

# Opinion: Taxes are the wrong answer for Calif.

By Ted Gaines

Regarding Senate Bill 1, a measure I voted against in the Senate Committee on Transportation and Housing, that creates permanent new taxes and fees to fund transportation infrastructure:

Is anyone shocked that the proposed solutions to a very real transportation infrastructure crisis are more taxes and fees? It's all Sacramento knows and it's a tired formula that punishes taxpayers for the sins of the politicians.



Ted Gaines

We already have some of the highest gas taxes and worst roads in the country, made even more apparent by the potholes and sinkholes from recent storms. High speed rail needs to be put out of its misery before families pay another penny in gas taxes. The California Department of Transportation is overstaffed by 1,500 people, wasting \$500 million every year. Cut that fat before forcing people to pay a new registration fee for their cars. California diverts a billion dollars in weight fees away from transportation infrastructure every single year. Let's put that money back into road building before shaking down commuters and businesses even more.

Californians are getting 33 cents on the dollar for their

transportation spending and pay about three times the national average per mile of road maintenance. That begs for regulatory reform so that meaningless red tape doesn't get in the way of delivering infrastructure at a cost that's fair to taxpayers. Why is it that California spends nearly \$50,000 in administration per state-controlled road mile while Texas only spends \$4,000? Should our bureaucracy really cost 12-times more than theirs?

The new Washington, D.C., is proposing a massive infrastructure investment, common-sense, money-saving regulatory reforms, and cutting taxes – all at the same time. California needs to follow Washington's lead instead of continuing to reach into hardworking taxpayers' pockets to deliver the same pathetic results.

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