

Beat: News

Gas Tax clears Maryland Senate and now to become law

Next stop: Gov. O Malley for signature

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USPA NEWS - The Maryland Senate has given final approval to Governor Martin O'Malley's Transportation Bill which includes the state's first gas tax in 20+ years.

The Senate voted 27-20 Friday afternoon to send the bill to Gov. Martin O'Malley for his signature.

The legislation as passed puts an additional 1 percent sales tax on a gallon of gasoline beginning this July. It also includes a provision to raise the tax automatically to adjust for inflation as determined by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). In real terms, the price of gas is expected to rise approximately 4 cents per gallon in July.

The bill also includes defined increases in future years. The sales tax would rise to 2 percent in January 2015 and 3 percent in July 2015.

It could potentially rise to 5 percent in 2016, if Congress does not approve a measure allowing states to charge an Internet sales tax.

The bill also increases vehicle registration fees by \$3.50 to pay for various emergency medical services, including a pay raise for Maryland State Police helicopter pilots.

Supporters of the bill contend that additional revenue sources are needed for the construction of the Baltimore's red line and the DC Metro system's purple line in addition to highways and bridges.

"With the passage of the Transportation Infrastructure Investment Act today, we will support more than 57,000 jobs, ease traffic congestion, and build a 21st century transportation network," said Governor Martin O'Malley.

O'Malley went on to say that "Thanks to the extraordinary leadership of Senate President Miller, House Speaker Busch and their colleagues in the General Assembly, Maryland is poised to create jobs and expand opportunity."

"Approving an unaffordable 80 percent gas tax hike that will also increase the cost of food, clothing, and services, punishes Maryland families," said Americans for Prosperity-Maryland Grassroots Director Nick Loffer. "Sending revenue, jobs, and Maryland citizens out of state with the 5th highest gas tax rate in the nation will lead to more pain in this difficult economy. This bill doesn't make sense for Maryland."

Maryland has not raised its 23.5-cents-per-gallon excise tax since 1992.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-712/gas-tax-clears-maryland-senate-and-now-to-become-law.html>

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