



TESTIMONY, SB 224
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Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee

On behalf of the safety and mobility interests of our 335,000 AAA Kansas motorist members and all Kansas motorists, we wish to, reluctantly, express support for the five cent increase in motor fuels taxes proposed in SB 224.

Reluctantly, because we believe the commitment to safe and efficient care of Kansas roads and bridges as a necessary, vital responsibility of the State of Kansas to the Kansas economy, for jobs and commerce, including tourism, is already in place under the T-WORKS program. In no way can this bill produce revenues to replace those established under T-WORKS.

More than \$500 million in T-WORKS modernization and expansion projects have been delayed and our biggest concern lies in the fact that many of those projects were programmed with safety concerns and enhancements in mind. Many of the safety issues addressed in these modernization/expansion projects included addressing sight distance issues, added shoulder capacity and more lanes added for safe passing zones.

To the average Kansas motorist the estimated additional cost per year from the motor fuels tax increase will range from \$19 to \$110, depending on the amount of driving and the fuel efficiency of the vehicle, also assuming a \$2.20/gal unleaded gasoline price. While Kansas taxpayers do not want to pay more, Kansas motorists need this investment, which will help address the state's infrastructure needs that have fallen behind after over two decades of hard work to make Kansas roads and bridges safer.

While this is an additional investment that should not have to be made, compare to these sample costs of inaction:

- The cost to repair damage from a pothole can range from \$50 (a simple realignment) to \$2000 (to repair a broken axle)
- The American Society of Civil Engineers puts the price tag for motorist maintenance, repair, additional fuel consumption and the cost of time lost to congestion at \$1,951 per year.

Quite simply, the cost of diverting funds from T-WORKS and doing very little is far greater than the costs associated with the proposal before you today. Today's bill responsibly places the cost of maintaining our roads on the users of those roads and would, thankfully, be protected by Kansas Constitutional amendment from diversion to other uses. By adding five cents to the existing motor fuels tax as the funding mechanism this body is ensuring that we capture out-of-state users as well.

We urge your favorable support of SB 224 so that the safety and modernization projects desperately needed in Kansas can advance and the total cost of driving for the Kansas motorist can be reduced.