

2016 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 242

BY REPRESENTATIVE JAMES

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to study the feasibility of a parish governing authority levying and collecting a sales tax on the retail sale of gasoline and to report the findings to the House Committee on Ways and Means, the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works, and to the member of the House of Representatives representing House District Number 101 on or before February 1, 2017.

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Louisiana prohibits a political subdivision of the state from levying a tax on motor fuel; and

WHEREAS, a constitutional amendment could authorize a parish governing authority to levy and collect a sales tax on retail sales of motor fuels, thereby raising revenue and reducing dependency on state funding for transportation projects, while also creating opportunities to enhance local transportation networks; and

WHEREAS, gasoline taxes are an important source of state revenue and are deemed to be the most important source of funding for transportation infrastructure projects across the country; and

WHEREAS, roads and streets are critical assets for local communities and many of these assets are deteriorating as the state has reduced its contributions and the cost of maintenance steadily increases; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to alleviate the backlog of local transportation projects, parishes have looked to new local funding options, such as local gasoline taxes; and

WHEREAS, ongoing road maintenance is a significant public safety concern and the failure to adequately maintain local streets, traffic signals, signs, and street lights has a direct correlation to traffic accidents, injuries, and deaths; and

WHEREAS, gasoline tax revenues have fallen short of infrastructure spending needs, primarily due to the fact that fixed, per-gallon gasoline tax rates have often stagnated while construction costs have grown; and

WHEREAS, taxes and fees paid by drivers, most of which is a gasoline tax, now make up a smaller share of total highway funding than at any point since the Interstate Highway System was created due to flaws in design of the gasoline tax; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's gasoline tax is among the lowest in the country and the implementation of gasoline taxes imposed by a parish governing authority can make up for a decline in revenue; and

WHEREAS, the severity of the transportation funding problem across the state necessitates the exploration of new revenue options, such as the ability for parish governing authorities to levy a gasoline tax.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to study the feasibility of a parish governing authority levying taxes on gasoline.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in studying the viability of a sales tax on the retail sale of gasoline, the Department of Transportation and Development shall consider and determine the following:

(1) How local gasoline taxes levied by a parish governing authority of the state could benefit the state of Louisiana and whether those benefits outweigh any disadvantages to the state and its residents?

(2) Whether an increase in gasoline taxes levied by a parish governing authority could be structured in such a way as to withstand future increases in fuel efficiency and construction costs?

(3) Whether additional gasoline taxes would allow various parish governing authorities to remain competitive with neighboring political subdivisions?

(4) How much additional revenue could be generated by the implementation of a gasoline tax by a parish governing authority?

(5) What method of implementation would be most beneficial to the state of Louisiana?

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development shall work in conjunction with the Louisiana Police Jury Association and the Louisiana Municipal Association to determine the most advantageous and effective method for a parish governing authority to levy a gasoline tax.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development shall complete a written report addressing the feasibility of a parish governing authority levying taxes on gasoline and submit the report to the House Committee on Ways and Means, the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works, and to the member of the House of Representatives representing House District Number 101 on or before February 1, 2017.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development, the president of the Louisiana Police Jury Association, and the president of the Louisiana Municipal Association.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES