

**MEDIA RELEASE**                      **PSA rejects proposed new tax for motorists to fund traffic management**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is appalled by the proposed new tax for motorists to fund traffic management. This tax will further burden the country's over-burdened citizens who are already struggling with the escalating costs of necessities.

The new tax will condemn commuters to more hardship. The cost of public transport will increase as service providers will transfer increased expenses to consumers who are mostly the unemployed and low-earning employees. The ripple effect of this decision on food prices was also not considered by the Department of Transport. Government clearly has no regard for the public who are already paying high fees to renew motor-vehicle licences as well as ridiculously expensive fuel. The Department unfortunately learnt nothing from the controversial electronic tolling system to pay for the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project, which was vehemently rejected by the public. The new tax will result in another 'e-toll' saga.

The PSA, representing more than 235 000 public-sector employees, believes that there is a need for a proper funding model and strategies. These can be achieved by the prioritisation of government resources without milking citizens. The PSA calls upon the Department of Transport to consider options that will offer motorists relief rather than burdening them more with any form of levy or tax. The fine tuning of fine collecting procedures relating to traffic offences and penalties would assist as the inefficiency of the system has led to the loss of much-needed revenue. The confiscation of movable property and the demerits systems are taking it too far and will create unnecessary problems for road users and government.

Cabinet must soberly decide against introduction of any form of tax to avoid public backlash, which may have unintended consequences. The PSA will, under the current economic climate, not hesitate to mobilise and cooperate with other organisations to prevent the introduction of any such tax for citizens of this country.

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