### Index

[Index 1](#_Toc329022843)

[1AC 4](#_Toc329022844)

[Tax Low Now 27](#_Toc329022864)

[Changes Driving Habits 29](#_Toc329022865)

[Changes Driving Habits 30](#_Toc329022866)

[Changes Driving Habits 31](#_Toc329022867)

[Increases Green Tech 33](#_Toc329022868)

[Increases Green Tech 34](#_Toc329022869)

[Increases Green Tech 35](#_Toc329022870)

[US Behind on Green Tech 37](#_Toc329022871)

[US Behind on Green Tech 39](#_Toc329022872)

[Green Tech Key to Competitiveness 40](#_Toc329022873)

[Green Tech Key to Competitiveness 41](#_Toc329022874)

[Green Tech Key to Competitiveness 43](#_Toc329022875)

[Environmental Leadership 44](#_Toc329022876)

[Environmental Leadership 45](#_Toc329022877)

[Environmental Leadership 46](#_Toc329022878)

[Obesity 2AC Add-on 48](#_Toc329022879)

[Obesity Solvency 49](#_Toc329022880)

[Obesity Bad—Death 51](#_Toc329022881)

[Obesity Bad—Hegemony 53](#_Toc329022882)

[Obesity Bad--Hegemony 55](#_Toc329022883)

[Accidents Add-on 56](#_Toc329022884)

[Accidents Solvency 57](#_Toc329022885)

[Accidents Impacts 58](#_Toc329022886)

[Speeding 59](#_Toc329022887)

[\*\*\*OIL\*\*\* 60](#_Toc329022888)

[Solves Oil Dependence 61](#_Toc329022889)

[Oil Dependence Impacts—Economy 62](#_Toc329022890)

[Oil Dependence Impacts—War 63](#_Toc329022891)

[Oil Dependence Impacts—War 64](#_Toc329022892)

[Solves Oil Shocks 65](#_Toc329022893)

[Solves Oil Shocks 66](#_Toc329022894)

[Solves Oil Shocks 67](#_Toc329022895)

[Oil Shocks Impacts 68](#_Toc329022896)

[Oil Shocks Impacts 69](#_Toc329022897)

[AT: Cushions against Shocks 70](#_Toc329022898)

[US Transportation Sector Key to Global Market 72](#_Toc329022899)

[AT: Oil Price DA’s 73](#_Toc329022900)

[\*\*\*Warming Advantage\*\*\* 74](#_Toc329022901)

[Solves Warming 75](#_Toc329022902)

[Solves Warming—Modeling 76](#_Toc329022903)

[Solves Warming—Modeling 78](#_Toc329022904)

[\*\*\*Air Pollution Advantage\*\*\* 79](#_Toc329022905)

[Cars Cause Pollution 80](#_Toc329022906)

[Air Pollution Solvency 82](#_Toc329022907)

[Air Pollution Solvency 84](#_Toc329022908)

[Air Pollution Impacts 85](#_Toc329022909)

[\*\*\*Highways Advantage\*\*\* 86](#_Toc329022910)

[Highways On Brink 87](#_Toc329022911)

[Key To Highway Trust Fund 88](#_Toc329022912)

[Key To Highway Trust Fund 89](#_Toc329022913)

[Key To Highway Trust Fund 90](#_Toc329022914)

[Highway Trust Fund Key To Infrastructure 91](#_Toc329022915)

[Generic Economy Cards 92](#_Toc329022916)

[Plan Solves Deficit Spending 93](#_Toc329022917)

[Plan Solves Systemic Economic Problems 94](#_Toc329022918)

[\*\*\*Case Arguments\*\*\* 95](#_Toc329022919)

[AT: Regressive 96](#_Toc329022920)

[AT: Regressive 97](#_Toc329022921)

[AT: Regressive 98](#_Toc329022922)

[AT: Coercion—Shift 99](#_Toc329022923)

[AT: Coercion—Gas Tax>Free Market 100](#_Toc329022924)

[AT: SQ Fuel Efficiency Solves 101](#_Toc329022925)

[AT: Alternative Taxation schemes 102](#_Toc329022926)

[Phased In Gas Tax 103](#_Toc329022927)

[Good Solvency Evidence 104](#_Toc329022928)

[Good Solvency Evidence 106](#_Toc329022929)

[Good Solvency Evidence 107](#_Toc329022930)

[Good Solvency Evidence 108](#_Toc329022931)

[Good Solvency Evidence 109](#_Toc329022932)

[\*\*\*States CP\*\*\* 110](#_Toc329022933)

[Unions DA 111](#_Toc329022934)

[States Can’t Solve Infrastructure 112](#_Toc329022935)

[State Diversion Takeouts 113](#_Toc329022936)

[Corruption Takeouts 114](#_Toc329022937)

[Transportation=Federal Issue 115](#_Toc329022938)

[\*\*\*Other CP’s\*\*\* 116](#_Toc329022939)

[AT: VMT CP 117](#_Toc329022940)

[AT: VMT CP 118](#_Toc329022941)

[AT: VMT CP 119](#_Toc329022942)

[AT: Toll Roads/License Fees CP 120](#_Toc329022943)

[AT: Cap and Trade CP 121](#_Toc329022944)

[T Cards 122](#_Toc329022945)

[T Cards 123](#_Toc329022946)

# 1AC

**Contention One: Inherency**

**The current federal gas tax hasn’t been raised since 1993 and no increase is coming**

CSG 2k12(Council of State Governments , http://www.csg.org/pubs/capitolideas/july\_august\_2011/StateGasTaxes.asp)

The federal gas tax hasn’t been raised since 1993, and has never been adjusted for inflation. But 60 percent of Americans believe the gas tax is raised automatically every year, according to a 2009 survey conducted by Building America’s Future and others. While many states have increased their state gas taxes during the last 20 years, 12 states and Puerto Rico have not done so in more than 20 years. No legislature voted to increase a state gas tax in 2010 or thus far in 2011, although several have tried. Gas tax hikes took effect in January 2010 in Nebraska and Florida. The fluctuations in the price of oil this year have even prompted several states to consider temporary or permanent reductions in their gas taxes. That’s despite the escalating costs of road construction and a growing backlog of maintenance in many states.

# 1AC

**Plan**

**Plan: The United States Federal Government should increase the gas tax by $1 and use all revenues for transportation infrastructure.**

# 1AC

**Advantage 1: Warming**

**Warming is real and human induced – consensus is on our side – numerous studies prove**

Rahmstorf 8 – Professor of Physics of the Oceans

Richard, of Physics of the Oceans at Potsdam University, Global Warming: Looking Beyond Kyoto, Edited by Ernesto Zedillo, “Anthropogenic Climate Change?,” pg. 42-4

It is time to turn to statement B: human activities are altering the climate. This can be broken into two parts. The first is as follows: global climate is warming. This is by now a generally undisputed point (except by novelist Michael Crichton), so we deal with it only briefly. The two leading compilations of data measured with thermometers are shown in figure 3-3, that of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and that of the British Hadley Centre for Climate Change. Although they differ in the details, due to the inclusion of different data sets and use of different spatial averaging and quality control procedures, they both show a consistent picture, with a global mean warming of 0.8°C since the late nineteenth century. Temperatures over the past ten years clearly were the warmest since measured records have been available. The year 1998 sticks out well above the longterm trend due to the occurrence of a major El Nino event that year (the last El Nino so far and one of the strongest on record). These events are examples of the largest natural climate variations on multiyear time scales and, by releasing heat from the ocean, generally cause positive anomalies in global mean temperature. It is remarkable that the year 2005 rivaled the heat of 1998 even though no El Nino event occurred that year. (A bizarre curiosity, perhaps worth mentioning, is that several prominent "climate skeptics" recently used the extreme year 1998 to claim in the media that global warming had ended. In Lindzen's words, "Indeed, the absence of any record breakers during the past seven years is statistical evidence that temperatures are not increasing.")33 In addition to the surface measurements, the more recent portion of the global warming trend (since 1979) is also documented by satellite data. It is not straightforward to derive a reliable surface temperature trend from satellites, as they measure radiation coming from throughout the atmosphere (not just near the surface), including the stratosphere, which has strongly cooled, and the records are not homogeneous' due to the short life span of individual satellites, the problem of orbital decay, observations at different times of day, and drifts in instrument calibration.' Current analyses of these satellite data show trends that are fully consistent with surface measurements and model simulations." If no reliable temperature measurements existed, could we be sure that the climate is warming? The "canaries in the coal mine" of climate change (as glaciologist Lonnie Thompson puts it) ~are mountain glaciers. We know, both from old photographs and from the position of the terminal moraines heaped up by the flowing ice, that mountain glaciers have been in retreat all over the world during the past century. There are precious few exceptions, and they are associated with a strong increase in precipitation or local cooling.36 I have inspected examples of shrinking glaciers myself in field trips to Switzerland, Norway, and New Zealand. As glaciers respond sensitively to temperature changes, data on the extent of glaciers have been used to reconstruct a history of Northern Hemisphere temperature over the past four centuries (see figure 3-4). Cores drilled in tropical glaciers show signs of recent melting that is unprecedented at least throughout the Holocene-the past 10,000 years. Another powerful sign of

# 1AC

Rahmstorf continues 2/4

warming, visible clearly from satellites, is the shrinking Arctic sea ice cover (figure 3-5), which has declined 20 percent since satellite observations began in 1979. While climate clearly became warmer in the twentieth century, much discussion particularly in the popular media has focused on the question of how "unusual" this warming is in a longer-term context. While this is an interesting question, it has often been mixed incorrectly with the question of causation. Scientifically, how unusual recent warming is-say, compared to the past millennium-in itself contains little information about its cause. Even a highly unusual warming could have a natural cause (for example, an exceptional increase in solar activity). And even a warming within the bounds of past natural variations could have a predominantly anthropogenic cause. I come to the question of causation shortly, after briefly visiting the evidence for past natural climate variations. Records from the time before systematic temperature measurements were collected are based on "proxy data," coming from tree rings, ice cores, corals, and other sources. These proxy data are generally linked to local temperatures in some way, but they may be influenced by other parameters as well (for example, precipitation), they may have a seasonal bias (for example, the growth season for tree rings), and high-quality long records are difficult to obtain and therefore few in number and geographic coverage. Therefore, there is still substantial uncertainty in the evolution of past global or hemispheric temperatures. (Comparing only local or regional temperature; as in Europe, is of limited value for our purposes,' as regional variations can be much larger than global ones and can have many regional causes, unrelated to global-scale forcing and climate change.) The first quantitative reconstruction for the Northern Hemisphere temperature of the past millennium, including an error estimation, was presented by Mann, Bradley, and Hughes and rightly highlighted in the 2001 IPCC report as one of the major new findings since its 1995 report; it is shown in figure 3\_6.39 The analysis suggests that, despite the large error bars, twentieth-century warming is indeed highly unusual and probably was unprecedented during the past millennium. This result, presumably because of its symbolic power, has attracted much criticism, to some extent in scientific journals, but even more so in the popular media. The hockey stick-shaped curve became a symbol for the IPCC, .and criticizing this particular data analysis became an avenue for some to question the credibility of the IPCC. Three important things have been overlooked in much of the media coverage. First, even if the scientific critics had been right, this would not have called into question the very cautious conclusion drawn by the IPCC from the reconstruction by Mann, Bradley, and Hughes: "New analyses of proxy data for the Northern Hemisphere indicate that the increase in temperature in the twentieth century is likely to have been the largest of any century during the past 1,000 years." This conclusion has since been supported further by every single one of close to a dozen new reconstructions (two of which are shown in figure 3-6).Second, by far the most serious scientific criticism raised against Mann, Hughes, and Bradley was simply based on a mistake. 40 The prominent paper of von Storch and others, which claimed (based on a model test) that the method of Mann, Bradley, and Hughes systematically underestimated variability, "was [itself] based on incorrect implementation of the reconstruction procedure."41 With correct implementation, climate field reconstruction procedures such as the one used by Mann, Bradley, and Hughes have been shown to perform well in similar model tests. Third, whether their reconstruction is accurate or not has no bearing on policy. If their analysis underestimated past natural climate variability, this would certainly not argue for a smaller climate sensitivity and thus a lesser concern about the consequences of our emissions. Some have argued that, in contrast, it would point to a larger climate sensitivity. While this is a valid point in principle, it does not apply in practice to the climate sensitivity estimates discussed herein or to the range given by IPCC, since these did not use the reconstruction of Mann, Hughes, and Bradley or any other proxy records of the past millennium. Media claims that "a pillar of the Kyoto Protocol" had been called into question were therefore misinformed. As an aside, the protocol was agreed in 1997, before the reconstruction in question even existed. The overheated public debate on this topic has, at least, helped to attract more researchers and funding to this area of paleoclimatology; its methodology has advanced significantly, and a number of new reconstructions have been presented in recent years. While the science has moved forward, the first seminal reconstruction by Mann, Hughes, and Bradley has held up remarkably well, with its main features reproduced by more recent work. Further progress probably will require substantial amounts of new proxy data, rather than further refinement of the statistical techniques pioneered by Mann, Hughes, and Bradley. Developing these data sets will require time and substantial effort. It is time to address the final statement: most of the observed warming over the past fifty years is anthropogenic. A large number of studies exist that have taken different approaches to analyze this issue, which is generally called the "attribution problem." I do not discuss the exact share of the anthropogenic contribution (although this is an interesting question). By "most" I imply mean "more than 50 percent.”The first and crucial piece of

# 1AC

Rahmstorf Continues 3/4

evidence is, of course, that the magnitude of the warming is what is expected from the anthropogenic perturbation of the radiation balance, so anthropogenic forcing is able to explain all of the temperature rise. As discussed here, the rise in greenhouse gases alone corresponds to 2.6 W/tn2 of forcing. This by itself, after subtraction of the observed 0'.6 W/m2 of ocean heat uptake, would Cause 1.6°C of warming since preindustrial times for medium climate sensitivity (3"C). With a current "best guess'; aerosol forcing of 1 W/m2, the expected warming is O.8°c. The point here is not that it is possible to obtain the 'exact observed number-this is fortuitous because the amount of aerosol' forcing is still very' uncertain-but that the expected magnitude is roughly right. There can be little doubt that the anthropogenic forcing is large enough to explain most of the warming. Depending on aerosol forcing and climate sensitivity, it could explain a large fraction of the warming, or all of it, or even more warming than has been observed (leaving room for natural processes to counteract some of the warming). The second important piece of evidence is clear: there is no viable alternative explanation. In the scientific literature, no serious alternative hypothesis has been proposed to explain the observed global warming. Other possible causes, such as solar activity, volcanic activity, cosmic rays, or orbital cycles, are well observed, but they do not show trends capable of explaining the observed warming. Since 1978, solar irradiance has been measured directly from satellites and shows the well-known eleven-year solar cycle, but no trend. There are various estimates of solar variability before this time, based on sunspot numbers, solar cycle length, the geomagnetic AA index, neutron monitor data, and, carbon-14 data. These indicate that solar activity probably increased somewhat up to 1940. While there is disagreement about the variation in previous centuries, different authors agree that solar activity did not significantly increase during the last sixty-five years. Therefore, this cannot explain the warming, and neither can any of the other factors mentioned. Models driven by natural factors only, leaving the anthropogenic forcing aside, show a cooling in the second half of the twentieth century (for an example, See figure 2-2, panel a, in chapter 2 of this volume). The trend in the sum of natural forcings is downward.The only way out would be either some as yet undiscovered unknown forcing or a warming trend that arises by chance from an unforced internal variability in the climate system. The latter cannot be completely ruled out, but has to be considered highly unlikely. No evidence in the observed record, proxy data, or current models suggest that such internal variability could cause a sustained trend of global warming of the observed magnitude. As discussed, twentieth century warming is unprecedented over the past 1,000 years (or even 2,000 years, as the few longer reconstructions available now suggest), which does not 'support the idea of large internal fluctuations. Also, those past variations correlate well with past forcing (solar variability, volcanic activity) and thus appear to be largely forced rather than due to unforced internal variability." And indeed, it would be difficult for a large and sustained unforced variability to satisfy the fundamental physical law of energy conservation. Natural internal variability generally shifts heat around different parts of the climate system-for example, the large El Nino event of 1998, which warmed, the atmosphere by releasing heat stored in the ocean. This mechanism implies that the ocean heat content drops as the atmosphere warms. For past decades, as discussed, we observed the atmosphere warming and the ocean heat content increasing, which rules out heat release from the ocean as a cause of surface warming. The heat content of the whole climate system is increasing, and there is no plausible source of this heat other than the heat trapped by greenhouse gases. ' A completely different approach to attribution is to analyze the spatial patterns of climate change. This is done in so-called fingerprint studies, which associate particular patterns or "fingerprints" with different forcings. It is plausible that the pattern of a solar-forced climate change differs from the pattern of a change caused by greenhouse gases. For example, a characteristic of greenhouse gases is that heat is trapped closer to the Earth's surface and that, unlike solar variability, greenhouse gases tend to warm more in winter, and at

# 1AC

Rahmstorf Continues 4/4

night. Such studies have used different data sets and have been performed by different groups of researchers with different statistical methods. They consistently conclude that the observed spatial pattern of warming can only be explained by greenhouse gases.49 Overall, it has to be considered, highly likely' that the observed warming is indeed predominantly due to the human-caused increase in greenhouse gases. ' This paper discussed the evidence for the anthropogenic increase in atmospheric CO2 concentration and the effect of CO2 on climate, finding that this anthropogenic increase is proven beyond reasonable doubt and that a mass of evidence points to a CO2 effect on climate of 3C ± 1.59C global-warming for a doubling of concentration. (This is, the classic IPCC range; my personal assessment is that, in-the light of new studies since the IPCC Third Assessment Report, the uncertainty range can now be narrowed somewhat to 3°C ± 1.0C) This is based on consistent results from theory, models, and data analysis, and, even in the absence-of any computer models, the same result would still hold based on physics and on data from climate history alone. Considering the plethora of consistent evidence, the chance that these conclusions are wrong has to be considered minute. If the preceding is accepted, then it follows logically and incontrovertibly that a further increase in CO2 concentration will lead to further warming. The magnitude of our emissions depends on human behavior, but the climatic response to various emissions scenarios can be computed from the information presented here. The result is the famous range of future global temperature scenarios shown in figure 3\_6.50 Two additional steps are involved in these computations: the consideration of anthropogenic forcings other than CO2 (for example, other greenhouse gases and aerosols) and the computation of concentrations from the emissions. Other gases are not discussed here, although they are important to get quantitatively accurate results. CO2 is the largest and most important forcing. Concerning concentrations, the scenarios shown basically assume that ocean and biosphere take up a similar share of our emitted CO2 as in the past. This could turn out to be an optimistic assumption; some models indicate the possibility of a positive feedback, with the biosphere turning into a carbon source rather than a sink under growing climatic stress. It is clear that even in the more optimistic of the shown (non-mitigation) scenarios, global temperature would rise by 2-3°C above its preindustrial level by the end of this century. Even for a paleoclimatologist like myself, this is an extraordinarily high temperature, which is very likely unprecedented in at least the past 100,000 years. As far as the data show, we would have to go back about 3 million years, to the Pliocene, for comparable temperatures. The rate of this warming (which is important for the ability of ecosystems to cope) is also highly unusual and unprecedented probably for an even longer time. The last major global warming trend occurred when the last great Ice Age ended between 15,000 and 10,000 years ago: this was a warming of about 5°C over 5,000 years, that is, a rate of only 0.1 °C per century. 52 The expected magnitude and rate of planetary warming is highly likely to come with major risk and impacts in terms of sea level rise (Pliocene sea level was 25-35 meters higher than now due to smaller Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets), extreme events (for example, hurricane activity is expected to increase in a warmer climate), and ecosystem loss. The second part of this paper examined the evidence for the current warming of the planet and discussed what is known about its causes. This part showed that global warming is already a measured and-well-established fact, not a theory. Many different lines of evidence consistently show that most of the observed warming of the past fifty years was caused by human activity. Above all, this warming is exactly what would be expected given the anthropogenic rise in greenhouse gases, and no viable alternative explanation for this warming has been proposed in the scientific literature. Taken together., the very strong evidence accumulated from thousands of independent studies, has over the past decades convinced virtually every climatologist around the world (many of whom were initially quite skeptical, including myself) that anthropogenic global warming is a reality with which we need to deal.

# 1AC

**And, tipping points are coming soon – must start decreasing emissions to prevent runaway warming**

Hamilton 10 – Professor of Public Ethics @ ANU

Clive Hamilton, Professor of Public Ethics in Australia, 2010, “Requiem for a Species: Why We Resist the Truth About Climate Change,” pg. 1-2

One of the most striking features of the global warming debate has been how, with each advance in climate science, the news keeps getting worse. Although temporarily slowed by the effects of the 2008 global financial crisis, the world's greenhouse gas emissions have been growing much faster than predicted in the 1990s. In addition, since 2005 a number of scientific papers have described the likelihood of the climate system passing significant 'tipping points' beyond which the warming process is reinforced by positive feedback mechanisms—small perturbations that cause large changes.1 This new understanding has upset the comforting idea of a 'dose—response' relationship between the amount of greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere and the amount of global warming that follows. That idea has allowed us to believe that, although we may be slow to respond, once we decide to act we will be able to rescue the situation. In truth, it is likely that in the next decade or so, beginning with the melting of the Arctic's summer sea-ice, the Earth's climate will shift onto a new trajectory driven by 'natural' processes that will take millenniums to work themselves out. The paleoclimate record shows the Earth's climate often changing abruptly, flipping from one state to another, sometimes within a few years.2 It now seems almost certain that, if it has not occurred already, within the next several years enough warming will be locked in to the system to set in train feedback processes that will overwhelm any attempts we make to cut back on our carbon emissions. We will be powerless to stop the jump to a new climate on Earth, one much less sympathetic to life. The kind of climate that has allowed civilisation to flourish will be gone and humans will enter a long struggle just to survive.

