



Lawmakers Consider Gasoline Tax Increase

Ten-Cent Hike Would Raise \$220M For Iowa Roads

[Amanda Lewis, KCCI.com](#)

DES MOINES, Iowa -- Iowa lawmakers are discussing raising the state's gasoline tax to help cover an expected \$700 million budget shortfall.

State and federal taxes already make up 40 cents of the price of a gallon of gas and that tax burden could jump to 50 cents if one proposal passes.

Lawmakers think that the dramatic drop of the price of fuel since last summer would make a higher tax easier for drivers to absorb. It would raise an estimated \$220 million to fix Iowa's aging roadways.

But some drivers wonder why the state needs money now.

"They've been collecting money for the roads for years and I'd like to know where that money is at," said Bill Kneller. "I think we're taxed enough as it is."

Others said that drivers should share the burden for keeping the roads repaired, as long as prices remain low.

"If the gas prices stay where they are right now, I guess I wouldn't consider it a huge deal," said Juliann Vanliew.

Some drivers said that this isn't the time to add more of a burden to drivers.

"I think they need to keep in mind the people out here like us," said Bryson Wright.

"I don't think they can afford to pay any more for gas."

"I would rather see an increase in things like property taxes or income taxes where it's based on people's ability to pay," said Diana Messersmith.

Kneller said it's not enough to hope that lawmakers won't increase the tax. He said he has already called his representative.

"Well, you don't get them directly," he said. "You get a secretary or something like that, but they just record that I'm against it. My wife has also called and she's against it, as well."

Others said drivers might as well give up because lawmakers will do whatever they feel necessary to fix the budget.

"That's got to be done, so I guess we'll just have to go along with it," said David Bolton.

Gov. Chet Culver has said a gas tax would not be his first choice to fix the budget, but he has not threatened a veto.

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