

Letter to the editor message points

As of 9-29-2020

Guidance: Please select about 2-3 points from the below to help reinforce and shape your letter to the editor. If you need assistance drafting your letter, contact APC's Communications & Outreach Director Kim Maiolo at kmaiolo@paconstructors.org. Kim can also assist you in identifying the correct media contact and appropriate submission process, as each media outlet is different.

- Act 89 of 2013 increased transportation funding in Pennsylvania by \$2.3 billion per year. However, the funding gap was much greater than that.
- Although fuel taxes and license and registration fees are supposed to be restricted for highway purposes, Pennsylvania has diverted a significant proportion of that revenue for non-highway uses. This year, the diverted amount is more than \$700 million, or the equivalent of about 12 cents per gallon in fuel taxes.
- On top of that, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a huge decrease in vehicle travel this year, which decreased fuel consumption and the tax revenue that would have been generated.
- PennDOT estimates that the pandemic will decrease fuel tax revenue by \$800 million through next year, and that we are \$9 billion per year short of what we need.
- Inflation and federal mandates have reduced the buying power of the revenue we still have, and the way we fund transportation with consumption taxes is not sustainable as we shift to alternative fuel vehicles and greater fuel efficiency.
- These developments threaten to diminish our safety, economic prosperity, food and energy security and overall quality of life.
- We must begin to take steps NOW to narrow the transportation funding gap. These steps include:
 - STOP diverting fuel tax and license and registration revenue, and use ALL of it to fund our highway needs, as the state constitution directs. This step would redirect the equivalent of 12 cents per gallon for its intended purpose, without raising taxes.
 - The current Oil Company Franchise Tax should be updated to recognize and offset inflation. The floor of this tax should be increased by 50 cents.
 - Pennsylvania needs to join other states in creating an alternative fuel vehicle fee so that electric vehicles and other alternative fuel vehicles pay their fair share for highway wear and tears these vehicles cause.
 - As other states have done, Pennsylvania should examine using federal stimulus money to restart highway projects that were shut down due to the pandemic. Using CARES funding for this purpose would boost the economy.
 - Congress must step up to reinvigorate the Federal Highway Trust Fund.
 - The rapid growth of distribution warehouses along Pennsylvania's interstate system has created an increase in truck traffic and wear and tear on our roads and bridges. A distribution impact fee on distribution centers should be set to offset these effects.

For more information about this issue, please visit www.paconstructors.org/growing-issue-of-transportation-funding.