**Runaway warming causes extinction—it’s the only existential threat**

Mazo 10 – PhD in Paleoclimatology from UCLA

Jeffrey Mazo, Managing Editor, Survival and Research Fellow for Environmental Security and Science Policy at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, 3-2010, “Climate Conflict: How global warming threatens security and what to do about it,” pg. 122

The best estimates for global warming to the end of the century range from 2.5-4.~C above pre-industrial levels, depending on the scenario. Even in the best-case scenario, the low end of the likely range is 1.goC, and in the worst 'business as usual' projections, which actual emissions have been matching, the range of likely warming runs from 3.1--7.1°C. Even keeping emissions at constant 2000 levels (which have already been exceeded), global temperature would still be expected to reach 1.2°C (O'9""1.5°C)above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century." Without early and severe reductions in emissions, the effects of climate change in the second half of the twenty-first century are likely to be catastrophic for the stability and security of countries in the developing world - not to mention the associated human tragedy. Climate change could even undermine the strength and stability of emerging and advanced economies, beyond the knock-on effects on security of widespread state failure and collapse in developing countries.' And although they have been condemned as melodramatic and alarmist, many informed observers believe that unmitigated climate change beyond the end of the century could pose an existential threat to civilisation." What is certain is that there is no precedent in human experience for such rapid change or such climatic conditions, and even in the best case adaptation to these extremes would mean profound social, cultural and political changes.

# 1AC

**Global warming leads to mass and unending international conflict**

Klare 6 – Professor of Peace and World Security Studies Michael, professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College, The Coming Resource Wars, 3-10-2006, http://www.alternet.org/environment/33243

It's official: the era of resource wars is upon us. In a major London address, British Defense Secretary John Reid warned that global climate change and dwindling natural resources are combining to increase the likelihood of violent conflict over land, water and energy. Climate change, he indicated, "will make scarce resources, clean water, viable agricultural land even scarcer" -- and this will "make the emergence of violent conflict more rather than less likely." Although not unprecedented, Reid's prediction of an upsurge in resource conflict is significant both because of his senior rank and the vehemence of his remarks. "The blunt truth is that the lack of water and agricultural land is a significant contributory factor to the tragic conflict we see unfolding in Darfur," he declared. "We should see this as a warning sign." Resource conflicts of this type are most likely to arise in the developing world, Reid indicated, but the more advanced and affluent countries are not likely to be spared the damaging and destabilizing effects of global climate change. With sea levels rising, water and energy becoming increasingly scarce and prime agricultural lands turning into deserts, internecine warfare over access to vital resources will become a global phenomenon. Reid's speech, delivered at the prestigious Chatham House in London (Britain's equivalent of the Council on Foreign Relations), is but the most recent expression of a growing trend in strategic circles to view environmental and resource effects -- rather than political orientation and ideology -- as the most potent source of armed conflict in the decades to come. With the world population rising, global consumption rates soaring, energy supplies rapidly disappearing and climate change eradicating valuable farmland, the stage is being set for persistent and worldwide struggles over vital resources. Religious and political strife will not disappear in this scenario, but rather will be channeled into contests over valuable sources of water, food and energy. Prior to Reid's address, the most significant expression of this outlook was a report prepared for the U.S. Department of Defense by a California-based consulting firm in October 2003. Entitled "An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security," the report warned that global climate change is more likely to result in sudden, cataclysmic environmental events than a gradual (and therefore manageable) rise in average temperatures. Such events could include a substantial increase in global sea levels, intense storms and hurricanes and continent-wide "dust bowl" effects. This would trigger pitched battles between the survivors of these effects for access to food, water, habitable land and energy supplies."Violence and disruption stemming from the stresses created by abrupt changes in the climate pose a different type of threat to national security than we are accustomed to today," the 2003 report noted. "Military confrontation may be triggered by a desperate need for natural resources such as energy, food and water rather than by conflicts over ideology, religion or national honor." Until now, this mode of analysis has failed to command the attention of top American and British policymakers. For the most part, they insist that ideological and religious differences -- notably, the clash between values of tolerance and democracy on one hand and extremist forms of Islam on the other -- remain the main drivers of international conflict. But Reid's speech at Chatham House suggests that a major shift in strategic thinking may be under way. Environmental perils may soon dominate the world security agenda. This shift is due in part to the growing weight of evidence pointing to a significant human role in altering the planet's basic climate systems. Recent studies showing the rapid shrinkage of the polar ice caps, the accelerated melting of North American glaciers, the increased frequency of severe hurricanes and a number of other such effects all suggest that dramatic and potentially harmful changes to the global climate have begun to occur. More importantly, they conclude that human behavior -- most importantly, the burning of fossil fuels in factories, power plants, and motor vehicles -- is the most likely cause of these changes. This assessment may not have yet penetrated the White House and other bastions of head-in-the-sand thinking, but it is clearly gaining ground among scientists and thoughtful analysts around the world. For the most part, public discussion of global climate change has tended to describe its effects as an environmental problem -- as a threat to safe water, arable soil, temperate forests, certain species and so on. And, of course, climate change is a potent threat to the environment; in fact, the greatest threat imaginable. But viewing climate change as an environmental problem fails to do justice to the magnitude of the peril it poses. As Reid's speech and the 2003 Pentagon study make clear, the greatest danger posed by global climate change is not the degradation of ecosystems per se, but rather the disintegration of entire human societies, producing wholesale starvation, mass migrations and recurring conflict over resources. "As famine, disease, and weather-related disasters strike due to abrupt climate change," the Pentagon report notes, "many countries' needs will exceed their carrying capacity" -- that is, their ability to provide the minimum requirements for human survival. This "will create a sense of desperation, which is likely to lead to offensive aggression" against countries with a greater stock of vital resources. "Imagine eastern European countries, struggling to feed their populations with a falling supply of food, water, and energy, eyeing Russia, whose population is already in decline, for access to its grain, minerals, and energy supply." Similar scenarios will be replicated all across the planet, as those without the means to survival invade or migrate to those with greater abundance -- producing endless struggles between resource "haves" and "have-nots." It is this prospect, more than anything, that worries John Reid. In particular, he expressed concern over the inadequate capacity of poor and

# 1AC

Klare 06 Continues…

unstable countries to cope with the effects of climate change, and the resulting risk of state collapse, civil war and mass migration. "More than 300 million people in Africa currently lack access to safe water," he observed, and "climate change will worsen this dire situation" -- provoking more wars like Darfur. And even if these social disasters will occur primarily in the developing world, the wealthier countries will also be caught up in them, whether by participating in peacekeeping and humanitarian aid operations, by fending off unwanted migrants or by fighting for access to overseas supplies of food, oil, and minerals. When reading of these nightmarish scenarios, it is easy to conjure up images of desperate, starving people killing one another with knives, staves and clubs -- as was certainly often the case in the past, and could easily prove to be so again. But these scenarios also envision the use of more deadly weapons. "In this world of warring states," the 2003 Pentagon report predicted, "nuclear arms proliferation is inevitable." As oil and natural gas disappears, more and more countries will rely on nuclear power to meet their energy needs -- and this "will accelerate nuclear proliferation as countries develop enrichment and reprocessing capabilities to ensure their national security." Although speculative, these reports make one thing clear: when thinking about the calamitous effects of global climate change, we must emphasize its social and political consequences as much as its purely environmental effects. Drought, flooding and storms can kill us, and surely will -- but so will wars among the survivors of these catastrophes over what remains of food, water and shelter. As Reid's comments indicate, no society, however affluent, will escape involvement in these forms of conflict.

