



**Written Public Comment**  
**Lake County Board Meeting, March 9, 2021**  
**Updated March 10 at 12:23 pm**

**Michael Warner**  
**March 5 at 9:21 pm**

County Board Member Taylor exemplifies the best qualities of an elected official and we in Lake County have been fortunate to have him represent us. I also experienced the good fortune of his leadership and avid support of water resource issues acting as the previous Director for the Lake County SMC. Craig always gave wise, measured and sound advice regarding agency mission objectives on both short- and long-term goals. Under his Chairmanship of the Commission and through record flooding and record setting rainfall, the SMC continued to make positive impacts for the residents of the County. Craig will be missed, but I also wish him the best in the next chapter of his life, and I am ultimately glad he chose to be close to his family in Colorado.

Craig's last influence at the Commission was again profound and resulted in two additional announcements at the March 4<sup>th</sup> SMC meeting, one naming Kurt Woolford the next Executive Director and the other, naming Mayor Donny Schmit, of Fox Lake the next Chair of the SMC. I have deeply founded faith in both appointments because I know the technical and staff leadership skills of Kurt firsthand and also have gotten to know Mayor Schmit well over his tenure as Mayor and Commissioner at SMC. In my estimation Mayor Schmit is the most knowledgeable and invested elected official on water resource issues in the County. He deeply understands the positive economic and public benefits of good water quality and reducing flood damages and is the perfect match for Commission Chair.

Thank you Craig, for all you have done and congrats to you, Kurt and Donny!

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## MFT Comments

**Michael Sturino, Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association**  
**March 2 at 3:52 pm**

I am writing in support of increasing the County Motor Fuel Tax on behalf of the Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association, whose members design and build transportation infrastructure throughout Lake County. With COVID-19 severely impacting Lake County communities and increasing area unemployment, now more than ever it is important to make significant investment in improving the County's infrastructure and creating good-paying jobs. This is why the 350 members of the IRTBA support Lake County increasing the County Motor Fuel Tax to 8 cents per gallon. Many of those members own businesses, employ workers, live, and perform work in Lake County. Their contributions to Lake County's economy and quality of life cannot be understated.

According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), every \$1 billion of highway spending supports more than 34,779 jobs. Nationwide, nearly 2.2 million jobs are supported by spending on highway and bridge construction. An investment in Lake County's transportation system is an investment in Lake County's COVID-19 economic recovery.

Lake County has a \$1.7 billion funding backlog for necessary transportation infrastructure projects, and this is very apparent when traveling through the County. By increasing the motor fuel tax, Lake County will be able to improve the quality of life of Lake County residents by completing road construction projects that will increase road safety and reduce congestion, air pollution and travel time.

The IRTBA is grateful to the Lake County Public Works Planning & Transportation Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of increasing the Lake County Motor Fuel Tax to 8 cents per gallon to help make Lake County's roads safer and better to use and to give needed momentum to Lake County's economic recovery.

Thank you,  
Mike Sturino

**Amanda Woodruff**  
**March 4 at 9:29 am**

This tax is tied to consumption and not income or value and would impose an unequal burden on lower income families. Since this tax would be tied to consumption, it disproportionately affects the hardest working, longest commuting, lowest income members of the county. Especially today (IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC!), where middle and upper income office workers have the increasing ability to work from home and telecommute, a motor fuel tax will build our infrastructure on the backs of the front-line workers. Wealthier people are also able to afford more fuel efficient vehicles, hybrids and electric, which further places the burden on the lower income communities. Furthermore, people are leaving Illinois at an alarming rate due to taxes, fees and policy. You do not want yet another new tax to cause more of your constituents to leave. Imposing this additional tax would do just that. Finally, an additional gas tax would only make support of local businesses less likely, as I know many gas stations are owned by local families. People would be more likely to purchase fuel in other, more affordable counties, or drive to Wisconsin or Indiana to purchase fuel. I strongly urge you to not pursue this additional tax.

**Jon Doi**  
**March 4 at 11:35 am**

As a long-suffering, Illinois tax payer, I realize what I am about to write (a second time) is like throwing a bucket of water at the sun. However, I will persist since my only other options are (a) say/do nothing or (b) leave Illinois.

So. I keep wondering/fretting about the fact that government seems to be the only entity that doesn't have to live within its means. When I am told to pay a bill - whether real estate tax, water bill, Discover bill, etc. - I must pay what I owe. I can try to get my neighbor to pay it but we all know how that will end. So to avoid some severe penalty, I must reduce other expenses and/or work a second job to earn enough income to pay my arrears. My obligation - and let's be clear - the bill I have been given is the result of what I voluntarily accumulated, whether my home is more than I should have bought, whether I washed my car too often, whether I simply bought too much; I was responsible and, therefore, I - and only I - should be responsible.

My fiscal history indicates that I do pay my bills. I have - long ago - learned to live within my means. I buy what I can afford.

Please sir and madam, tell me what I said that doesn't make good sense? Really. I would like a response.

Blessings to you all. Jon Doi

**Julie Chamberlin, Berger Excavating Contractors, Inc**

**March 4 at 7:30 pm**

I am writing in support of increasing the County Motor Fuel Tax. We are a local business that struggles with the traffic in the county. The traffic in this county is a very real conversation with employees, clients and other businesses. Now more than ever it is important to make significant investment in improving the County's infrastructure and creating good-paying jobs. The contribution this would make to Lake County's economy and quality of life cannot be understated. This is the best investment the county can make which will return huge rewards.

By increasing the motor fuel tax, Lake County will be able to improve the quality of life for residents, attract more businesses, increase road safety and reduce congestion.

I appreciate the County Public Works and the Planning & Transportation Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of increasing the Lake County Motor Fuel Tax to 8 cents per gallon to help make Lake County's roads safer and build a stronger and more prosperous county.

Sincerely,

Julie Chamberlin

**Michael Rainier**

**March 5 at 11:52 am**

I moved to Lake County from Cook County for a reason. High taxes. What commissioners need to consider is that Wisconsin is right there and not only are the gas taxes cheaper but so are sales taxes. If Lake County commissioners want to keep pushing people to spend their money north of the border then by all means keep adding and raising taxes. If you were to, dare I say, lower taxes the government would likely see increased revenue. Why? Because there would be almost no incentive for those of us living so close to the border of a lower tax state to make the drive to save about 30 cents per gallon (currently) and about 2% on sales tax. Maybe start considering those factors and if the county needs money, find areas where spending can be cut or taxes can be lowered.

**Luke Timmer**

**March 5 at 8:23 am**

Good morning,

The state of Illinois is already known for having extremely high gas taxes compared to other states including Hawaii. An island. Where everything is shipped. Just for this fact alone, the tax should not be raised but yet here we are. During the pandemic many people lost their jobs and businesses and it made it a lot harder for people to get by. So this marks a bad time to raise taxes. Why should the people of Lake county have to bear the cost of whatever this money will be used for when they have already lost so much? Last time I checked the politicians didn't lose their jobs. I don't think you guys actually understand what it's like to live off a normal salary. If you guys can't work with the money you're given you need to see where it's being wasted and cut it out. I and many others are sick and tired of giving the government more money to do less. Please reconsider your vote and vote no on the gas tax. Show the Lake county citizens that you support them, not your high up friends. I made a post on nextdoor and out of the 10 comments it got only one person supported it. Their response summed up to be "it's not a big deal". I wouldn't really even call that support. And yes that is a small sample but it is still valid. If most of Lake County is against this tax then so should you.

Thank you for your time,

Luke Timmer

**Suzi Schmidt, former Lake County Board Chairman**

**March 7 at 12:02 pm**

Thank you for the opportunity to address the County Board.

On April 8, 2008 the Lake County Board, on a voice vote, voted unanimously to pass a Resolution that ALL RTA funds would go to transportation projects in Lake County and that the County would continue to fund its portion of the annual budget of the Transportation Department for construction and maintenance to county roads. We did not have the authority to impose a gas tax. The gas tax was not permitted until 2019 as part of the Governor's Rebuild Illinois Capital Bill Legislation. The State's Gas Tax goes up automatically a certain percentage each year depending on the rate of inflation not to exceed 1 cent every year.

In the mid 2000s the County Board went to referendum for a 1/2 cent and then a 1/4 cent sales tax. The public spoke and defeated both referendums. After that the RTA went to the State Legislators and requested a 1/2 cent fee for a variety of services. The RTA asked for support from Metro Counties, an organization that represented all the collar counties, Cook County and numerous counties around the state. As Chairman of Metro Counties, Lake and DuPage County worked with the RTA and the Legislators to agree to give 1/4 cent of the 1/2 cent to the collar counties because we felt that we would not be getting the same service as Cook County. An agreement was made, and that's how we received the funding that we have today. To date, the county has garnered \$362,676,632.00 million in funds for our transportation projects. Yes, almost \$363 million dollars. This money can be used to pay off bonds since the money comes in annually, about \$30 million per year. This gives the County a lot more revenue than a gas tax ever would. Previous Boards were not ignoring transportation issues in Lake County; we set up a plan to fund projects that were and are important.

The taxpayers of Lake County are already taxed to death. There is NO need for a gas tax. I understand that some of the board members and staff plan on raiding the RTA Fund and use it for some pet projects. I urge you to leave this fund alone and stick with your core mission and not venturing into issues that are not the County's job.

Over the years the County has spent millions of dollars on State Road Projects. Instead of imposing a gas tax and raiding the RTA Fund, stop doing State Road Projects and use the \$45 billion dollar Capital Bill funds the state passed for this purpose in 2019. That should take the pressure off of the County transportation budget.

There is absolutely NO need for Lake County Government to impose a gas tax on citizens and businesses.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Suzi Schmidt, Lake Villa

**Francine O'Sullivan**

**March 8 at 6:28 am**

I oppose the gas tax in Lake County!!! We are still struggling with the pandemic!!! I am a Sr Citizen on disability (low income) trying to figure out if I can stay in Lake County as the house taxes are ridiculously high! So many friends & neighbors have moved because of Lake County Taxes! I can barely get groceries with the prices going up & everything else. I have lived & worked here for 20 years & now that I am on disability for medical issues with no insurance because I can't afford, that the last thing I need is an increase in another tax. We all don't have money to change out our cars. If you care about the people in this county "your neighbors" you will not raise the taxes on gas or homes.

Why would Terry Wilke want to increase our Motor Fuel Tax in this crisis? Please do not do this to our county!!!

A concerned Lake County resident!

Francine O'Sullivan, Round Lake Beach, IL.

**Doug Kearney**

**March 8 at 4:31 pm**

Good Morning,

I have comments for Tuesday's Board meeting. They are in reference to the proposal to raise the gas tax in Lake County. I strongly advise the board to not burden the tax payers any more than we already are and to tighten your belts on the budget to better prioritize budget items. There's more than enough money in the budget. Just look at all those bike path underpasses that have been built in the past decade. Nobody even knows how many people are using them or if they were really needed in the first place. I submitted a FOIA last spring and spoke with the county planner on this. All he said was that there was a need based upon surveys. That's a lot of money to spend just based upon random surveys.

Attached is a letter with a couple of comparisons of Illinois and Lake County to our neighbors.

Thank You, Doug Kearney, Round Lake Beach

Letter can be found at the bottom of document

**Linda Soto, Lake County Transportation Alliance**

**March 8 at 9:13 am**

See letter at bottom of document

**Audrey**

**March 8 at 10:05 am**

I'm a resident of lake county and I am opposed to this gas tax increase proposal. As it stands, the amount of taxes we have in this county are absurd. Unfortunately, I am tied to this area due to a divorce with children but my husband and I are actively planning to leave the state, and county, as soon as is possible as allowed by the terms of my divorce. We cannot afford to buy a house due to the fact that property taxes would cost as much, or more than, the monthly mortgage payment. If this gas tax passes you will further push out the dream of home ownership for many.

As far as vehicles go, electric vehicles are not a possibility for all, especially those living in apartments. You cannot assume that everyone has the ability to "just go purchase an elective vehicle" Mr Wilke, the privilege you exude is astounding and out of touch with the citizens of lake county.

And to even entertain the idea of raising the gas tax upon the heels of a state increase and pandemic is just, excuse my language, **shitting** on the residents.

Thank you, Audrey

**Kristen Hartman**

**March 8 at 11:27 am**

I am writing to voice my support of the gas tax. I support the gas tax because I understand the importance of investing in infrastructure and I think it's important for the drivers who use our roads to contribute to their maintenance. I also appreciate that the tax would not apply to public transportation vehicles so it shouldn't affect costs for those using public transportation.

Thank you,

Kristen Hartman

Grayslake

**Jefferey Giannelli**

**March 8 at 11:44 am**

As a Lake County, Illinois resident and business owner I am vehemently opposed to the proposed gas tax being voted on tomorrow, March 9, 2021 by the Lake County Board. The State of Illinois already applies about a 40 cent per gallon tax on gasoline in Illinois, some of which already comes back to Lake County for roads. Stop raising taxes and start looking at ways to "cut spending". Many business and residents in Lake County and Illinois are suffering from the economic effects of the COVID lock down.

