

From: Ethan Barton [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 May 2024 3:50 pm
To: haveyoursay
Subject: Increase in roading rates.

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To whom it may concern.

I am writing to express our vehement opposition to the Waitomo District Council's proposed targeted rate increase on exotic forestry blocks. This proposal, which suggests a staggering 1,200% increase in the District Roding Rate from \$4 per hectare to \$48 per hectare, is not only unreasonable but also detrimental to the economic health and growth of our region.

Labeling this rate increase as merely excessive would be an understatement—it is absurd. At a time when local businesses and industries are striving to recover and grow, imposing such an astronomical increase is counterproductive. It's a clear signal to the forestry sector and related businesses that their contribution to the local economy is undervalued. Forestry is not just about the trees; it involves a wide array of local contractors and businesses, from equipment suppliers to transport services, all of whom provide vital employment in our community. These are local jobs, filled by local people, pumping money back into our local economy.

By pushing this proposal, the Council is effectively stifling growth and sending a discouraging message to every stakeholder invested in the prosperity of our region. The message being sent is not just unwelcome, it's downright dismissive, telling the hard-working members of the forestry sector to take their business, their jobs, and their economic contributions elsewhere.

This proposal needs to be reconsidered. It's not just a bad idea—it's a fundamentally flawed strategy that threatens the livelihood of many in our community. I urge the Waitomo District Council to withdraw this proposal immediately and engage in a more constructive dialogue with the stakeholders to find feasible, fair, and balanced solutions to road maintenance funding. Let's focus on policies that support growth and collaboration, rather than imposing punitive measures that are bound to have far-reaching negative consequences.

We need a council that supports its people and industries, not one that holds them back with poorly conceived financial burdens. Let's be smart, let's be fair, and let's work together for the betterment of our community. Drop this rate hike, and let's find a better way forward.