

February 18, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

As the leading road safety associations and organizations in the United States, we write to strongly urge you to oppose the Gas Prices Relief Act, introduced by Reps. Tom O'Halleran, Sharice Davids, Kim Schrier, Josh Harder, Dan Kildee, Lou Correa, Elissa Slotkin, Sheila Cherfilus-McCormack, and Joe Morelle. This legislation would be calamitous to federal transportation and road safety programs, shortly after the enactment of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) that provided historic federal investments in this nation's infrastructure.

The IIJA nearly doubled funding for road safety programs, clearly demonstrating the intent of Congress to address the vast safety needs on our transportation network. The IIJA focuses on roadway safety infrastructure, work zone and commercial vehicle safety, behavioral and educational safety programs, enforcement campaigns, and the safety of vulnerable road users. These investments are critical to improve safety on our roadways, but the Gas Prices Relief Act imperils implementation of these important programs by threatening the funding provided in the IIJA.

According to preliminary estimates from the National Safety Council for the first half of 2021, traffic fatalities rose 16 percent from the previous year to 21,450. In 2020, the last full year of data that is available, more than 42,000 men, women and children died on U.S. roadways. It is inconceivable to think that just when Congress is aggressively tackling this nationwide trend, the legs will be cut out from underneath this critically important effort.

The ability to come together and enact multi-year transportation bills rests on the user-fee funded Highway Trust Fund (HTF), which allows for contract authority to be provided to states to meet their transportation system needs. Without the user fees generated from federal fuel taxes, the funding necessary to pay for the IIJA investments will not be available unless Congress again transfers funds from the General Fund into the HTF. At a time of record federal debt and deficits, it makes little sense to suspend a revenue source needed to maintain the solvency of the HTF.

Although perhaps well intentioned, we know that any reduction in fuel prices that this legislation aims to achieve will not be fully realized by taxpayers, even in the short term. In addition, it will be incredibly difficult to reinstate this user fee once this proposed suspension sunsets at the end of 2022. This legislation is bad policy for taxpayers and for the safety of all road users. Please oppose the Gas Prices

Relief Act and protect Congress's ability to implement the IIJA and future long-term, safety-focused transportation bills.

Sincerely,

American Traffic Safety Services Association

AAA

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

American Highway Users Alliance

American Public Works Association

American Society of Civil Engineers

Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

FIA Foundation

Governors Highway Safety Association

Institute of Transportation Engineers

National Association of County Engineers

National Asphalt Pavement Association

Cc: Rep. Steny Hoyer
Rep. Steve Scalise
Rep. Hakeem Jeffries
Rep. Elise Stefanik
Rep. Tom O'Halleran
Rep. Sharice Davids
Rep. Kim Schrier
Rep. Josh Harder
Rep. Dan Kildee
Rep. Lou Correa
Rep. Elissa Slotkin
Rep. Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Rep. Joe Morelle

February 18, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Schumer and Leader McConnell:

As the leading road safety associations and organizations in the United States, we write to strongly urge you to oppose the Gas Prices Relief Act, introduced by Sens. Kelly, Hassan, Stabenow, Cortez Masto, Warnock and Rosen. This legislation would be calamitous to federal transportation and road safety programs, shortly after the enactment of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) that provided historic federal investments in this nation's infrastructure.

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Institute of Transportation Engineers

National Association of County Engineers

National Asphalt Pavement Association

Cc: Sen. Richard Durbin
Sen. John Thune
Sen. Mark Kelly
Sen. Maggie Hassan
Sen. Debbie Stabenow
Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto
Sen. Raphael Warnock
Sen. Jackie Rosen



February 17, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
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The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, and Leaders Schumer, McCarthy, and McConnell:

Suspending the federal gasoline tax in the name of “economic relief” is misguided and could undermine the recently enacted and bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The national associations and labor unions of the Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) and the Americans for Transportation Mobility (ATM) coalition strongly oppose the S. 3609, the Gas Price Relief Act of 2022.

Federal highway and public transportation programs are funded primarily with taxes on gasoline and diesel fuel, founded on a “user pays” model, where those who use transportation systems pay for them. The TCC and ATM strongly support these user fees.

