



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

January 24, 2017

Gas tax hike may pay for road funding

Journal Review

Bob Cox

1/23/17

Road funding in Indiana could be increased in the near future, and state legislators are proposing motorists who use Indiana roadways pay more at the gas pumps. Indiana House Bill 1002 is authored by Republican Representative Edmond Soliday of Valparaiso, and co-authored by three representatives including Dr. Tim Brown of Crawfordsville. If the bill passes, not only will gas taxes be increased \$.10 per gallon, but also vehicle registration fees will be increased and, someday, tolls to use interstate highways will implemented as part of a 20-year road funding plan. The proposal seeks to raise an average of \$1.2 billion in new, dedicated money each year for the next two decades to improve the state's existing roads and bridges and provide additional funds to support local road projects. The proposed bill also will increase the state tax on diesel and other motor vehicle fuels by 10 cents per gallon, and all fuel taxes automatically would increase in future years based on inflation and Indiana personal income changes. In addition, all revenue from the state's 7 percent sales tax on gasoline, one-seventh of which currently is allocated for roads, would be used entirely for infrastructure starting in 2021. Locally, Crawfordsville and area towns would receive more funds annually for roads and bridges if the bill passes as written. The Republican Caucus released a press release Friday which stated that finding a long-term solution to road funding is essential for the future of Indiana.

http://www.journalreview.com/news/local/article_907342a6-e112-11e6-99b7-6b176e4a6776.html

Contracts awarded for 1-69 bridges near Ind. 332

Muncie Star Press

1/23/17

YORKTOWN, Ind. – The Indiana Department of Transportation has awarded a \$1.7 million contract for maintenance and modernization of bridges carrying Interstate 69 over Pleasant Run Creek, immediately south of the Ind. 332 interchange. Construction near the interchange will require temporary closing of the Ind. 332 entrance ramp to southbound I-69, and the northbound exit ramp, for up to 30 days. Specific closure dates will be announced. Motorists can also anticipate temporary traffic-lane shifts, median crossovers and single-lane closures in each direction on I-69. All work is expected to be complete in October.

<http://www.thestarpress.com/story/news/local/2017/01/23/contracts-awarded-bridges/96968748/>

Legislators expect gasoline tax hike to dominate discussion this session

Banner Graphic

Eric Bernsee

1/22/17

The governor's proposal to bump the Indiana state gasoline tax by 10 cents captured much of the attention and set most of the tongues wagging after Gov. Eric Holcomb's first State of the State address last week. But to hear the legislators representing Putnam County tell it, you ain't seen nuthin' yet ... "That's one you're going to see dominating the conversation over the next few months," predicted District 24 State Sen. John Crane (R-Avon), making his Putnam County Legislative Update debut Saturday morning at the Farm Bureau Insurance Office. The ways and means of improving Indiana's poorly rated roads and bridges is expected to be "a huge issue," Crane said, indicating that Gov. Holcomb has put it this way: He's "considering a menu of options." Besides the 10-cent gasoline tax hike, he also proposed a \$15 annual vehicle fee and a \$150 annual charge for electric vehicles (which still use the roadways but purchase little if any gasoline). While Gov. Holcomb reasons that asking Hoosiers to invest a little more to meet a need, the end result will be worth it, count Sen. Crane among those who haven't made up their minds as far as the proposed gasoline tax hike goes. "I'm uncomfortable with the concept, coming from a conservative standpoint," he offered Saturday. Meanwhile, moderator Steve Cash of the Putnam County Farm Bureau said that organization supports House Bill 1002, which includes increasing the current 18-cent gasoline tax by 10 cents.

<http://www.bannergraphic.com/story/2379274.html>

LETTER: Frye Backs House Infrastructure Funding Plan

99.3 FM

Indiana Representative, Randy Frye

1/20/17

As a member of the House Committee on Roads and Transportation and a user of Indiana's roads and bridges, I know our state needs a long-term investment plan to maintain and improve our roads. One of my goals this session is to support a sustainable and comprehensive funding solution that will keep Indiana's infrastructure functioning for years to come. Data shows that 21 percent of Indiana's bridges are structurally inadequate and functionally worn out. The conditions of our deteriorating roads are resulting in Hoosier motorists spending nearly \$500 annually on vehicle repairs. Our local infrastructure is also impacted by the Ohio River that floods and causes damages to many of our roads. Our area is heavily traveled, since we connect Indianapolis to Ohio and Kentucky. Hoosier roads are the main arteries in our state's economy, supporting local businesses and communities. Over the last 12 years, Indiana has led with the right policies, cutting billions of dollars in taxes for Hoosier families and job creators. Indiana now ranks among the top states nationally for its economic climate. Now is the time to invest in Indiana's infrastructure without spending down critical reserves or cutting into the state's general fund, which pays for critical services like education and public safety.

<http://eaglecountryonline.com/local-article/letter-frye-backs-house-infrastructure-funding-plan/>

Conservative group taking opposition to gas tax hike on the road

Indianapolis Star

Chelsea Schneider

1/19/17

An influential Republican-leaning opponent of a proposal to hike state gasoline taxes is ramping up its efforts to persuade GOP lawmakers to reconsider. The conservative group Americans for Prosperity-Indiana will hold a series of town halls this month aimed at putting "pressure on state lawmakers to oppose" the increases included in a plan by House Republican leaders, according to a statement released Thursday. The proposal would raise gasoline taxes by 10 cents a gallon and lead to regular increases by tying the rate to inflation. Revenue would be used to fund the state's roads and bridges.

At least seven Republican lawmakers will attend forums planned for their area, including leading

budget architect Sen. Luke Kenley, R-Noblesville, and Rep. Jerry Torr, R-Carmel, at the Carmel town hall on Jan. 26. Lawmakers didn't campaign on raising taxes last year, making the forums necessary, said Justin Stevens, Indiana director of Americans for Prosperity. "My guess is most of them will be for (the increases)," Stevens said of lawmakers attending the events. "Our main objective is to educate people, and if (lawmakers') arguments win the day, then we're fine with that. I don't think it will." Kenley said he supports the gas tax increases contained in the House GOP's plan, calling them "an essential ingredient" as lawmakers work to raise \$1.2 billion a year for road and bridge maintenance and expansion. "We need these roads, and we need to get them fixed up," he said, "and we need to maintain them and have good roads going forward for our economy. I think user fees is the way to go, and that's where I am."

<http://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/2017/01/19/conservative-group-taking-opposition-gas-tax-hike-road/96771862/>

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