversized classrooms, including specifically losing out on several opportunities due to lack of funding) is the state's "inability" to reach a capital-expenditures budget enabling new school construction. It is, unfortunately, a political reality in this state that taxation is regressive and insufficient, especially regarding inherited and passively-acquired wealth; this settlement can't and doesn't change that. Proposing tax hikes in return for greater services (that allow true choice in other matters) is not politically possible, especially in the face of unethical, intellectually dishonest, self-interested antitax protests. At minimum, the Volkswagen funds should allow a substantial shifting of funds from other areas of state government toward the capital expenditures necessary to comply with McCleary... without raising taxes, and without making those who benefit in the long run from better schools pay for new construction. This plan should explicitly acknowledge its place in the current legal (not just political) ordering of budget priorities in this state. Perhaps there cannot be a "\$112 million" offset directly into the capital expenditure budget; there surely can be acknowledgement... which might also limit starvation of existing programs with the excuse that "we've got Volkswagen money!"

In other senses, too, this plan is grossly incomplete, and perhaps deceptively so. The "proposed plan" document makes exactly no comparison to current expenditures; does not disclose overlaps or duplication with existing efforts, nor synergies potentially obtainable by coordination with existing efforts; does not distinguish among objectives potentially obtainable with on-the-market-already technologies and materials and those (such as fully electric ferries) that would require substantial research and development prior to deployment; and, most critically, does not appear to budget for maintenance of any new infrastructure, only for its initial construction.

As such, I cannot support the plan due to its very incompleteness. It is deceptive and inappropriate to present such a fundamentally flawed plan for public comment in any area, let alone one in the inherently changeable area of transportation infrastructure. This plan is the equivalent of justifying a widening of I-5 through downtown Seattle without any attention paid to repairing existing bridges or road maintenance five years from now or even resiting of on- and off-ramps on surface streets to accommodate new traffic flows.