

# ANOTHER PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP DISASTER

## Canada: Port Mann Bridge

The Port Mann Bridge in Vancouver is another 3P disaster from around the world – a disaster much like the failures (SR 91 and SR 125) that have cost California taxpayers hundreds of millions more than they should have. Because they are so profitable, it is not a surprise that multi-national companies and Wall Street investment houses want to bring more such 3Ps to the “lucrative” California market.

### ***What the experts say:***

**The British Columbia Government has bailed out the \$3.3 billion Port Mann Bridge Project after private financing for the 3P project collapsed. The cost of building the bridge and associated highway ballooned to an estimated \$3.3 billion from an original projection of \$1.5 billion.<sup>1</sup>**

**Transportation minister Kevin Falcon announced that the government hopes to “recoup the debt financing through \$3 tolls.”<sup>2</sup> This latest development is a blow to Partnerships BC, the agency that promotes and oversees 3Ps in Canada. Partnership BC CEO Larry Blain has admitted “public borrowing to pay for the bridge will cost \$200 million less than the 3P plan.”<sup>3</sup>**



### The Public Interest Alternative

- Require competitive bidding.
- Require public oversight, design and inspection to ensure public safety and cost controls.
- Utilize tax exempt public financing which is as much as 35 percent lower than private borrowing.
- Tolls should be reinvested in our transportation and other public infrastructure.
- Prohibit non-compete clauses and cash payments that prevent improvements to competing public roads, increasing congestion.

<sup>1</sup> *The Abbotsford Times*, “Brouhaha over bridge,” March 10, 2009

<sup>2</sup> *The Vancouver Sun*, “Private financing for new Port Mann project vaporizes,” February 28, 2009

<sup>3</sup> *The Abbotsford Times*, “Port Mann plans change,” March 2, 2009