Exploring a Road Charge for California

Gas Tax Alternative to Fund Road Maintenance and Improvements

WHO: In 2014 the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1077 (SB 1077) directing California to conduct a pilot program to study the feasibility of a road charge as a replacement for the gas tax to pay for road maintenance and repairs. A 15-member technical advisory committee (TAC), composed of representatives from diverse interests, is now working to study the potential for a road charge and outline the parameters of the pilot program.

WHAT: Road charging means drivers pay to help maintain the roads based on the distance they travel or a period of time they use the roads, rather than the amount of gasoline they consume. The experience of other states demonstrates that such usage-based charges can be implemented in a way that ensures data security and maximum privacy protection for drivers.

WHY: The revenues currently available for highways and local roads are inadequate to preserve and maintain existing roadway infrastructure, reduce congestion and improve service. The gas tax is an ineffective mechanism for meeting California's long-term transportation needs because it will steadily generate less revenue as cars become more fuel efficient. By 2030 as much as half of the revenue that could have been collected from the gas tax will be lost to fuel efficiency.

WHEN: The TAC will craft the parameters of the road charge pilot program by the end of 2015. Beginning no later than January 1, 2017, thousands of California drivers will make history by volunteering to participate in the road charge pilot program to test new approaches. The outcomes of the road charge pilot program and the TAC's subsequent recommendations will be reported back to the Legislature no later than June 30, 2018. The Legislature will then decide whether and how to enact a full-scale permanent road charge program.

HOW: The TAC will meet monthly throughout 2015 and will solicit widespread public and stakeholder input through a variety of means to help shape the design of the road charge pilot program. These efforts include:

- Providing a feedback mechanism through this website. Provide your input here. All public input submitted by August 14, 2015 will be used to inform the TAC as they prepare their final recommendations for the design of a road charge pilot program.
- Reaching out to stakeholder groups, state and local elected officials, community leaders, and the general public.
- Conducting public surveys and focus groups to gain an understanding of public attitudes.
- Consulting with members of a Work Group assembled to provide expertise and input from key stakeholders and public interests.
- Dedicating time for public comment at the monthly TAC meetings and providing webcast of meetings on the California Road Charge Pilot website.

We would like your input!

Please weigh in and provide your input as we explore road charging. We invite you to share your feedback here. All comments received by August 14, 2015 will be used to inform the TAC. We also invite you to attend one of our upcoming TAC meetings.

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