

Calif. carbon tax would be first at the pump

By Michael B. Marois, Bloomberg

California would be the first U.S. state to impose a “carbon tax” directly on motorists at the fuel pump under a plan by a leading Democratic lawmaker to ease greenhouse-gas pollution.

Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg wants to shift responsibility for emissions on gasoline sold by companies such as Chevron Corp., a cost that would otherwise be passed on to consumers in fuel prices. Instead, Steinberg wants to directly tax motorists 15 cents a gallon, rising to 24 cents in 2020.

California was the nation’s first state to set a limit for most carbon emissions, with regulations that aim to achieve a reduction of about 15 percent by 2020. The state auctions a limited number of pollution permits that industries can use to help meet the limit under a system called cap-and-trade.

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