Government should have the moral courage to not add insult to injury. Government spending is out of control in Illinois at all levels of government. I share the same opinion of my neighbors and family members in Lake County who all vote. I encourage you to vote no to the gas tax in Lake County.

Jeffrey Giannelli, Lake Forest

**Submitted by several individuals through [grassrootmessages.com](https://grassrootmessages.com)**

Dear County Board Member:

I write in opposition to the proposed 8 cents per gallon motor fuel tax increase in Lake County.

As you know, the state motor fuel tax has more than doubled in the last two years and more than 50% of that revenue is dedicated to municipalities, counties, township road districts, and mass transit agencies around the state, amounting to an additional \$600M plus per year.

Lake County residents already pay some of the highest property taxes in the nation. An 8 cents per gallon motor fuel tax would give us some of the highest combined motor fuel taxes in the nation as well.

Lake County residents, like myself, are feeling the pain from our state's high taxes and the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I urge you to vote no on increasing the motor fuel tax on Lake County residents.

**Mary Elizabeth O'Neill**

**March 8 at 12:04 pm**

Dear Lake County Board Members,

I am writing in support of the proposed 4-cent gas tax increase. I am optimistic that the projects this additional revenue will help fund will stimulate the local economy and create jobs, as well as make our roads and bridges safer. Moreover, many of the underserved communities in Lake County suffer from environmental injustices. To the extent these projects improve air quality in our county that will be an added benefit.

Any tax increase will be an unpopular decision in Lake County. I applaud the board members who make difficult, unpopular decisions for the right reasons, many of whom were elected by small margins and know this may impact their chance of reelection. It shows bravery and integrity.

Thank you.

Elizabeth O'Neill  
Green Oaks

**Tammy Hightower**  
**March 8 at 12:30 pm**

I Tammy Hightower oppose Lake County Motor Fuel Tax.

**Alicia Timm**  
**March 8 at 2:13 pm**

I am writing to support the \$0.04 gas tax in Lake County. There is a huge backlog of projects that if remedied could move traffic along, reduce air pollution, and improve the quality of life of Lake County residents. Nobody wants increased property taxes, but we have to pay for these improvements. People from outside our communities will be paying for a portion of this investment when they travel through Lake County. Let's support this investment in our infrastructure and get Lake County moving again safely and efficiently. Thank you for your time.

**Whitney Richardson**  
**March 8 at 2:55 pm**

I hope this finds you well and in good health. I'm writing to oppose the proposed motor fuel tax which goes up for a final vote tomorrow. Many residents across Lake County are low-income and already excessively burdened by high cost of living and low wages. Even a 4-cent fuel tax places undue burden on these residents, especially during an ongoing pandemic. I think it's crucial to make decisions that center their needs.

Many of these low-income residents are frontline workers who rely on their cars for transportation to wage-jobs. They don't get to work from home, and buying a fuel-efficient or electric vehicle is not on the table for them in the same way it may be for higher-income residents. Our low-income residents are most burdened by industry-generated environmental hazards, as well as policies and procedures that neglect their needs. Any environmentally-friendly sounding initiative needs to prioritize their interests. I don't believe that a fuel/user tax or property tax are the only ways to raise the needed infrastructure funds. I do believe that ongoing discussion and review of alternate means to generate the needed infrastructure funds is warranted.

I also want to emphasize that this ordinance was rushed and didn't prioritize public comments. Procedure is critical. I attended the meeting last Wednesday and, despite the knowledge that many members of the public attended the call, public comment was postponed until well after board members continued to discuss. I wasn't able to stay on the call for an indefinite length of time and needed to sign off after 2.5 hours (1.5 of which the committee spent discussing the ordinance amongst themselves).

As a resident of Vernon Hills, it is my sincere hope that Lake County prioritizes the input of its residents, invites public comment prior to committee/board discussion and allows for an adequate time for public feedback prior to voting on ordinances that impact us. Julie, as my rep, I appreciate your time and consideration. Thank you.

All my best, Whitney

**Margaret Clark**

**March 8 at 3:01 pm**

I am writing to show my support of the proposed Lake County Motor Fuel Tax. My name is Margaret Clark and I live in District 15 in Libertyville.

A responsible government understands the importance of investing in and maintaining their infrastructure. I see this proposal as a step to do just that. Last month in Texas we all saw the results of how neglecting infrastructure results in tragedy.

In doing some research, I learned that all the collar counties already have a county gas tax. Lake is proposing to only match the lowest rate that our neighbors are already charging. I hope we can let more Lake County residents, who might be hesitant to support this measure, know this.

Jennifer Clark is the board member who represents my district and I know she is a well respected economist. I trust her judgment and her support of this measure makes me more certain that this is a proper step to take.

Thank you to all the board members who are smart and courageous enough to support the Lake County Motor Fuel Tax.

Sincerely,

Margaret Clark, Libertyville

**Michele Reynolds**

**March 8 at 3:02 pm**

I am VERY concerned about raising any taxes at this point. I am also very concerned and disappointed with Board Member Terry Wilke's comments. I think it is unreasonable to think those most impacted by increased taxes could afford to purchase another vehicle, or "drive" to another locale where gas taxes are more favorable.

As an FYI, i am an Independent but have leaned Democratic in most recent years.

For those who know me from my days working for the County, I would be more than happy to volunteer some time to see if there are other avenues to cut costs versus raising taxes. Additionally, is it possible this vote could be tabled and a public meeting be held to discuss?









YOUR VOICE FOR LAKE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Madam Chair Sandy Hart  
And Board of Commissioners  
The County of Lake  
18 N. County Street  
Waukegan, IL 60085

Re: Adoption of Lake County Motor Fuel Tax

Dear Madam Chair Sandy Hart and Board of Commissioners,

The Lake County Transportation Alliance (LCTA) supports the Lake County Board in its consideration to enact a Local Option-County Motor Fuel Tax. We applaud the County board for not having raised the property tax levy in the past two years and its efforts to be sensitive to the high property taxes that exist in Lake County. We also know that the top concerns throughout Lake County revolve around improving transportation through road improvements, grade separations for growing freight traffic, reducing congestion, decreasing commute times and improving safety and so much more.

In 1989 a State Bill was passed allowing the collar counties, excluding Lake and Will County, to enact a County Motor Fuel Tax. In 2019 that Bill was amended to include Lake and Will County, shortly after Will County enacted its own MFT. Lake County remains the only collar county that has yet to enact any local MFT.

A local MFT can only be used for transportation improvements pertaining to county highways. The current funding from other sources to our county does not support the backlog of projects for our public highways. The Lake County Board has already determined that a key goal to the county's future is to create a multi-modal transportation system that improves the quality of life, increases safety, reduces accidents and has an environmental value. We are aligned in this mission for the County. LCTA recognizes the economic challenges that have been strained by the pandemic making this action more difficult but we believe that the local MFT offers a means of dedicated funds that ensure progress of critical Transportation Improvement Projects (TIP) throughout the entire Lake County region.

LCTA has reviewed a 2015 study.

**How a Gas Tax Increase Affects the Retail Pump Price**

An economic analysis of 2013-14 Market Impacts in 5 States

By Dr. Alison Black, SVP & Chief Economist - American Road & Transportation Builders Association

It concluded:



YOUR VOICE FOR LAKE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

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March 1, 2021  
Adoption of Lake County MFT

- Increasing the gas tax does not result in a commensurate penny-to-penny increase in the retail price motorists pay at the pump, a study of the market impacts of five state gas tax increases enacted in 2013 found.
- The analysis, found, on average, the price for a gallon of regular gasoline the day after a state gas tax increase goes into effect only reflects about 22 percent of the new levy. A month after enactment, only about a third of the levy shows up in the pump price, she says, and thereafter, it is not a significant retail price factor.
- The study also found that since 2005 the average weekly price of gasoline nationally has fluctuated, on average, five cents per gallon. Black says a modest increase in the federal gas tax rate to restore the purchasing power of the user fee—last adjusted in 1993—would likely be “lost” in the week-to-week price fluctuation experienced at the pump.

The Lake County Transportation Alliance (LCTA) is a public-private advocacy group created to raise awareness and build consensus on development and implementation of short and long-term transportation goals and objectives in Lake County, Illinois. LCTA works to improve the quality of life in Lake County through a multi-modal transportation network that provides mobility and economic opportunity for all. As such, we are committed to supporting the adoption of a local MFT. We believe this will best serve our commuters, employers, employees and the movement of freight over the long term and benefit our economic viability.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Manhard", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Peter Manhard  
President  
LCTA  
Suite 280  
One Overlook Point  
Lincolnshire, IL 60069  
Office 847-597-1224

