

# NOZZLE & WRENCH

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## KIRK'S CORNER

# Help-Help Who Will Participate to Save their Business?



By Kirk Mccauley,  
Director Of Member  
Relations &  
Government Affairs

**Getting a group of dealers together** to oppose a permit application or a zoning issue is like trying to find teeth in a chicken. I sense that some leased dealers and those who are commissioned agents do not want to become involved with zoning issues. They think there is no value in opposing fueling outlets that are new to industry (NTI) mega stations. These dealer/agents act like that is for someone else to worry about, not me, I get paid a fee every month or cents per gallon for selling the fuel. I am talking about an NTI that wants to be in an area that is already saturated with fueling outlets. These could be fuel with a c-store or fuel sold by a club store.

Do you think when your volume drops that you will keep

your same CA fee structure and your same lease agreement? Will inside sales show a sharp decline along with fuel? Will your location lose value?

Looking at location where NTIs have come into a market area and there has been no need for additional volume the answer to all three questions is yes, with few exceptions.

They not only create urban blight with empty stations selling flower and used tires, but they also discourage owners of current locations from renovating and reinvesting in these locations.

I know I have said it before but belonging to community associations and supporting high school car washes, local sports teams is not only the right thing to do but pays big dividends at zoning and permit hearings. Retaining attorneys are expensive but costs can be minimal when split up amongst a group of dealers and it always possible you might get some help from your supplier.



*Retaining attorneys are expensive but costs can be minimal when split up amongst a group of dealers and it always possible you might get some help from your supplier.*

Continues on page 4

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*Bottom line is you need to invest in keeping your business running. A little investment now could pay big dividends later.*

## **Help-Help Who Will Participate to Save their Business?**

*Continued from page 1*

Opposing locations takes on a sense of urgency when you look at diminishing sales because of higher gas mileage vehicles, electric vehicles and now we have the Transportation Climate Initiative. Halloween is getting close so read about TCI in this issue because it is a scary outlook.

Sometimes you must become involved, if not in person, then with emails and messages to planning boards and council members. Asking your customers to do the same via a flyer or engaging them in a conversation. Yes, you do need to contribute to the cause and ask other dealers to do the same. Bottom line is you need to invest in keeping your business running. A little investment now could pay big dividends later.

Talk to your suppliers and see what they think because you are all in it together, independent dealers, commissioned agent, suppliers, and dealers that own their property.

### **Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI)**

WMDA/CAR was participants in 2 webinars for TCI in the month of September. TCI goal is scary to the fuel retailer and wholesalers. As I have said before TCI is an effort by Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, Virginia, and north eastern states to cut carbon fuel sales up to 25 and possibly 30% by 2030. They want to accomplish this by limiting fuel that can be purchased by suppliers through a Cap and trade system. The effort is spear headed by the very liberal Georgetown Climate center who is managing the efforts of the states and D.C.

We are working on response but in the meantime, I would like every dealer to read the contents 2 links below. They want to take up to 30% of your volume away and increase the price of gas California style which is consistently the highest price gas in lower 48 by far. Please read the links and will have some answers and responses, bullet point shortly.

<https://www.transportationandclimate.org/main-menu/tcis-regional-policy-design-process-2019>

<https://www.transportationandclimate.org/tci-shares-proposals-ensure-equity-public-webinar>

### **Department of Labor- Wage and Hour Division – Proposed Rules for Independent contractor**

The Wage and hour Division is proposing new rules specifically pertaining to Independent contractors and clear-cut definitions of who qualifies. The link is below, and you can send a response after reading. The proposal document was issued September 25th and comment period will end October 26, 2020.

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/09/25/2020-21018/independent-contractor-status-under-the-fair-labor-standards-act>

### **Tool Trucks and COVID-19**

Over the years I have had questions about how shops manage tool trucks and mechanics. In large shops its more of a problem but with COVID 19 it is a concern for all repair facilities. Now you must not only consider the lost time but the medical concerns of everybody jumping on a tool truck with a driver that has been in multiple locations day after day. You also must balance the fact that techs need their tools.

My son manages a shop in NC that has had this problem over the years of wasted time and a tool truck becoming a hang out (just like he did when he worked for me). He came up with a solution that maybe some of you are doing now but might be worth going over some of the steps.

Techs look at the tool catalog online, and order from the catalog. The order goes to your normal Snap-On salesman or MAC dealer if they service your shop. Both have catalogs online.

Dealers receives your order and has the tool on the truck on his normal day at your shop. Techs each have a set time to be on the truck and are limited to 5 minutes, one tech at a time and must wear a facial covering

Tool dealers must wear a facial covering and his temperature is checked when he arrives at the shop and must stay on his truck.

The Schedule is made up at the shop, each tech has a time to pick up the tool or pay on their bill. All browsing is done online. No wasted time on



the truck. Techs do not often think how much a tool cost but just how much they must pay every week. LOL – I was the same when younger.

These are guidelines and can be adjusted to suite your needs. With COVID one mistake could shut you down for weeks. Truthfully, this works better for the shop and for the tool dealer. COVID was the reason my son went to this system and post COVID he sees no reason to go back to old ways. Your employees are your income stream and you need to do everything possible to keep them healthy. Remind them what they do on their own time can affect not only their income but everyone they work with.

### **Lead Wheel Weights Not legal to install in Maryland**

Thought I had better clarify this because a shop called, and the vender was offering lead at a particularly good price. That vender was breaking Maryland law to offer lead weights for sale in Maryland. Do not chance it. There are other products that work at a reasonable price. Parts Authority carries a nice assortment of non-lead wheel weights.

### **Massachusetts – Right to Repair and Telematics Systems**

Last month I wrote about data systems in new cars and how they sent information to dealers and manufacture only (telematics).

How owners should have a choice.

This month Roy Littlefield IV has a good article about Massachusetts efforts to pass a law that would require auto makers to give buyer a choice of where information is sent.

Question 1 on November Ballot gives voters the choice to make and could be a steppingstone for other states to use. This would be a vote by residents of the state and would carry a lot of weight in other state legislations. Read RL4 article in SSSA section of our newsletter. ■

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October 6, 2020

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.  
Office of the Governor  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Peter Franchot  
Office of the Comptroller  
80 Calvert Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Nancy Kopp  
Office of the Treasurer  
80 Calvert Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan, Comptroller Franchot and Treasurer Kopp:


As the leaders from Maryland's business associations, representing thousands of employers across the state, we remain steadfast in our commitment to doing our part in mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis. First and foremost, we believe that the health and safety of our members, their employees, customers, and the general public is of paramount importance and it will remain our top priority.

However, the economic impact of COVID-19 is unprecedented and will continue to require an extraordinary response. Maryland businesses remain grateful for the actions taken so far to ease the health and economic impacts of the pandemic, but more is needed to properly support and sustain Maryland's job creators to overcome and rebuild in the wake of this crisis.

One issue that remains of great concern to the business community is the health of Maryland's Unemployment Trust Fund.

As economic recovery from the pandemic continues, the stability of Maryland's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund balance is becoming more precarious. In addition to placing a strain on the payout of benefits to struggling workers who are in need of UI benefits, depletion of the trust fund balance will force Maryland employers, many of whom have closed their doors through no fault of their own, to face significant unemployment insurance tax increases in future years, likely as soon as 2021. Even businesses fortunate to remain open and keep employees on their payroll will incur premium increases as a result of a depleted trust fund balance with a change to higher fee tables.

Like you, we will continue to urge Congress to consider grants or forgivable loans to address the trust fund balance issue. Aid from the federal government would allow states like ours to avoid



significant UI tax increases for employers—who are already struggling with the economic and financial impacts of the pandemic—in future years. However, in the absence of federal action, the state must step in to address the health of our Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.

Last month, the Comptroller announced the final close-out numbers for the 2020 fiscal year that ended June 30. Those figures include a \$585.5 million unallocated balance in the state’s general fund. Additionally, according to the Maryland Department of Budget and Management, roughly \$117 million in federal CARES Act funds remains unallocated.

The decisions on what programs best merit these additional state dollars are difficult ones, however, we strongly urge you, the members of the Board of Public Works, to set aside some amount of these unallocated funds to support the state’s depleted Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. This decision would show both responsible and prudent fiscal administration and aid struggling businesses by allowing them to keep more money in their pocket as they rebuild from this extremely difficult time.

We look forward to working alongside each of you as we tackle economic recovery and overcome the unprecedented impact that COVID-19 has had on our state’s job creators.

Sincerely,

Apartment & Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington (AOBA)  
Maryland Chamber of Commerce  
Maryland Hotel Lodging Association  
Maryland Retailers Association  
Mid-Atlantic Petroleum Distributors Association  
National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)  
Restaurant Association of Maryland  
Washington, Maryland, Delaware Service Station and Automotive Repair Association (WMDA)

Cc: Secretary David Brinkley, Maryland Department of Budget and Management  
Secretary Tiffany Robinson, Maryland Department of Labor

# Get Off My Bus



By Sandi Weaver  
BA Auto Care, Inc.

**Managing employees has got to be** the hardest part of owning a business. All the different personalities, strengths and weaknesses and different values can cause issues from time to time. Employees are our biggest assets but sometimes we have to let someone go.

We've all had the A tech with a bad attitude that we keep because it's hard to find technicians. Or the service advisor who wants to do it their way and not follow company policy. But have you noticed when this person leaves, everyone else steps up and are happy to do it? As owners, it's sometimes hard to see what's right in front of us.

It always amazes me when one of these people leaves or is let go and you hear from everyone else all the other things they did or didn't do. Here are some tips to help know when it's time to let someone off the bus and some tips to doing so without repercussions?

Know when to get them off the bus:

1. Listen to your employees. If they are telling you this person is doing something wrong or not doing what they are supposed to, know it is probably worse than they are letting on.

2. Put your personal feelings aside. Having compassion for employees is very important but not letting them go because they just bought a house or are having a hard time will not help you and your business to thrive.

3. To change their seat or not. Sometimes changing their job to suit their strengths works our great, other times it just prolongs the inevitable.

Tips to letting someone go. Letting someone go usually ends well but there are times when it can come back to bite you in the butt.

1. Taking a human resources class and/or consulting a professional is top priority.

2. Documentation. Make sure you are documenting everything the employee has done incorrectly and the steps you took to resolve it. (Again, seek professional help is always advised)

3. Trust your gut. You know deep down what's right and what's not so listen and trust yourself.

It may be hard to let someone go due to fear but the reward is a happy, healthy place to work for everyone. ■



*Managing employees has got to be the hardest part of owning a business. All the different personalities, strengths and weaknesses and different values can cause issues from time to time.*





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# Content is King: Best Practices for Instagram Posts

**One of the main benefits of Instagram** that separates it from all other social media platforms is that it's photo-centric by design. Unlike other social media sites, Instagram is comprised solely of photos and videos that can be accompanied with text, but text is not mandatory. This is helpful to your business because most people remember more of what they see than what they read or hear!

Research has shown that videos tend to outperform images on social media when it comes to engagement and results, but both videos and images outperform social media posts without either. This instantly gives Instagram the leg up on other social media platforms that don't require one of the two to post successfully. Another advantage of a business account is the "Later" function which allows you to build a series of posts for the upcoming week and then schedule them to go live later at predetermined times so you can "set and forget" your posting schedule.

Having a photo- or video-centric platform allows your followers to remember your brand better and it makes them more likely to engage with your content, but there are some best practices that you can follow to maximize the role Instagram can have on your business including:

## Use Professional Looking Photos

Instagram is a photo-sharing social media platform, so it's important to share visually pleasing content. Generic photos just won't cut it, so be sure to take photos and edit them carefully. To add a new photo, tap the camera button at the bottom of your screen. You can take a new photo or select one from your camera roll. On the next screen, there are multiple options to personalize your post. You can add a filter, tag other users, write a caption and add a location.

## Use Instagram Stories

Instagram Stories is one of the channel's most popular features. These photos and videos disappear 24 hours after they're posted. Instagram offers many tools that make it easy to create engaging and creative stories. On Instagram Stories, you can post recorded videos, still photos, live videos, boomerangs (videos that loop back and

*Research has shown that videos tend to outperform images on social media when it comes to engagement and results, but both videos and images outperform social media posts without either.*



forth), basic text, music and focused photos. You can also add stickers for polls, questions, or the Ask Me Anything feature, which is a fun way to answer common questions and promote your expertise.

### Use Hashtags

Hashtags are a great way to help users find content on Instagram. Hashtags can include letters and numbers, but they can't contain any non-numerical characters. For example, #TiresAndWheels works as a hashtag, but #Tires&Wheels does not. Hashtags such as #nofilter (a photo that hasn't been heavily edited with filters), #selfie (a picture of yourself), and #tbt or #throwbackthursday (old photos) are popular on Instagram, but they may not work for you or your dealership's brand. It's a good idea to look at other established brands (or even personal users and bloggers) in your industry for examples of what hashtags to use to be successful.

### Selling On Instagram

The company has been rolling out an in-app payment feature known as "Checkout on Instagram" that allows users to purchase items without ever leaving the post they are on. To do this, you need to create a product catalog and connect it to your account. Then you tag the product, similar to how you tag a person in a post. To create a shoppable post you must have a business account and you must sell physical goods that comply with Instagram's merchant agreement and commerce policies, but it essentially turns the social platform into another, user-friendly eCommerce site.

Bottom line: If you are not using Instagram to promote your business, enhance your brand, engage a new generation of customers, and sell products and services directly, you're leaving money on the table!

*This article was created by the team at Net Driven. Learn more about Net Driven digital marketing solutions by visiting [www.netdriven.com](http://www.netdriven.com).* ■

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# Battle for Right to Repair in Massachusetts to have Nationwide Implications



By Roy Littlefield IV

**This fall has proved to be very active** in government affairs as Congress acted on several looming deadlines. WMDA/ CAR working through SSDA-AT continued to voice our opinions to Congressional leaders through these legislative negotiations. SSDA-AT took part in several virtual meetings throughout the month on some of our most pressing legislative and regulatory concerns.

## Massachusetts Question 1, “Right to Repair Law” Vehicle Data Access Requirement Initiative (2020)

SSDA-AT is fighting for a November ballot question in Massachusetts to pass that would update the existing “right to repair” law expanding access to vehicle maintenance and repair data by independent repair shops and aftermarket parts retailers. SSDA-AT has been working on grassroots efforts with the New England Tire & Automotive Association and Auto Care Association. If we do not act, independent repair shops will soon have limited or no access.

Question 1 (2020) would require manufacturers that sell motor vehicles equipped with telematics systems to install a standardized open data platform beginning with model year 2022. The initiative defines telematics systems as “any system in a motor vehicle that collects information generated by the operation of the vehicle and transmits such information, in this chapter referred to as ‘telematics system data,’ utilizing wireless communications to a remote receiving point where it is stored.” Vehicle owners could then access telematics system data through a mobile device application and give consent for independent repair facilities to access that data and send commands to the system for repair, maintenance, and diagnostic testing.

Question 1 (2020) would also require that manufacture authorization for mechanical data through the open data platform by owners and independent repair facilities be standardized across all makes and models and administered by an independent party.

