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CIVITAS ACTION

February 12, 2018

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our organizations and the millions of Americans we represent across all 50 states, we write to express our opposition to raising the federal gas tax. Federal policy should concentrate first on the many impediments to a more efficient, effective, and user-accountable transportation network.

Raising the gas tax is a bad idea. It will make the burden of government on families and businesses heavier. A higher gas tax means higher prices not just on gas, but on goods and services throughout the economy. These costs would inevitably be passed along to consumers in the form of higher prices, resulting in a regressive tax hike on those who can least afford it.

We applaud the landmark tax reform bill recently approved by Congress and signed into law by President Trump. Millions of families and small businesses will benefit from these pro-growth tax cuts after years of slow economic growth and stagnant wages. Undermining the impact of this long overdue and badly needed tax relief by raising the federal gas tax would be counterproductive and misguided – hitting less affluent Americans and those living on fixed incomes the hardest.

Rather than seeking to increase prices at the pump in the form of a tax hike, lawmakers should first reform the way existing transportation dollars are spent.

Too often, highway funds are diverted to non-highway projects, a problem that worsens with each passing year. This non-highway spending shortchanges motorists, and undermines the user-pays principle.

In addition, labor mandates and byzantine planning and analysis requirements can needlessly delay the completion of transportation projects and contribute to increased costs. Modernizing these burdensome planning requirements and sweeping away cost-boosting labor restrictions would stretch existing dollars further.

Before asking Americans to pay more for a tank of gas, Congress should pursue common-sense reforms that properly prioritize federal transportation infrastructure needs, reduce costly and time-consuming bureaucratic hurdles, and ensure that tax dollars are spent on roads and bridges, not frittered away on unrelated pet projects, red tape and paperwork.

Sincerely,

Brent Wm. Gardner
Chief Government Affairs Officer
Americans for Prosperity



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