



March 12, 2019, 3:30 PM
House Taxation Committee
Room 112-N

Testimony re: H.B. 2381, Providing for a \$.06 increase in motor fuel taxes

Dear Chairman Johnson, Vice Chairman Mason, Ranking Member Gartner, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to HB 2381. My name is Jeff Glendening and I am the Kansas State Director of Americans for Prosperity. As one of the largest grassroots organizations in the nation, Americans for Prosperity (AFP) is dedicated to educating citizens on how free market policies lead to more Kansas residents living their version of the American dream.

Through broad-based grassroots outreach, AFP is driving long-term solutions to the country's biggest problems. AFP activists engage friends and neighbors on key issues and encourage them to take an active role in building a culture of mutual benefit, where people succeed by helping one another. AFP recruits and unites activists in 35 states behind a common goal of advancing policies that will help people improve their lives.

As such, I strongly urge you to oppose H.B. 2381, which would allow for a \$.06 increase in state gas taxes. Simply put, raising the gas tax without reforming how the state spends such revenue is a bad idea that will make the burden of government on families and businesses that much heavier. A higher gas tax means higher prices not just on fuel, but on goods and services throughout the economy. These costs would inevitably be passed along to consumers in the form of higher prices, resulting in a regressive tax hike on those who can least afford it.

Rather than seeking to increase prices at the pump in the form of a tax hike, lawmakers should first reform the way existing transportation dollars are spent. Too often, highway funds are diverted to non-highway projects. This non-highway spending shortchanges motorists and undermines the user-pays principle.

Efforts to improve our state's infrastructure should focus on maximizing tax dollars by targeting priorities such as roads and bridges, eliminating wasteful spending, removing regulatory barriers that delay projects and drive up costs, and ensuring there is proper oversight and accountability. Additionally, our state should fully unleash and leverage the private sector to meet transportation needs wherever possible. Until such time as these reforms are addressed, conversations about gas tax increases are premature.

It is time for Kansas to pursue commonsense reforms instead of asking its taxpayers to pay more at the pump. I ask that you reject H.B. 2381 and first focus on enacting policies that help Kansans keep more of their hard-earned money.

Jeff Glendening
Kansas State Director, Americans for Prosperity

Our mission: Americans for Prosperity exists to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the policies and goals of a free society at the local, state and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate.