

'Buying' the votes for a gas-tax hike

By Jim Miller, Christopher Cadelago and Taryn Luna, Sacramento Bee

California drivers will begin paying 12 cents per gallon more in gas taxes later this year, the first of several tax and fee hikes contained in this week's road-funding bill that eventually will cost the average motorist about \$120 a year.

It wasn't the sort of vote any politician likes to cast. So the measure's success on Thursday relied on a collection of eleventh-hour sweeteners offered by Gov. Jerry Brown and Democratic legislative leaders to reach the necessary two-thirds super-majority.

Now that the dust has settled, it's clear they doled out nearly \$1 billion in district-specific transportation projects, with a popular commuter train system linking the valley and Bay Area headed to new locales. It also appears architects could get legal indemnity in construction lawsuits, and four Riverside County cities could see a budget boost.

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