The Massachusetts Attorney General would also have to prepare notices that motor vehicle dealers present to prospective owners that explain the car’s telematics systems and the requirements under the new law. Denial of access to mechanical data by a manufacturer would result in treble damages or \$10,000 in compensation to the vehicle owner. Independent repairers and the parts aftermarket and want to maintain the level playing field won when Massachusetts passed the right to repair law in 2012, which later was expanded nationwide. The law mandated auto makers make available the same diagnostic and repair data available to independents that car companies provide their own car



*Question 1 (2020) would require manufacturers that sell motor vehicles equipped with telematics systems to install a standardized open data platform beginning with model year 2022.*

# GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



dealerships and certified repair facilities.

A “yes” vote supports requiring manufacturers that sell vehicles with telematics systems in Massachusetts to equip them with a standardized open data platform beginning with model year 2022 that vehicle owners and independent repair facilities may access to retrieve mechanical data and run diagnostics through a mobile-based application.

A “no” vote opposes requiring vehicles beginning with model year 2022 to be equipped with a standardized open data platform that vehicle owners and independent repair facilities may access to retrieve mechanical data and run diagnostics through a mobile-based application, thereby maintaining that vehicle owners and independent repair facilities may access mechanical and diagnostic data through a personal computer.

Remember, 86% of MA voted in favor of the Right To Repair Question in 2012, but by this year, 2020, advancements in vehicle technology and increasing restrictions by automakers will result in more than 90% of new cars being equipped to transmit

real-time diagnostic and repair information wirelessly to vehicle manufacturers, threatening the rights that we enjoy today to choose to get our car fixed at trusted independent repair shops or do the work ourselves.

Here are the facts:

- More than 90% of new cars transmit real-time repair information wirelessly, and independent repair shops will soon have limited or no access.
- Vehicle manufacturers are increasingly restricting access to car information. This means car owners are steered toward more expensive dealer repair options. It’s your car -- shouldn’t it be your right to access the information you need to repair it without having to pay high prices at the dealer?
- Massachusetts voters voted 86% in 2012 to require car companies to make available repair information and diagnostics. But now big auto is using the next generation of wireless technology to get around the law and shut out independent repair shops. That’s not what we voted for.
- Beacon Hill needs to update

the law to protect the right of car owners to shop around for vehicle repair. Consumers deserve the right to take their car to any repair shop that they want.

## Key Provisions to the Ballot Initiative Give You Control

Commencing in model year 2022 and thereafter a manufacturer of motor vehicles sold in the Commonwealth, including heavy duty vehicles having a gross vehicle weight rating of more than 14,000 pounds, that utilizes a telematics system shall be required to equip such vehicles with an inter-operable, standardized and open access platform across all of the manufacturer’s makes and models.

Such platform shall be capable of securely communicating all mechanical data emanating directly from the motor vehicle via direct data connection to the platform.

Such platform shall be directly accessible by the owner of the vehicle through a mobile-based application and, upon the authorization of the vehicle owner, all mechanical data shall be directly accessible by an

*There are over 3,000+ independent repair shops and auto part stores in Massachusetts who rely on access to repair and diagnostic information to properly repair vehicles.*

independent repair facility or a class 1 dealer licensed pursuant to section 58 of chapter 140 limited to the time to complete the repair or for a period of time agreed to by the vehicle owner for the purposes of maintaining, diagnosing and repairing the motor vehicle.

Access shall include the ability to send commands to in-vehicle components if needed for purposes of maintenance, diagnostics and repair.

Without an update to this law our trusted independent repair shops will be unable to fix their loyal customers cars and thus consumers will have less choice and pay more for their car repairs. The spirit of the Right to Repair Law was to ensure a consumer's right to get their car repaired where they choose – technology advancements should not impair that choice!

