

inlander, 12-29-2011

No Problem Here The Washington State Department of Transportation's 2011 Congestion Report details the amount of congestion Washington drivers experience on a daily basis. It's a 70-page report full of figures and graphs and tables. Their discussion of congestion in the Spokane area occupies about a third of a page. The vast majority of this annual report focuses on the Central Puget Sound, as it should. According to the traffic engineers at WSDOT, Spokane drivers experience about 390 hours of delay per day driving around our region. The number for the Puget Sound is 123,000 hours of delay per day. Spokane's congestion accounts for threethenths of 1 percent of the delay experienced by Washington drivers on an average day.

We do not have a legitimate congestion problem in our area that warrants spending \$2 billion on the North Spokane Freeway. This project has always been a bad idea that reeks of pork barrel politics.

The Legislature has cut \$10 billion dollars of the state's budget since the beginning of the recession. Kids are going to school hungry, going into packed classrooms with poorly equipped teachers. College tuition is skyrocketing. Criminals are not serving their full sentences because we can't afford to keep the bad guys behind bars. Yet the WSDOT is telling us we need to pour at least another \$1.3 billion down the rat hole that has already sucked \$600 million out of our wallets. And our legislative leaders continue to funnel precious dollars into this project that doesn't have a problem it solves. It's time to put a fork in this turkey, it is done.

John Covert Citizens for Sensible Transportation Planning Spokane Wash.

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CHOICE REALTY

Melissa Murphy

Consistently ranked among the Top 10 agents in Spokane

Homes of the Week

FEATURED HOME



5657 S. Swenson
4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 4227 sq. ft. granite covered entry and view to surrounding forest. Double hardwood floors throughout. Spacious open floor.
Priced at \$525,000

5 Mile

9907 N. Rosemead
3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 3900 sq. ft. Much features like granite counters, hardwood floors and large tile windows. Spacious living room with the fireplace and woodwork.
Priced at \$359,000

South Hill

3415 E. 65th
3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 2000 sq. ft. Large living room with fireplace, updated kitchen with new cabinets and tile flooring, master drop and living room with fireplace.
Priced at \$329,000

457 W. Shoshone
3 bedrooms, 1.5 bathrooms, 2000 sq. ft. Main floor master with double closets, master living room, great living room with fireplace and woodwork.
Priced at \$309,000

11 W. Sumner
3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1718 sq. ft. Close condition with vinylwood, park, metal entry and granite, hardwood floors. Spacious renovated kitchen with new granite.
Priced at \$335,000

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B INLANDER DECEMBER 29, 2011

LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR@INLANDER.COM

Nice Party!

It's clear after last week's Republican choice not to renew the payroll tax extension that they have not a bag of dog-doo on the porch and then stepped backward into it. When Republicans first invited the Tea Party into their house, it was probably because it was an interesting group, and it was assumed as they would shake things up. But now the boys in tri-cornered hats have their feet on the coffee table, are smoking the house cigars, and riling through wallets and drawers.

I suspect that mainstream Republicans put on their fancy coats, because it was to be long before they get the barn's rick out the door and into the street. They can look back in to the window to see what's happening in their foster home but might not want to look too long, considering the damage being done to their party.

BRUCE EMREY
Spokane, Wash.

Heartbreaking System

A friend recently gave me a copy of the article "Foster Overload" (11/17/11), as my husband and I had been foster parents. Your article discussed so many challenges we faced during the almost eight years we had children in our care. We had 12 children in our home over the years, sometimes only one child but usually two or more and several siblings groups.

Our experience with foster care was one we will never forget and can only be summed up in the fact that the state foster care system is broken. I, too, would like to see the system become more child-centered, but what is it going to take to see real change? Part of the problem is the state's "normal" requirement for foster parenting, which allows licensing for many who are completely unprepared for what they encounter with the serious needs of the children in their care.

Prior to placement in our home, we always requested any background information available on the children, in most cases, very serious information was intentionally withheld from us, and we were confronted with issues that we were not only unprepared to but had no explanation with. I do hear the ongoing stories about caseworkers being overworked, but at times I wonder. Many jobs require 60 hours of work for a 40-hour week, and what I do know is there is a very serious lack of accountability for the time of caseworkers.

My husband and I decided not to renew our foster care license about eight years ago as we believed the system to be one we could no longer be a part of. I could go on and on with our gut-wrenching experiences and the heartbreak we suffered on behalf of so many little children in the hands of the state. Hopefully your article will shed some light on this shameful situation.

CATHY COGGELL
Spokane, Wash.

No Problem Here

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and graphs and tables. Their discussion of congestion in the Spokane area occupies about a third of a page. The vast majority of this annual report focuses on the Central Puget Sound, as it should. According to the traffic engineers at WSDOT, Spokane drivers experience about 700 hours of delay per day driving around our region. The number for the Puget Sound is 123,000 hours of delay per day. Spokane's congestion accounts for three-tenths of 1 percent of the delay experienced by Washington drivers on an average day.

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