

## House Republican Press Release

April 11, 2008  
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### **A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE State Representative Ruth Fahrback**



#### *Scheduled gas tax increase should not happen*

Another half-percent increase in Connecticut's gross receipts tax on petroleum is scheduled to go into effect in July. With exorbitant gas prices (and the price of almost everything else) already having a negative impact on consumers and the economy, this scheduled increase should not be allowed to happen. We simply can not afford it

As it is, the current gross receipts tax of seven percent is passed on to consumers, hidden in the price of gasoline, and costs motorists nearly 20 cents per gallon. The scheduled increase will translate into roughly three additional cents per gallon of gasoline for motorists. This is on top of Connecticut's current 25-cents per gallon gasoline tax, meaning this summer 48 cents of every gallon of gas you buy will be taxes.

Because the tax is a percentage of the price of oil, the overall tax receipts increase each time the price of oil increases. The gross receipts tax was touted as needed to fund mass transportation initiatives. In fact, the majority of those funds are deposited in the state's General Fund.

The legislature's General Law Committee has unanimously voted in favor of legislation that would keep the gross receipts tax at seven percent, but the recent rhetoric from proponents of the scheduled increase indicates motorists will likely not be seeing any relief at the pump in the near future.

That's no surprise, seeing as many proponents of the gas tax increase never met a tax they didn't like. But taxing people out of their vehicles and onto mass transit (buses, trains, etc.) is not likely to happen. The National Center for Policy Analysis (NCPA) estimates that 80 percent of commuters drive to work alone and that trend is expected to continue in the future.

The NCPA also reports that between now and 2043, based on current trends, highway capacity will grow only nine percent, but traffic levels will swell by 135 percent to more than seven trillion vehicle miles traveled annually. The average motorist can expect to spend 160 hours stuck in traffic delays, or the equivalent of four weeks each year.

So, try as they might, fringe environmentalists and those with a proclivity to tax and spend are not likely to change our driving habits. Efforts to convert vehicles from gasoline to alternative fuels are welcomed, but we should not be trying to accomplish that goal by adding more taxes on top of an already over-taxed electorate.

*State Rep. Ruth Fahrbach represents the 61<sup>st</sup> District, including Suffield, and parts of Windsor and East Granby, in the General Assembly.*