

Resolution in Support of Raising Fuel Taxes by 35 Cents and Indexing to Inflation

Patrons: Matthew Savage, Anthony Miroff

Whereas, The federal gas tax has remained at an inadequate rate of 18.4 cents-per-gallon since 1993, when the average gas price was less than half what it is today;

Whereas, If those rates had grown with inflation as measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Price Index, the 18.4 cent-per-gallon gasoline tax would have increased by about 12 cents by 2019, and the 24.4 cent-per-gallon diesel tax would have increased by about 15 cents;

Whereas, The gasoline tax finances the Federal-Aid Highway program through the Highway Trust Fund;

Whereas, The Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund, which provides grants to transit agencies across the country, is similarly funded through the gas tax;

Whereas, The funding of nationwide transit agencies is necessary to ensure a transition from energy-intensive private transport to more efficient means of transport, both public and private;

Whereas, Due to routine underfunding and underappreciation in the last three decades, the Mass Transit Account is expected to be depleted in 2021, with the Highway Trust Fund falling into deficit in the proceeding year;¹

Whereas, For every dollar the federal government appropriates to transit, almost four dollars are appropriated to highways,² leading to enhanced dependence on polluting automobiles;

¹ [“Congressional Budget Office Report 56373: Reauthorizing Federal Highway Programs: Issues and Options.” 2020.](#)

² [“Department of Transportation: Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Estimates”](#)

Virginia Young Democrats Teen Caucus

Whereas, Raising the gas tax by 35 cents would provide \$500 billion in tax revenues over ten years for potential use in the budget;³

Whereas, Raising fuel taxes will disincentivize the use of gasoline and diesel vehicles;

Whereas, Policies that disincentivize the use of less energy-intensive vehicles threaten to stop a transition to net-zero carbon emissions;

Whereas, Appropriations for the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 expire on October 1st, and the Democratic surface transportation reauthorization proposal -- the Moving Forward Act -- did not include an increase in the gas tax;

Now, therefore, be it:

Resolved, That the Virginia Young Democrats Teen Caucus urges the United States Congress to raise the excise tax on motor fuels by 35 cents and index the tax to inflation through the GDP Price Index.

Resolved, That the Virginia Young Democrats Teen Caucus urges the United States Congress to, at least, quadruple funding allocated to the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund under 26 U.S. Code § 9503 (e) (2).

Resolved, That the Virginia Young Democrats Teen Caucus opposes proposed federal fees on electric vehicle owners.

Resolved, That the Virginia Young Democrats Teen Caucus urges the Democratic nominees for President and Vice President to prioritize providing long-term funding for the Highway Trust Fund, specifically in the Mass Transit Account, as part of their Administration.

³ [“Congressional Budget Office: Options for Reducing the Deficit: 2019 to 2028”](#)