

It works by magic, that's how

According to the Pioneer Press article, *Are penalties too high for transit fare evaders?* (2/4, p. 3A), Democrats will be introducing a bill that will reduce the penalty, arguing that this will result in greater compliance. Not surprisingly, and against all reason, there is no explanation of how making fare evasion less painful will miraculously accomplish this.

Brad Tabke, sponsor of the bill, states that less than 3% of citations for fare evasion are paid, which, he says, puts an undue burden on the poor and court system. Uh, paying your fare is not an undue burden—it's an obligation, and there is no reason for those citations to burden the courts: unpaid citations would simply go to warrant, which would come to light when those fare-beaters, being the paragons of society that they are, eventually come under scrutiny for other violations of the law.

Frank Hornstein, who supports the bill, believes it will insure that our transit system is equitable and serves the entire community. What, may I ask Mr Hornstein, is inequitable about everyone paying their fare? And the last I checked, no subset of the larger community is excluded from riding public transit.

Finally, the bill would include funding for hiring "transit ambassadors," lay people whose function would be to enforce payment and write citations. Considering the kind of people those ambassadors will be dealing with I hope the bill includes generous hospital benefits.

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