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Abolish the Congestion Charge

Chris Prior for the London Assembly

"Use your vote, have your say"

CHOICE RATHER THAN CHARGES

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Immediate Release

"I believe that people want choice rather than charges," says Chris Prior, the Abolish the Congestion Charge candidate in the London wide Assembly elections.

"We are the party of protest but also the party of progress. We need policies that work if we are successfully to tackle congestion and London's contribution to global warming. Government has a duty to provide much better public transport and to help people respond effectively to the environmental challenge. Every year it taxes Londoners £15bn more than it spends; then, with congestion charge, it charges them again for its failure to deliver.

People pay their congestion charge for nothing. There is no service provided, indeed the reverse. Congestion is actually worse than before it was introduced and has increased by nearly 25% on the edges of the Zone as people make longer journeys to avoid paying. It is not just drivers that suffer; buses are 11% slower than before. There has been no measurable improvement in air quality.

It is an unfair and bad tax. Over £5.50 of every £8 goes in running the scheme. If it weren't for the excessive fines, the congestion charge would hardly show any return at all. Relying on catching people out is not good public policy.

The scheme is fundamentally flawed and must be abolished. Believing you can reform it to make it "better" is like thinking you can make a concrete plane fly by giving it a new coat of paint.

I urge the millions who have been fined and who pay the charge to use their vote and have their say. I also urge those who can't afford to pay the charge and are frightened to come near the centre of London for fear of being fined, to vote against this example of bad government. I ask all Londoners to take a stand and demand real solutions to the real problems London faces. The more bad government is tolerated, the more of it we will get. "

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. Chris Prior is 43, is married to the author Lily Prior. He is the Chief Executive of storeton.com. He also the founder of Plug in Britain, which promotes plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles. They live in Battersea with their son.

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