

Gas tax could be replaced with fee based on miles driven

By Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times

With California's gas tax unable to keep up with road maintenance needs, one state lawmaker has proposed a study to determine the feasibility of instead taxing motorists based on the number of miles they drive.

A combination of inflation, cars getting better mileage and more hybrids and electric vehicles on the road mean the 18-cent-per-gallon gas tax approved by voters in 1990 is falling short of covering the costs of maintaining the state's transportation system.

Inflation has meant purchasing power of the state's gas tax has steadily diminished over time, according to Sen. Mark DeSaulnier, D-Concord.

He has introduced SB1077, which would allow the California Transportation Agency to conduct a voluntary pilot program to study the feasibility of a mileage-based fee to replace existing gas taxes.

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