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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Vito Fossella
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January 17, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker and Leader Boehner,

I write today to voice my strong opposition to the recommendation contained in the report released by the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission that calls for increasing the federal gasoline tax by 40 cents per gallon. In light of the fact that this proposal has the potential to cause economic peril and further confiscate the hard-earned money of the American people, I respectfully urge you to not include it in any legislation moving forward.

The proposal, which was released by the Commission this week in response to last year's bridge collapse in Minneapolis, Minnesota, would increase the current gasoline tax of 18.4 cents per gallon by 5 to 8 cents per gallon over the next 5 years and then index it to inflation to ensure near-annually increases thereafter. While it is certainly important to improve the nation's highway infrastructure, public transportation systems and rural access, dramatically raising taxes on hard-working Americans, as the economy is facing a slowdown, is exactly the wrong remedy at the wrong time. It goes without saying that the American people are already overtaxed. Congress should look for new ways to reduce taxes and hold the line on government spending – not take more money from the pockets of American families.

The proposal to increase the gasoline tax would place harsh and extreme financial burdens on the backs of every American, more so in my home state of New York, which already boasts the nation's second-highest gas tax. New Yorkers currently pay more than \$3.00 for a gallon of regular gas. If enacted, this proposal would force an average family to pay an additional \$1,000 annually in federal gasoline taxes – money they could otherwise use to make ends meet.

Furthermore, every increase in the price of gasoline is ultimately paid by the American people in the form of higher prices on goods and services. This proposal would further raise the price for a gallon of milk, food and groceries, commuting to work, and a

stop at the neighborhood pharmacy. Again, the overall economic impact could be devastating to the American economy at the very moment our nation is facing a possible economic downturn. Raising the gas tax could reduce economic growth, increase inflation and lead to the loss of American jobs.

Lastly, with oil prices recently hitting an all-time high of \$100 per barrel, gas prices surpassing \$3.00 per gallon and a slumping economy, we need to avert hard-working American's from being hit with a economic tidal wave.

Within all relevant rules and regulations, I urge you reject the proposal to increase the federal gasoline tax from coming into fruition. Should you wish to discuss this matter personally, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-225-3371. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Vito J. Fossella
Member of Congress

CC: Chairman Charlie Rangel
Ranking Member Jim McCrery

Chairman James Oberstar
Ranking Member John Mica