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Overcrowded Carpool Lanes

■ Re "Easing of Carpool Rules Backfires as Lanes Jam," Jan. 22: I feel no joy that my predictions have proven true of the dire impact to the El Monte busway of state Sen. Hilda Solis' bill reducing from three to two the minimum number of passengers a vehicle needs to use the busway. Our organization took a strong stance against the legislation and mounted a campaign to organize the bus riders who use the busway to lobby their legislators.

The data from Caltrans was clear that the change would be detrimental. Now that the consequences are clear, Solis has the gall to claim, "It is too soon to come out and criticize." How backed up does the busway have to get before she admits her legislation was wrong and should be repealed?

DANA GABBARD
 Executive Secretary
 Southern California Transit
 Advocates, Los Angeles

■ The saturation debacle on the El Monte busway was predicted last spring in testimony Caltrans and MTA officials presented to the Legislature's transportation committees. The "often-open carpool lanes" coveted by other drivers are not empty. Carpool lanes, especially transit facilities like the I-10's El Monte busway, carry fewer vehicles but more travelers than general purpose lanes.

If legislators want to make use of the additional capacity available in carpool lanes, as they should, then they should convert the state's carpool lanes to high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes and sell the available space at a price that won't attract more drivers than the lanes can accommodate.

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HOW TO WRITE TO US

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