INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX PROJECT

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Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project - Submission.

Australia's largest infrastructure project has been estimated — by The City of Sydney Councils' independently commissioned review — to blow out to at least $45 billion dollars. For 33km of road, this works out to cost more than $1.3 billion per km. Even under the current NSW government estimate the minimum cost will be half a billion dollars per km.

WestConnex follows on from similar tollway tunnels such as The Sydney Harbour Tunnel, Cross City Tunnel, and Lane Cove Tunnel, all of which are spectacular disasters on financial grounds alone.

WestConnex allows a few giant companies to profit massively at the public's expense. Transurban, for example, who own a majority of Sydney's tollways already.
Things like guaranteed income clauses in the operating contract need to be looked at. The relationship between Labor/Liberal parties and road companies who are a major donor to both needs to be looked at.

Even in the context of Sydney, WestConnex is an inequitable use of public funds. Universal public usage assumes that everyone owns a car and can drive, or can afford alternatives like taxis.

The destruction, past and potential, of heritage buildings by the WestConnex project, can only be seen as a great loss. The National Trust Of Australia strongly argues against WestConnex.

The proposed unfiltered chimney stacks for WestConnex tunnels are manifestly inadequate. The World Health Organisation catagorizes diesel exhaust as a Class 1 carcinogen, meaning there is no known safe level of exposure to it.

The project runs totally counter to the idea that action needs to be taken to mitigate global warming, both in the short term building of the road, but even more in the long term usage.

WestConnex is a gross diversion of funds that should rightfully go towards public transport. WestConnex' existing tunnels should be put to use for underground rail.