**It’s not too late to solve warming– even if temporarily over the tipping point, can be brought back down**

Dyer 9 – PhD in ME History

Gwynne, MA in Military History and PhD in Middle Eastern History former @ [Senior Lecturer](file:///C%3A%5Cwiki%5CSenior_Lecturer) in War Studies at the [Royal Military Academy Sandhurst](file:///C%3A%5Cwiki%5CRoyal_Military_Academy_Sandhurst), Climate Wars

There is no need to despair. The slow-feedback effects take a long time to work their way through the climate system, and if we could manage to get the carbon dioxide concentration back down to a safe level before they have run their course, they might be stopped in their tracks. As Hansen et al. put it in their paper: A point of no return can be avoided, even if the tipping level [which puts us on course for an ice-free world] is temporarily exceeded. Ocean and ice-sheet inertia permit overshoot, provided the [concentration of carbon dioxide] is returned below the tipping level before initiating irre­versible dynamic change .... However, if overshoot is in place for centuries, the thermal perturbation will so pen­etrate the ocean that recovery without dramatic effects, such as ice-sheet disintegration, becomes unlikely. The real, long-term target is 350 parts per million or lower, if we want the Holocene to last into the indefinite future, but for the remainder of this book I am going to revert to the 450 parts per million ceiling that has become common currency among most of those who are involved in climate change issues. If we manage to stop the rise in the carbon dioxide concentration at or not far beyond that figure, then we must immediately begin the equally urgent and arduous task of getting it back down to a much lower level that is safe for the long term, but one step at a time will have to suffice. I suspect that few now alive will see the day when we seriously start work on bringing the concen­tration back down to 350, so let us focus here on how to stop it rising past 450.

# 1AC

**You should err on the side of solving warming because climate change could be irreversible even if the evidence is debatable**

Sunstein 7 – Professor of Political Science

Cass R., Professor in the Department of Political Science and at the Law School of the University of Chicago, 2007, “Worst-Case Scenarios”, Harvard University Press

Most worst-case scenarios appear to have an element of irreversibility. Once a species is lost, it is lost forever. The special concern for endangered species stems from the permanence of their loss (outside of Jurassic Park). One of the most serious fears associated with genetically modified organisms is that they might lead to irreversible ecological harm. Because some greenhouse gases stay in the atmosphere for centuries, the problem of climate change may be irreversible, at least for all practical purposes. Transgenic crops can impose irreversible losses too, because they can make pests more resistant to pesticides. If we invest significant wealth in one source of energy and neglect others, we may be effectively stuck forever, or at least for a long time. One objection to capital punishment is that errors cannot be reversed. In ordinary life, our judgments about worst-case scenarios have everything to do with irreversibility. Of course an action may be hard but not impossible to undo, and so there may be a continuum of cases, with different degrees of difficulty in reversing. A marriage can be reversed, but divorce is rarely easy; having a child is very close to irreversible; moving from New York to Paris is reversible, but moving back may be difficult. People often take steps to avoid courses of action that are burdensome rather than literally impossible to reverse. In this light, we might identify an Irreversible Harm Precautionary Principle, applicable to a subset of risks.' As a rough first approximation, the principle says this: Special steps should be taken to avoid irreversible harms, through precautions that go well beyond those that would be taken if irreversibility were not a problem. The general attitude here is "act, then learn," as opposed to the tempting alternative of "wait and learn." In the case of climate change, some people believe that research should be our first line of defense. In their view, we should refuse to commit substantial resources to the problem until evidence of serious harm is unmistakably clear.' But even assuming that the evidence is not so clear, research without action allows greenhouse gas emissions to continue, which might produce risks that are irreversible, or at best difficult and expensive to reverse. For this reason, the best course of action might well be to take precautions now as a way of preserving flexibility for future generations. In the environmental context in general, this principle suggests that regulators should proceed with far more aggressive measures than would otherwise seem justified

# 1AC

**There should be an extremely high standard of evidence in debates about global warming – current climate skepticism ignores peer-review, comes from unspecialized writers, cherry picks evidence and is informed by ideology**

Somerville 11 – Professor of Oceanography @ UCSD

Richard Somerville, Distinguished Professor Emeritus and Research Professor at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego, Coordinating Lead Author in Working Group I for the 2007 Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 3-8-2011, “CLIMATE SCIENCE AND EPA'S GREENHOUSE GAS REGULATIONS,” CQ Congressional Testimony, Lexis

Although the expert community is in wide agreement on the basic results of climate change science, as assessed in AR4 and The Copenhagen Diagnosis, much confusion exists among the general public and politicians in many countries, as polling data convincingly shows. In my opinion, many people need to learn more about the nature of junk or fake science, so they will be better equipped to recognize and reject it. There are a number of warning signs that can help identify suspicious claims. One is failure to rely on and cite published research results from peer- reviewed journals. Trustworthy science is not something that appears first on television or the Internet. Reputable scientists first announce the results of their research by peer-reviewed publication in well-regarded scientific journals. Peer review is not a guarantee of excellent science, but the lack of it is a red flag. Peer review is a necessary rather than a sufficient criterion. Another warning sign is a lack of relevant credentials on the part of the person making assertions, especially education and research experience in the specialized field in question. For example, it is not essential to have earned a Ph. D. degree or to hold a university professorship. It is important, however, that the person be qualified, not in some general broad scientific area, such as physics or chemistry, but in the relevant specialty. Accomplishments and even great distinction in one area of science do not qualify anybody to speak authoritatively in a very different area. We would not ask even an expert cardiologist for advice on, say, dentistry. One should inquire whether the person claiming expertise in some area of climate science has done first-person research on the topic under consideration and published it in reputable peer-reviewed journals. Is the person actively participating in the research area in question, or simply criticizing it from the vantage point of an outsider? One should be suspicious of a lack of detailed familiarity with the specific scientific topic and its research literature. Good science takes account of what is already known and acknowledges and builds on earlier research by others. Other warning signs include a blatant failure to be objective and to consider all relevant research results, both pro and con a given position. Scientific honesty and integrity require wide- ranging and thorough consideration of all the evidence that might bear on a particular question. Choosing to make selective choices among competing evidence, so as to emphasize those results that support a given position, while ignoring or dismissing any findings that do not support it, is a practice known as "cherry picking" and is a hallmark of poor science or pseudo-science. Mixing science with ideology or policy or personalities is never justified in research. Scientific validity has nothing to do with political viewpoints. There are no Republican or Democratic thermometers. Whether a given politician agrees or disagrees with a research finding is absolutely unimportant scientifically. Science can usefully inform the making of policy, but only if policy considerations have not infected the science. Similarly, one should always be alert to the risk of bias due to political viewpoints, ideological preferences, or connections with interested parties. All sources of funding, financial interests and other potential reasons for bias should be openly disclosed. Finally, we must always be alert for any hint of delusions of grandeur on the part of those who would insist that they themselves are correct, while nearly everyone else in the entire field of climate science is badly mistaken. Scientific progress is nearly always incremental**,** with very few exceptions. Occasionally, an unknown lone genius in a humble position, such as the young Einstein doing theoretical physics while working as a clerk in a patent office, does indeed revolutionize a scientific field, dramatically overthrowing conventional wisdom. However, such events are exceedingly rare, and claims to be such a lone genius deserve the most severe scrutiny. For every authentic Einstein, there must be thousands of outright charlatans, as well as many more ordinary mortals who are simply very badly mistaken.

