

Congress prefers drivers over public transit

By Emily Badger, Washington Post

The federal tax code has a weird way of favoring people who drive to work over those who take public transit there.

If you're a driver, the federal commuter benefit allows you to spend up to \$245 of your pre-tax income each month on parking at work. If you pay to take the bus or train instead, the benefit is only about half that – \$130.

For several years now, transit advocates have gone back and forth with Congress trying to equalize the benefits (or remove the bias, depending on how you look at it). And for a brief and glorious period, the Recovery Act (and some extensions) temporarily did that.

This year, however, for lack of action from Congress, the transit benefit shrank back to its old level. And now Chuck Schumer and several other members of Congress are trying to revive the issue during the lame-duck session.

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