There are over 3,000+ independent repair shops and auto part stores in Massachusetts who rely on access to repair and diagnostic information to properly repair vehicles. It's critical that this question passes at the ballot so that we can protect mostly importantly the rights of consumers, but also the 30,000 jobs in our independent repair and auto parts industry.

You may have seen ads on both sides of Question 1 as car manufacturers are using egregious scare tactics to continue to hold a monopoly on wireless repair information. Both cyber security experts and law enforcement concur that giving the owner of the car their own car repair information can be done safely and securely. This legislation and ballot initiative do NOT cover

GPS or personal information!

Although we are not in Massachusetts, the outcome of this initiative would have nationwide implications as did the decision in 2012.

Vote for Right to Repair!



### Other Updates

As we continue to struggle with COVID-19 relief for some businesses, WMDA/CAR signed onto a PPP Forgiveness coalition letter, signed by over 100 financial service, business and non-profit trades that was just sent to House and Senate leadership asking for Congress to pass S. 4117 & H.R. 7777 – legislation that would streamline PPP forgiveness process along with expanding the hold harmless protections for lenders. SSDA-AT also joined the Small Business Legislative Council (SBLC) in supporting the Paycheck Protection Program Small Business Enhancement Act (HR 7894).

Last month, WMDA/CAR took part in an interactive Congressional roundtable discussion with members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation. We discussed stimulus and relief policies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The status of liability protections as businesses strive to operate safely during the pandemic. In addition to key infrastructure and transportation issues. We

shared with the Delegation the association's goals and legislative priorities moving forward.

During September, SSDA-AT also took part in a virtual OSHA small business roundtable to discuss pending regulations at the agency. We also look part in a SBLC legislative meeting with Congressman Curtis (R-UT-3) to discuss the Paycheck Protection Program Small Business Enhancement Act and other means of COVID-19 relief being considered.

On September 30, the U.S. Senate passed a continuing resolution (CR) funding the federal government through December 11, 2020 with a bipartisan 84 to 10 vote.

The CR included a one-year extension of the current surface transportation authorization with flat funding.

The House passed the continuing resolution prior to Senate consideration allowing the bill to head to the President for his signature and averting a government shutdown.

The continuing resolution authorizes the transfer of \$10.4 billion to the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) from the general fund for highways and another \$3.2 billion for transit to keep the HTF solvent.

While WMDA/CAR would have preferred having a bipartisan long-term highway bill enacted this year, a one-year extension that includes funds to keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent is better than multiple extensions that create uncertainty for roadway projects and planning.

WMDA/CAR looks forward to continuing to work with Congress on a long-term highway bill. ■



## Work Comp Insights: A Return to Health and Happiness

**Return to work programs** help you get injured employees back to their normal or modified job duties as quickly and safely as possible.

Instead of paying for workers' compensation costs and lost work days, you'll save money by paying your employees their normal wages for doing light-duty work that the company needs done anyway. You'll also be able to keep them on their regular work schedules, which is proven to increase their likelihood of returning to regular working duties sooner.

### Benefits for Your Company

Return to work programs reduce employees' days away from work, allow employees to recover more quickly and foster a more positive work environment.

Implementing a return to work program can benefit your company financially by:

- Anticipating and controlling hidden costs
- Reducing the financial impact of workplace injuries
- Providing a proactive approach to cost containment
- Improving your ability to manage an injury claim and any restrictions
- Getting your experienced employees back to work, resulting in less time and money spent on recruiting and hiring

- Helping you keep regular contact with injured employees

Your company can benefit from a return to work program in other ways, including:

- Boosting morale
- Keeping injured employees productive
- Discouraging abuse
- Demonstrating a consistent procedure
- Establishing solid communication and organization
- Enhancing injured employees' self-worth

### Benefits for Your Employees

Return to work programs don't just benefit your company—they benefit your employees, too. Implementing a return to work program for injured employees communicates care and concern, and shows your employees that you value their well-being and want them back on the job as soon as possible.