# 1AC

**98% of economists agree the plan will solve—creates demand for fuel efficient transit and decreases driving**

Global Network Consulting ’12 <a strategy consulting firm and member of [Monitor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monitor_Group) Group, that helps businesses, NGOs, and governments use [scenario planning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scenario_planning) to plan for multiple possible futures> “Carbon Emissions: Is gas tax the answer?” <http://gnconsulting.com.br/site/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=3857:carbon-emissions-is-a-gas-tax-the-answer&Itemid=245>)

According to a recent report by Reuters, “…new cars with traditional engines are showing striking fuel efficiency gains thanks to technologies such as turbochargers, direct injection, and engines that shut down when the vehicle stops, then spring back to life when the driver presses the accelerator.” To put a number on all this progress, cars on the road today are 60 percent more fuel efficiency than what we were driving just 20 years ago. Yet for some reason, the average driver has yet to see it translate into a significant boost in gas mileage. For instance, in 1980, the country’s fleet of autos offered car owners an average of about 23 miles per gallon, whereas by 2006 that average increased just slightly to around 27 mpg. So what gives? Christopher Knittel, an economist at MIT, has sifted through many of these confounding figures and came up with an explanation. All these gains in fuel economy, he says, have been offset by the fact that cars on the road today have also become bigger and more powerful. His analysis found that during that 26 year period, the average curb weight of vehicles increased 26 percent, while their horsepower rose 107 percent. And had that not been the case, a typical vehicle today would boast an average mileage rating of 37 mpg. I know it sounds a bit counter-intuitive but here’s additional evidence of consumers trending toward ever-more muscular cars: In 1980, light trucks represented about 20 percent of passenger vehicles sold in the United States. By 2004, light trucks — including SUVs — accounted for 51 percent of passenger-vehicle sales. To conduct the study, detailed in the journal American Economic Review as part of a report titled “Automobiles on Steroids,” Knittel drew upon data from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, auto manufacturers and trade journals. “I find little fault with the auto manufacturers, because there has been no incentive to put technologies into overall fuel economy,” Knittel said. “Firms are going to give consumers what they want, and if gas prices are low, consumers are going to want big, fast cars.” Even from a mile away, we can all see what he’s getting at. While the benefits of better gas mileage and reduced emissions are attractive selling points, it appears that most consumers would still rather eschew them for something along the lines of an SUV or Dodge Ram. So there you have it. Once again, just more proof that free market forces are at odds with the environmental imperative. Still, the solution Knittel proposes, which works similarly in principle to taxing cigarette smokers, does come off as somewhat radical. “When it comes to climate change, leaving the market alone isn’t going to lead to the efficient outcome,” Knittel said. “The right starting point is a gas tax.” So far, government has opted for a less meddlesome approach to curb emissions by putting the impetus on car manufacturers instead of the consumers. The Obama administration has required that the industry design vehicles that meet certain fuel economy benchmarks known as the Corporate Average Fuel Economy or CAFE standards. For instance, future models are expected to travel an average of 35.5 mpg by 2016, and 54.5 mpg by 2025. These rules, according to Knittel’s calculations, may lead to car companies rolling back the weight and horsepower capacity in future models as well as potentially spurring further innovation in fuel efficiency technologies. But even so, Knittel foresees any such gains being further offset by what he calls a “rebound effect,” where an apparently ideal scenario ends up encouraging people to drive even more. A gas tax, he believes, would create demand for more fuel-efficient cars without as much rebound, the phenomenon through which greater efficiency leads to potentially greater consumption. “I think 98 percent of economists would say that we need higher gas taxes,” he added.

# 1AC

**The plan would uniquely solve warming—would result in a 5 year halt of emissions within the first year**

Davis and Kilian, 9 [Lucas Davis and Lutz Kilian, January 2009, National Bureau Of Economic Research, “ESTIMATING THE EFFECT OF A GASOLINE TAX ON CARBON EMISSIONS” (http://www.nber.org/papers/w14685.pdf?new\_window=1)]

Several policymakers and economists have proposed the adoption of a carbon tax in the United States.1 In the United States 33.8% of carbon dioxide emissions are derived from the transportation sector, so the responsiveness of gasoline consumption to tax changes will play a significant role in determining the evolution of overall carbon dioxide emissions in response to policy interventions.2 It is widely recognized that a carbon tax in practice must take the form of a tax on the consumption of energy products such as gasoline (e.g. Fullerton and West, 2002). A tax of $10.00 per ton of carbon dioxide, as suggested by Nordhaus (2007), for example, would increase gasoline taxes by approximately 9 cents.3 In this paper, we evaluate how effective a gasoline tax increase would be in reducing gasoline consumption. Our most credible estimates imply that a 10 cent tax increase would decrease U.S. carbon emissions from the transportation sector by about 1.5% and decrease total U.S. carbon emissions by about 0.5%. To put this estimate in context, total U.S. carbon dioxide emissions increased by 1.1% annually between 1990 and 2007, so a 10 cent gasoline tax increase would approximately offset half a year of growth in total U.S. emissions.4 This estimate captures only the short-run response resulting from reduced discretionary driving and reduced driving speed, for example. The long-run response is likely to be considerably larger as drivers substitute toward more fuel-efficient vehicles. Despite the policy relevance of the question to be addressed in this paper, empirical evidence on the effectiveness of gasoline taxes on carbon emissions is virtually nonexistent. … Even this panel approach, however, does not fully address the issue of price endogeneity. An alternative approach to this endogeneity problem has been the use of instruments for gasoline prices. While this approach is appealing, the challenge has been to find instruments that are both truly exogenous and strong in the econometric sense (see Stock, Wright and Yogo, 2002).6 In this paper we use changes in gasoline taxes by state and month as an instrument. Even though tax legislation may respond to current prices, the implementation of tax changes typically occurs with a lag making it reasonable to believe that changes in tax rates are uncorrelated with unobserved changes in demand. In constructing our instrument we are careful to exclude ad valorem gasoline taxes (used in many states) because they are functionally related to price, violating the endogeneity assumption. For the national data our instrumental variable (IV) estimates rely on the historical variation in gasoline taxes over time. We find a price elasticity that is much larger, but not statistically distinguishable from zero, even after accounting for weak instruments. An alternative IV approach is to exploit additional variation in gasoline taxes across states. The resulting panel IV estimates are substantially larger than the OLS panel estimates. In our preferred estimates that restrict attention to dates of nominal state tax increases, we find a statistically significant price elasticity of −0.46. We examine a variety of alternative IV specifications including specifications that control for factors potentially correlated with gasoline tax changes and we consider alternative estimators. The results are remarkably similar across specifications. In addition, we contrast the IV estimates to alternative elasticity estimates obtained from recursively identified vector autoregressions in which the percent change in gasoline prices (or alternatively the percent change in gasoline taxes) is ordered first and the percent change in gasoline consumption is ordered second. With this approach the elasticity is identified under the assumption that changes in gasoline prices (or taxes) are predetermined with respect to all factors driving U.S. gasoline consumption.7 Overall, our results indicate that gasoline consumption is more sensitive to gasoline taxes than would be implied by recent estimates of the gasoline price elasticity. A likely reason is that price changes induced by tax changes are more persistent than other price changes and thus induce larger behavioral changes. In addition, gasoline tax increases are often accompanied by extensive media coverage. Even under the largest plausible estimates, however, gasoline tax increases of the magnitude that have been discussed would have only a moderate short-run impact on total U.S. gasoline consumption and carbon emissions based on our estimates. A natural conjecture is that the long-run elasticities will be larger, but standard econometric models based on historical data do not allow us to predict such long-run effects. The format of the paper is as follows. Section 2 describes the data used for the analysis and describes the evolution of gasoline taxes in the United States over the period 1989-2008. Section 3 presents least squares and IV estimates from log differenced single-equation specifications. Section 4 presents results from structural VAR models. Section 5 assesses the effects of the proposed gasoline tax on carbon emissions, and section 6 summarizes the policy implications.