Proponents of the gasoline tax holiday, as proposed in S. 3609, suggest it would lower prices for consumers. However, the view that federal fuel taxes have a discernible impact on prices at the pump misses the mark. The federal gasoline tax has not been increased since 1993, when gasoline was around \$1.00 per gallon nationally. Meanwhile, gasoline prices have increased roughly 250 percent, which indicates other factors, like supply and demand, input costs, and geopolitics are drivers of price fluctuations--not federal fuel taxes. A gasoline tax holiday would have little meaningful impact on fuel prices, would further erode the user-pays system, and make it harder to repair America’s aging infrastructure.

The IIJA provides resources to rebuild American infrastructure for the 21st century and provide the short and long-term economic benefits that will make a real difference for American families, rather than temporary political gimmicks. The IIJA will make important improvements to connect communities, prioritize resiliency, save lives, and facilitate economic growth and competitiveness. Disrupting the carefully negotiated revenue structure in the IIJA would jeopardize these benefits.

The TCC and ATM oppose this proposal to suspend the federal gasoline user fee and urge the House and Senate to reject this plan as well. We believe efforts would be better spent on delivering the first year of promised investments by completing the FY 2022 appropriations process.

Sincerely,

The Transportation Construction Coalition

Americans for Transportation Mobility

February 18, 2022

Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leaders McCarthy and McConnell:

We write in strong opposition to [S. 3609](#), the “Gas Prices Relief Act of 2022” and the companion bill the “Gas Prices Relief Act” introduced in the House today. These bills will only further weaken the federal Highway Trust Fund and are shortsighted, since the gasoline excise tax is helping to pay for the historic “Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)” just passed in November of last year.

While we understand the pain Americans are feeling at the pump and throughout the economy due to rising inflation, a gas tax holiday is not the answer to this problem. Federal motor fuel taxes are applied at the wholesale level. Notwithstanding an intention that any savings be passed on, there is no guarantee that reducing the federal tax by 18.4 cents per gallon will result in an 18.4 cent reduction when drivers fill their tanks. There are many factors at play that will impact the price the consumer pays at the pump, including the cost of producing a barrel of oil. These costs fluctuate daily.

Additionally, this policy sets a concerning course that will further deteriorate the user pays system that traditionally has funded our roadways. The Highway Trust Fund has been insolvent since 2008, and that insolvency has resulted in general fund transfers to support the trust fund since that date totaling over \$270 billion. We believe in the user fee-based system and strongly support asking motorists to pay for the roads that they use every day. As members of Congress and stakeholders struggle to find a way to address the long-term solvency of the Highway Trust Fund, advancing policies that take us in the opposite direction are shortsighted and counterproductive. We do appreciate that the legislation includes a General Fund transfer to make up for the loss of the proposed gas tax holiday. But negotiating the pay-fors for the IIJA was painstaking and required a delicate balance. If this legislation is enacted it further depletes the trust in the Highway Trust Fund and results in more General Funds going to pay for something that the users of the system want to support.

This policy, if enacted, could set the dangerous precedent that during times of economic strife, a gas tax holiday is the solution, even though it will lead to little if any direct benefit to the driver. This path could result in diluting the single largest contributor to the Highway Trust Fund.

The cost of this law if enacted in March would be roughly \$20 billion. That means \$20 billion in user fee dollars not deposited into the Highway Trust Fund and \$20 billion more General Fund dollars flowing out of the coffers.

We urge opposition to a proposal that will do little to provide the average citizen relief at the pump but will do lasting damage to a Highway Trust Fund that provides critical revenue for investment in our roadways and bridges. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

American Highway Users Alliance
American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
American Concrete Pavement Association
American Council of Engineering Companies of Arizona
American Motorcyclist Association
American Society of Civil Engineers
American Traffic Safety Services Association
American Trucking Associations
Arizona Chapter, Associated General Contractors of America
Arizona Highway Users Conference
Arizona Rural Transportation Advocacy Council
Associated Equipment Distributors
Associated General Contractors of America
Association for Materials Protection and Performance
Ergon Asphalt & Emulsions, Inc.
FP², Formerly the Foundation for Pavement Preservation
Greyhound Lines, Inc.
Heritage Construction & Materials
Maryland Asphalt Association
National Asphalt Pavement Association
National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association
Potters Industries, LLC
Tire Industry Association (TIA)
Trinity Highway Products