Your employees also benefit from a return to work program in the following ways:

- Retaining full earning capacity
- Maintaining a productive mindset
- Staying on their regular work schedule
- Avoiding dependence on a disability system
- Having a sense of security and stability

- Seeing management's commitment to employees' well-being reinforced

### Get Your Program Going

Many companies fail to implement return to work programs because they don't have the resources or expertise to get started. Return to work programs must be organized and implemented efficiently, and

AmeriTrust can help you do just that by providing you with the resources you need to make your program a success, including educational articles, forms and policies. Our staff of loss control professionals can conduct a thorough evaluation of your company's return to work program needs and determine the best plan for your organization.

If you have questions or would like to apply for workers' compensation coverage call us today at 800.825.9489. ■

**Brought to you by AmeriTrust Group, Inc., 800.825.9489**

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# Senate Passes One-Year Extension of Highway Bill

*While SSDA-AT would have preferred having a bipartisan long-term highway bill enacted this year, a one-year extension that includes funds to keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent is better than multiple extensions that create uncertainty for roadway projects and planning.*



By Roy Littlefield III

**On September 30, the U.S. Senate passed** a continuing resolution (CR) funding the federal government through December 11, 2020 with a bipartisan 84 to 10 vote.

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The continuing resolution authorizes the transfer of \$10.4 billion to the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) from the general fund for highways and another \$3.2 billion for transit to keep the HTF solvent.

While SSDA-AT would have preferred having a bipartisan long-term highway bill enacted this year, a one-year extension that includes funds to keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent is better than multiple extensions that create uncertainty for roadway projects and planning.

Congress and the President have considered and proposed various Infrastructures options, but none have passed congress.

WMDA/CAR representatives attended a White House briefing session on the Presidents' \$2 trillion infrastructure bill that addressed highways, transit, railroads airports, parts, schools, water, electric grids, and hospitals.

Democrats in the House of Representatives moved a 5-year infrastructure bill that would have focused on highways, bridges and transit needs. The funding levels would have required an extra \$50 billion of new revenue to the Highway Trust Fund.

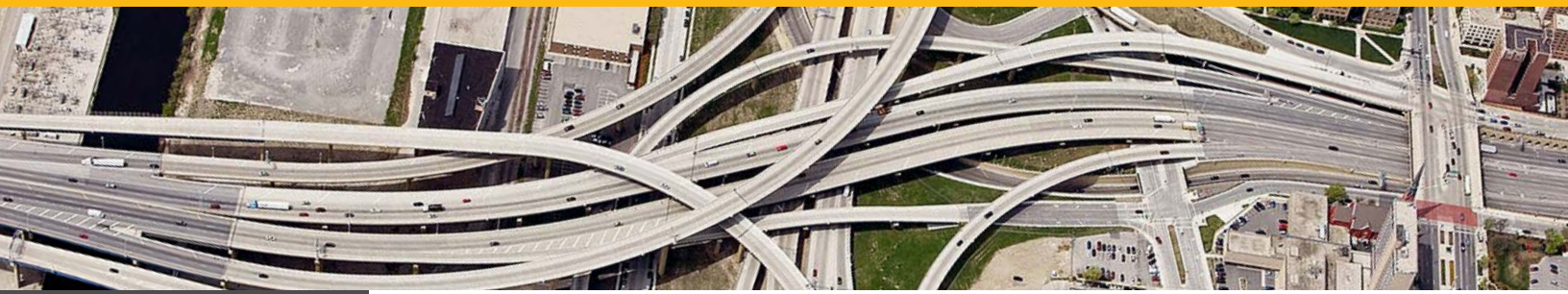
While Congress was unable to reach a consensus, over 40 bills were introduced to raise taxes to fund a long-term bill.