# 1AC

**Advantage 2: Economy**

**Increasing gas tax provides sustainable green jobs and mitigates climate change**

Freidman ’11 <New York Times Staff Writer, Pulitzer Prize winner> “Is it weird enough yet?” The New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/14/opinion/friedman-is-it-weird-enough-yet.html?_r=2&ref=opinion>

There is only one effective, sustainable way to produce “green jobs,” and that is with a fixed, durable, long-term price signal that raises the price of dirty fuels and thereby creates sustained consumer demand for, and sustained private sector investment in, renewables. Without a carbon tax or gasoline tax or cap-and-trade system that makes renewable energies competitive with dirty fuels, while they achieve scale and move down the cost curve, green jobs will remain a hobby. President Obama has chosen not to push for a price signal for political reasons. He has opted for using regulations and government funding. In the area of regulation, he deserves great credit for just pushing through new fuel economy standards that will ensure that by 2025 the average U.S. car will get the mileage (and have the emissions) of today’s Prius hybrid. But elsewhere, Obama has relied on green subsidies rather than a price signal. Some of this has really helped start-ups leverage private capital, but you also get Solyndras. The G.O.P. has blocked any price signal and fought every regulation. The result too often is taxpayer money subsidizing wonderful green innovation, but with no sustainable market within which these companies can scale. Let’s fix that. We need revenue to balance the budget. We need sustainable clean-tech jobs. We need less dependence on Mideast oil. And we need to take steps to mitigate climate change — just in case Governor Perry is wrong. The easiest way to do all of this at once is with a gasoline tax or price on carbon. Would you rather cut Social Security and Medicare or pay a little more per gallon of gas and make the country stronger, safer and healthier? It still amazes me that our politicians have the courage to send our citizens to war but not to ask the public that question.

**Higher gas prices spur small business growth in alt energy – emp. proven**

Spors, 2012 Kelly Spors, former small-business and entrepreneurship reporter The Wall Street Journal, May 21, 2012, “Can a Gas Tax Fuel Clean Energy Innovation?”, Small Business Trends, accessed June 28, 2012 from http://smallbiztrends.com/2012/05/gas-tax-fuel-clean-energy-innovation.html

Tax and deficit issues aside, there’s another reason for business owners to think about the gas tax: Higher gas prices may help encourage clean energy innovation and support environmentally sustainable behaviors among business owners and consumers – such as the purchase and development of eco-friendlier vehicles and driving less. While it may raise business costs, it may spur business owners think about how to reduce their gas usage and be more sustainable. Christopher Knittel, an energy economics professor at MIT, has studied how gas prices affect behaviors. He and researchers from Northwestern University found that a $1 increase in prices between 1998 and 2008 led people to buy 21% more fuel-efficient vehicles. (Not surprisingly, the CEO of General Motors has come out in support of a gas tax increase.) Knittel also found that less driving led to less local air pollution and related health problems.

# 1AC

**Green tech is key to US economic competitiveness**

Holliday 12

(Stuart W., President and CEO of Meridian International, “Green Technology: The Key to More Jobs, Higher Exports, Cleaner Environment, Better Reputation?” http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stuart-w-holliday/green-technology\_b\_1224096.html)

We all agree that America needs to create more jobs, although there is certainly less agreement on how to do so. A few years ago, green technology was the solution to our problems, but energy prices sagged, investment dried up, and our patience for innovation waned. Though it seems the polish of green technology has dulled, let us not forget that the factors driving the rush have not disappeared, and will reemerge sooner than we think. Instead of waiting for the next energy crisis to strike, let us use the current economic situation as the catalyst for renewed investment. While the days of a quick fix through quotas and 100 MPG retrofitted Priuses are largely behind us, a number of reasoned engineers, businesspeople, and government leaders have quietly moved forward using the spirit of the boom and the lessons of the bust to their advantage. At a recent seminar convened by Meridian International Center, an interesting discussion took place among members of the diplomatic, public, and private sectors on this subject. All agreed that investing in green technologies is "common sense" -- but the reasons went well beyond environmental concerns. Research has shown that returns on investment in green tech are nearly certain to include large-scale job creation, increased American exports, add a desperately needed growth sector of the economy, and provide substantial long-term (and often short term) cost savings for companies of all size. Reinvestment anyone? Yet the group also acknowledged the important diplomatic function that green technology plays. Our discussion included representatives from the United States, Finland, Georgia, and Nigeria -- all of whom noted that environmental collaboration must represent part of its overall diplomatic strategy. The realization that we have a common responsibility to protect the world we all share is the first step in tackling larger issues. Borders are man-made -- and the effects of environmental damage and over use rarely have the decency to stop at check-points. Working together to tackle the manageable issues of energy consumption is crucial, and the US has both the opportunity and obligation to take a leadership position in the world.

# 1AC

**The loss of economic leadership results in global conflict, withdrawal of global power projection, and escalation of hotspots**

Friedberg and Schoenfeld 8

Aaron, professor of politics and international relations at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, Gabriel, Visiting Scholar @ Witherspoon Institute, The Dangers of a Diminished America, WSJ, 10/21, Proquest

Pressures to cut defense spending, and to dodge the cost of waging two wars, already intense before this crisis, are likely to mount. Despite the success of the surge, the war in Iraq remains deeply unpopular. Precipitous withdrawal -- attractive to a sizable swath of the electorate before the financial implosion -- might well become even more popular with annual war bills running in the

Even before our current woes, calls to save jobs by restricting imports had begun to gather support among many Democrats and some Republicans. In a prolonged recession, gale-force winds of protectionism will blow. Then there are the dolorous consequences of a potential collapse of the world's financial architecture. For decades now, Americans have enjoyed the advantages of being at the center of that system. The worldwide use of the dollar, and the stability of our economy, among other things, made it easier for us to run huge budget deficits, as we counted on foreigners to pick up the tab by buying dollar-denominated assets as a safe haven. Will this be possible in the future? Meanwhile, traditional foreign-policy challenges are multiplying. The threat from al Qaeda and Islamic terrorist affiliates has not been extinguished. Iran and North Korea are continuing on their bellicose paths, while Pakistan and Afghanistan are progressing smartly down the road to chaos. Russia's new militancy and China's seemingly relentless rise also give cause for concern. If America now tries to pull back from the world stage, it will leave a dangerous power vacuum. The stabilizing effects of our presence in Asia, our continuing commitment to Europe, and our position as defender of last resort for Middle East energy sources and supply lines could all be placed at risk. In such a scenario there are shades of the 1930s, when global trade and finance ground nearly to a halt, the peaceful democracies failed to cooperate, and aggressive powers led by the remorseless fanatics who rose up on the crest of economic disaster exploited their divisions. Today we run the risk that rogue states may choose to become ever more reckless with their nuclear toys, just at our moment of maximum vulnerability. The aftershocks of the financial crisis will almost certainly rock our principal strategic competitors even harder than they will rock us. The dramatic free fall of the Russian stock market has demonstrated the fragility of a state whose economic performance hinges on high oil prices, now driven down by the global slowdown. China is perhaps even more fragile, its economic growth depending heavily on foreign investment and access to foreign markets. Both will now be constricted, inflicting economic pain and perhaps even sparking unrest in a country where political legitimacy rests on progress in the long march to prosperity. None of this is good news if the authoritarian leaders of these countries seek to divert attention from internal travails with external adventures.

