



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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Op-ed: Shore up taxes, truck wear on roads

Journal and Courier
Thomas R. Schilli
8/27/15

This year, nearly all of us have seen the problems created when highways and bridges are not maintained properly. Traveling from Indianapolis north has been especially difficult with portions of Interstate 65, U.S. 52 and U.S. 421 being under construction. Currently, an 11-cents-per-gallon tax is collected via quarterly fuel tax reports filed by motor carriers. The fallacy of this process is that many companies either fail to file or falsify the quarterly fuel tax reports to avoid the tax. Indiana is one of only two states which use the dual method to collect; that is, partial collection at the pump and partial collection by tax filings. The solution? Collect the 11-cent tax at the pump. This would assure compliance with collection. The 11-cent add-on would then fairly represent the tax paid by the trucking industry, and the Indiana motoring public would be aware of the full amount of tax paid by the trucking industry. It has been estimated this action would collect an additional \$15 million per year from the non-payers as well as reduce enforcement costs. If you agree with my thoughts, send this note to your state representative and senator, and urge them to make these changes. Fair funding for roads is in everyone's best interest and is supported by the trucking industry. Although these suggestions increase cost to the trucking industry, they are less expensive than the future costs to replace bridges and highways that are now maintained with inadequate care and insufficient funding. It is time to improve our Indiana highway system. <http://www.jconline.com/story/opinion/readers/2015/08/27/op-ed-shore-taxes-truck-wear-roads/32477457/>

Engineers working on plan for I-65 bridge near Lafayette

The Journal Gazette
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Engineers could soon have a repair plan for an Interstate 65 bridge over Wildcat Creek, according to the Indiana Department of Transportation. A 30-mile section of northbound I-65 has been closed for weeks because of safety concerns. The agency hopes to secure the bridge and reopen the northbound lanes between Lebanon and Lafayette by mid-September, the (Lafayette) Journal & Courier reported. Subcontractors believe installing a series of micro piles will stabilize a pier on the bridge that had sunk about 9 inches during construction as part of a project to widen the interstate and the bridge, said state Department of Transportation spokesman Will Wingfield. "Crews have been testing since Saturday how the repairs would distribute loads to the adjacent soils before finalizing the repair plans," he said. Geotechnical and structural experts working with the agency expect final designs will be ready on Tuesday. Contractors have been working closely with the agency and sharing information so the state can expedite the final review and repairs can begin, Wingfield said. The southbound I-65 bridge is supported by more stable soil and hasn't

moved during construction, so it remains open to traffic, according to the Department of Transportation. Movement on both bridges is being monitored by a sensor system installed by Purdue University's Bowen Laboratory, per the state's request. Amid the closure of the I-65 bridge, Gov. Mike Pence is considering using some of the state's \$2.14 billion in reserves to repair and improve infrastructure across Indiana. He said earlier this month that his administration is looking into options to free up resources to invest in the state's roads and bridges.

<http://www.journalgazette.net/news/local/indiana/Engineers-working-on-plan-for-I-65-bridge-near-Lafayette-8463675>

Op-ed: I-65 lesson, raise Ind. gas tax

Journal and Courier

Carl V. Covely, Jr.

8/27/15

According to the Federation of Tax Administrators, Indiana's gas tax, at 18 cents, is 45th out of the 48 contiguous states, plus the District of Columbia. This is only five places from the bottom. Being first is not good at 50.5 cents per gallon. Being nearly last at 18 cents per gallon is not good either. The average and mean is 24 cents to 25 cents. If we adopted a six-cent increase in our gas tax, it would increase revenues by 33 percent and we would then be no higher than the mid-point for all states. We definitely need more money for Indiana roads. U.S. 52 from just north of Stockwell Road to Teal Road is in terrible shape. I can find no plan to do anything with this section of highway. Indiana 28 from Indiana 25 to U.S. 231 is also in terrible shape. The longer a road deteriorates the more it costs to fix it. We have driven from Milwaukee to Naples, Florida. The biggest bottleneck is Interstate 65 in Indiana. All of I-65 needs to be widened to six lanes. These are just three examples of the backlog in state highway reconstruction and maintenance. The I-65 detour roads of U.S. 52, Indiana 28 and U.S. 231 are going to need resurfacing much sooner than would have been the case had we not had the problem with the I-65 bridge over the Wildcat Creek.

<http://www.jconline.com/story/opinion/readers/2015/08/27/op-ed-lesson-raise-ind-gas-tax/32476345/>

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