Proposals to fund a new infrastructure package included: A motor fuel tax increase (of various amounts from 5 cents per gallon to \$1.00 per gallon), repeal of the LIFO (last-in, first-out) accounting procedure (which would raise a one-time total of \$106 billion), a Vehicle Mile Traveled (VMT) tax, raising existing taxes, and/or setting new taxes.

But there will be much disagreement on some major issues: (1) motor fuel taxes – state governors are almost united in their support of a major motor fuel tax increase. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the powerful road builders lobby all support a major increase (and indexing the tax to inflation so that it goes up in future years without having to go through Congress). Proposals being considered range from increasing the motor fuel tax by 5 cents to 8 cents a gallon a year for 5 years (raising the tax in total by 25-40 cents a gallon) to increasing the tax \$1.00 per gallon; (2) privatization of highways – allowing states to continue the trend of turning over public roads to private companies. In these lease arrangements, the road is leased to a private company for 99 years. The private company gives the state a greater amount of money up front (which is appealing to Governors who are facing server shortfalls).







What seems to then happen is that the roads get less maintenance, and to make this a good business move the private company either increases existing tolls or puts in new tolls; (3) weigh-distance tax – the recent congressionally mandated study was positive on the equity of a national-weight distance tax or a vehicle-miles-driven tax; (4) Tax proposals if a motor fuel tax increase is not possible, including reinstating the FET on tread rubber, reinstating the FET on passenger tires, and increasing the FET on truck tires by 10%.

SSDA-AT will take the following positions with the highway proposals:

- Support a 5+ year bill
- Stay neutral to small gas tax increases; oppose any gas tax increase over 10 cent per gallon
- Oppose the privatization of highways
- Oppose a weight distance tax
- Oppose Vehicle Miles Traveled
- Oppose FET on passenger tires

SSDA-AT believes there are a variety of other funding options available that would not be harmful to the industry including repatriation of overseas money.

SSDA-AT strongly believes that all users of infrastructure must pay their fair share, not just the highway users.

SSDA-AT strongly supports a

5-year Federal and highway bill.

Because of both the 1-year extension and the potential impact tax increases could have on the industry SSDA-AT has announced a September 2021, Federal Lobby Day to encourage WMDA/ CAR members and members of other similar state and regional Associations to come to Capitol Hill and in a show of unity, speak in one voice to weigh in with Senators, Congressmen, and the Administration on the funding options being considered to sustain this important initiative. ■



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## LET YOUR MEMBERSHIP WORK FOR YOU!

*Simply participate in all of the programs for which you are eligible and you will save or make enough to pay for your membership in WMDA/CAR!*



# SUPPORT YOUR WMDA/CAR PAC

## What do the Bog Turtle and the Delmarva Fox Squirrel have in common with small businesses in Maryland, Delaware, and District of Columbia?

**Small business has become a piggy bank for legislators and are now on the endangered species list.** While the above two animals have the state's help to try to increase their habitat and population, it seems legislative bodies are doing everything they can to hurt and eliminate small businesses. A change is needed in the halls of Annapolis, Dover, and District of Columbia. WMDA/CAR is your advocate every day to bring your viewpoint and business common sense to legislators. With COVID 19 spending in trillions of dollars, legislators will target businesses to replenish funds. We want to pay our fair share but must put an emphasis on FAIR.

Your WMDA/CAR PAC FUND contributions will go towards helping elect people that understand the responsibility of making a weekly payroll and having all your family's assets, hopes and future tied up in the value of their business. We also must educate legislators who are currently in chambers.

This is going to be a multi-year project and we will join with other like-minded organizations to get the most bang for the buck.

Thank you,

**WMDA/CAR PAC Committee**

Chairman Rick Agoris

Treasurer Riaz Ahmad



### SUGGESTED CONTRIBUTIONS:

- 1 Location:** \$150 or more
- 2-5 Locations:** \$300 or more
- 6-10 Locations:** \$500 or more
- 10 + Locations:** \$1,000 or more

## Your contribution and support can make a difference!

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