**Doug Kearney**

609 East Clarendon Drive  
Round Lake Beach, IL 60073  
Doug.Kearney@SBCGlobal.net

8th March, 2021

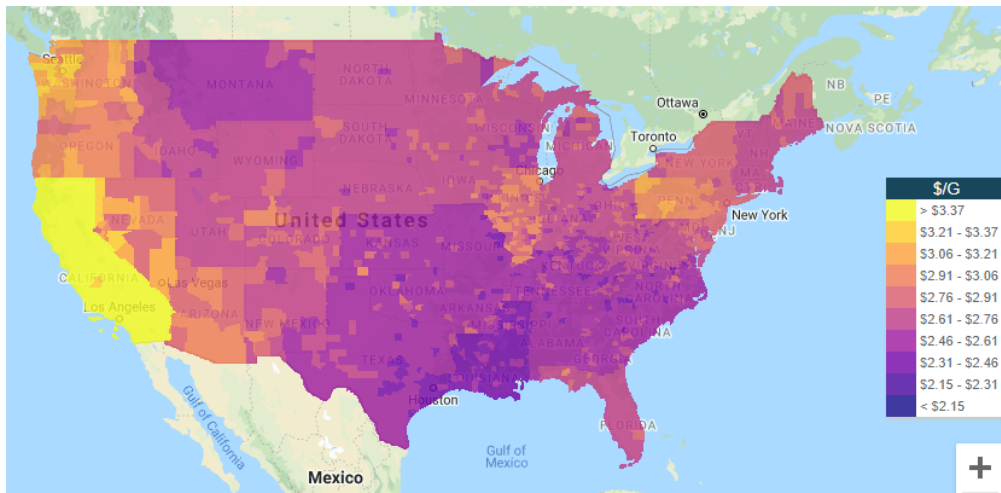
**Lake County Board**

18 North County Street  
Waukegan, IL 60085

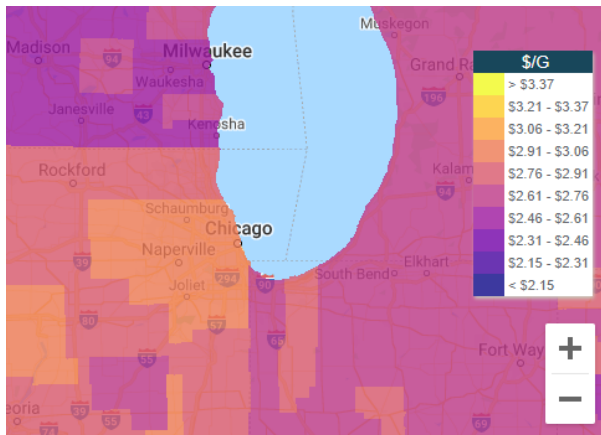
To the Lake County Board,

This is in reference to the proposal to raise the gas tax in Lake County.

The state of Illinois already has one of the highest gas taxes in the country - this is clearly obvious when you look at the Gas Buddy price map, where Illinois is clearly defined, as well as a handful of other high tax states:



On a more local level, the border of Lake County and Cook County is also clear to see:



It's been said that my county board member has said that the gas tax is "voluntary." Well that's only partially true. Gas taxes are fairly well known to be regressive taxes that affect the lower income groups the most - they don't have the resources to go out and purchase an EV to free them from the taxes.

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According to the Illinois Secretary of State Lake County has 3616 electric vehicles - somewhere down the road you guys and the state will have to address how those drivers will be paying their fair share to support the roads. Right now they are freeloading off the backs of the taxpayers on both that and the \$7,000 federal tax credit that they receive to purchase those vehicles. That's a credit that they get regardless of income or vehicle cost - clearly a tax cut to the rich for those Tesla owners!

Here's how it's voluntary to others, like myself: I promise that I will purchase at least 90% of my gas over the border as long as there's a clear difference in prices. That will also include a collateral impact where I will combine other shopping near where I buy my gas. I recently discovered that Antioch added a 1% tax for the eastern part of the village, basically Menards and Walmart. I had been patronizing that Menards, now I will only go to Fox Lake or one in Wisconsin. While you may or may not listen to our votes at the polls or our comments, we do have the freedom to vote with our pocket books.

The Board should be demanding that our elected representatives in Springfield get a proportionate share of the revenue from the states' gas tax increase sent back here - our share was nowhere near what it should've been for the third most populated county in the state. The board also shouldn't have gone against the voter's wishes for the route 53 / FAP 342 extension in Lake County. That a project that was clearly wanted by the voters in the referendum and that should've been built 40 years ago!

Thank You for your consideration,

**Doug Kearney**