



January 19, 2015

Basia Ruta  
Auditor General for Local Government  
Suite 201 10470-152nd Street  
Surrey, BC V3R 0Y3

Dear Ms. Ruta,

As you know, a plebiscite is being held in Metro Vancouver over the issue of imposing a 0.5% sales tax on consumers in order to fund the Mayor's Council's TransLink expansion plans.

It is broadly agreed that taxpayers' money should not be used to influence voters in an open and free democracy. Influencing voters should be the purview of campaigns and activists, not the institutions of our governments that must remain neutral in electoral processes to maintain their credibility.

It was with concern that I read in the Vancouver Sun on January 16, 2015 (*Vancouver, Surrey mayors lead way for Yes campaign in transit plebiscite, by Kelly Sinoski*) that "The Yes campaign is expected to cost as much as \$4 million, most of which will likely come from TransLink coffers and focus on educating residents about what they will get in the plan."

TransLink should not be spending any public money to influence the outcome of this vote, or it will call the validity of the process into question. Therefore, the official NO campaign in this plebiscite is calling upon the Auditor General for Local Government to:

- a) Ensure that no public money from TransLink or any local governments (including Metro Vancouver) is spent to influence the outcome of the vote.
- b) Ensure that any advertising by TransLink or local governments designed to "educate" voters about the process is vetted by the Auditor General for Local Government for neutrality and bias before being released.

We believe that all residents of Metro Vancouver are best served by an open, free and fair process. Having governments spend public monies to ensure the results of a vote is unseemly and in direct contravention of decades of practice in Canada and other advanced democracies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. I. Marshall".

Hamish I. Marshall  
Campaign Manager – NO TransLink Tax

cc. Keith Archer, Chief Electoral Officer, Elections BC

[www.NoTransLinkTax.ca](http://www.NoTransLinkTax.ca)

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