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Grave concerns about privatizing turnpike

TO THE EDITOR:

Curiously, there seems to be very little public concern that our state government is considering turning over the Pennsylvania Turnpike to private business. The *Intelligencer Journal* ran an editorial recently ("Go Slow on Turnpike," *Intell*, Dec. 21), but most people hardly seem to have taken notice and the editorial did not take a firm stand on the issue.

I am not surprised. This is in line (on a local level) with the selling of Conestoga View, (on the national level) with the privatization of our education system and (on the world-wide level) with the privatization of our military.

There is a widespread notion that the private sector is more efficient at delivering services than the public sector. This belief is based largely on the brief, entertaining stories with which we are barraged by television, radio, magazines, newspapers and e-mails. The anecdotes are designed to raise our righteous indignation to a level that causes us to clamor that someone should do something about it, whatever it is. We recently went through an

election season in which scandals in our government played a significant role. With exception of the Foley scandal, every other scandal had to do with private business' attempts to buy influence from our well-paid elected servants.

For several decades there has been a nearly continuous parade of corporate malfeasance; from the Wall Street and S&L scandals, to Enron, Tyco and Halliburton. There is evidence that corporations are far more corrupt than government, especially since corporations are the driving force behind most of our government's scandals.

The citizenry appears blasé about the prospect of selling off our highway infrastructure to the highest bidder without regard for the long term ramifications. There is tremendous power and profit to be had by controlling any state or country's infrastructure. Giving up that level of control is foolish.

Thousands of years ago the Israelites were judged by Samuel. When he grew old, he placed his sons in charge of judging the people, but they became corrupt, taking bribes. The people clamored for

change. They demanded a king. It did not turn out well. We are repeating history again. We are reverting back to an era when wealth and power were held in the hands of the very few.

The thing that makes America the greatest country on earth is that we are *self-governed*. Do we really want to make the worldwide corporations king over us or will we muster up the will and courage to take our responsibility for self-governance seriously?

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