# 1AC

**Increased gas tax would shield our economy from the impacts of price shocks**

Williford 11 – College of Charleston (10 February 2011, Sam Williford, “Oil Dependence Threatens Economic Stability”, http://economyincrisis.org/content/oil-dependence-threatens-economic-stability)

The recent protests in the Middle East prove yet again that our economy is too heavily dependent upon foreign oil for its survival and that we must takes steps to correct this issue. While Egypt is a relatively small provider of oil (only 700,000 barrels per day, compared to more than 8 million per day from Saudi Arabia), the Suez Canal is a vital lifeline between Asia and Europe. If disturbances were to affect the flow of traffic through this corridor, it would greatly disrupt international commerce, causing oil prices to spike further than they have already. This is due to the fact that America imports a vast amount of black gold everyday. Our reliance on gasoline powered personal transportation and shipping are the largest causes. Thus, to minimize the impact of price shocks, we must implement measures to reduce demand. Goals to increase usage of electric vehicles is a start, but alone will do too little, too late in dealing with the problem. A gradual raising of the gasoline tax that would go to fund public transportation alternatives would encourage people to drive less.

**Even a 10% disruption in oil would economic collapse of unprecedented magnitude—no available safeguards**

Black 12 (Edwin Black, American [syndicated columnist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Print_syndication), and [journalist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Journalist) specializing in the historical interplay between economics and politics in the [Middle East](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East), “When the Pump Runs Dry, February 27)< http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2012-02-27/news/bs-ed-oil-interruption-20120227\_1\_crude-abqaiq-international-energy-agency

The crude realities: America uses approximately 19 million to 20 million barrels of oil per day, almost half of which is imported. If we lose just 1 million barrels per day, or suffer the type of damage sustained from Hurricane Katrina, the government will open the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which offers a mere six- to eight-week supply of unrefined crude oil. If we lose 1.5 million barrels per day, or approximately 7.5 percent, we will ask our allies in the 28-member International Energy Agency to open their SPRs and otherwise assist. If we lose 2 million barrels per day, or 10 percent, for a protracted period, government crisis monitors say the chaos will be so catastrophic, they cannot even model it. One government oil crisis source told me: "We cannot put a price tag on it. If it happens, just cash in your 401(k)." Exactly how could America be subjected to a protracted oil interruption — that is, a 10 percent shortfall lasting longer than several weeks? It will not come from hurricane action in the Gulf of Mexico, or even major refinery accidents or other oil infrastructure damage. Such damage would be repaired within days and the temporary losses absorbed by the small, half-million-barrel-per-day global cushion available. But a disruption of the vital Persian Gulf chokepoints — the Abqaiq processing plant in eastern Saudi Arabia, the Ras Tanura terminal on the Saudi Arabian coast, or the two-mile-wide sea lane of the Strait of Hormuz — would be devastating. If one, two or three of them is hit by terrorists flying hijacked jumbo jets or shut down by Iranian military action, as much as 40 percent of all seaborne oil will be stopped, as much as 18 percent of all global supply will be interrupted, and more than 10 percent of the U.S. supply will be cut off. Estimates on the

# 1AC

Black Continues…

U.S. shortfall suggest the percentage lost could be far higher. Repeat attacks, and the difficulty of anti-mine operations in a hostile environment, could prolong the crisis for many months — which is exactly what al-Qaeda and the Iranian regime have promised. Yet, apparently, there is no government plan. The best experts predict that if we suffer as much as a 10 percent shortfall for any period of time, let alone 20 percent, it will be a **neighbor-against-neighbor, "Mad Max" scenario as food shortages swell and a** storm of economic collapse surges across the country. Indeed, experts have been warning about this looming calamity for years. But the government and presidential candidates refuse to even consider the possibility or develop a contingency plan. Even if a secret plan exists, who would execute such a monumental undertaking? Yet American allies have developed oil contingency legislation and other administrative plans that will permit their nations to survive a stoppage. These measures include severe vehicle traffic reductions, enabling fast alternative fuel production and mass vehicle fuel retrofitting, as well as rush public transit enhancement and mandated changes in driving habits. Unquestionably, for America to survive such a catastrophe would require a very painful, multi-layered program of immediate-term, short-term, mid-term and long-term fixes that would change our society and transform it off of dependency on oil. Currently, the nation has no real alternative fuel delivery or retrofitting infrastructure. Lawmakers, mayors, governors and candidates have not developed such a plan during the half decade the interruption has been looming. The notion that Saudi Arabia can make up the shortfall from an Iranian disruption is impossible. Saudi oil too must pass through the narrow sea lanes of the Strait. The trans-Arabian Petroline that terminates at Yanbu can carry only a few million barrels per day, and a rush project to double its capacity would require an estimated $600 million and some two years of construction and chemical changes; this presupposes Iran would not simply attack the line with a barrage of medium range missiles from its Red Sea forward ports. For America to have prepared intelligently for a Persian Gulf oil interruption would have required a decade of planning. To absorb the hit from a sudden oil stoppage, as is now once again threatened, will be very painful indeed.

# 1AC

**Global economic crisis causes war---strong statistical support—also causes great power transitions**

Royal 10 – Jedediah Royal, Director of Cooperative Threat Reduction at the U.S. Department of Defense, 2010, “Economic Integration, Economic Signaling and the Problem of Economic Crises,” in Economics of War and Peace: Economic, Legal and Political Perspectives, ed. Goldsmith and Brauer, p. 213-214

Less intuitive is how periods of economic decline may increase the likelihood of external conflict. Political science literature has contributed a moderate degree of attention to the impact of economic decline and the security and defence behaviour of interdependent states. Research in this vein has been considered at systemic, dyadic and national levels. Several notable contributions follow. First, on the systemic level, Pollins (2008) advances Modelski and Thompson’s (1996) work on leadership cycle theory, finding that rhythms in the global economy are associated with the rise and fall of pre-eminent power and the often bloody transition from one pre-eminent leader to the next. As such, exogenous shocks such as economic crises could usher in a redistribution of relative power (see also Gilpin, 10981) that leads to uncertainty about power balances, increasing the risk of miscalculation (Fearon, 1995). Alternatively, even a relatively certain redistribution of power could lead to a permissive environment for conflict as a rising power may seek to challenge a declining power (Werner, 1999). Seperately, Polllins (1996) also shows that global economic cycles combined with parallel leadership cycles impact the likelihood of conflict among major, medium, and small powers, although he suggests that the causes and connections between global economic conditions and security conditions remain unknown. Second, on a dyadic level, Copeland’s (1996,2000) theory of trade expectations suggests that ‘future expectation of trade’ is a significant variable in understanding economic conditions and security behavior of states. He argues that interdependent states are likely to gain pacific benefits from trade so long as they have an optimistic view of future trade relations. However, if the expectation of future trade decline, particularly for difficult to replace items such as energy resources, the likelihood for conflict increases , as states will be inclined to use force to gain access to those resources. Crises could potentially be the trigger for decreased trade expectations either on its own or because it triggers protectionist moves by interdependent states. Third, others have considered the link between economic decline and external armed conflict at a national level. Blomberg and Hess (2002) find a strong correlation between internal conflict and external conflict, particularly during periods of economic downturn. They write, The linkages between internal and external conflict and prosperity are strong and mutually reinforcing. Economic conflict tends to spawn internal conflict, which in turn returns the favour. Moreover, the presence of a recession tends to amplify the extent to which international and external conflicts self-reinforce each other. (Blomberg & Hess, 2002, p.89). Economic decline has also been linked with an increase in the likelihood of terrorism (Blomberg, Hess, & Weerapana, 2004), which has the capacity to spill across borders and lead to external tensions. Furthermore, crises generally reduce the popularity of a sitting government. ‘Diversionary theory’ suggests that, when facing unpopularity arising from economic decline, sitting governments have increased incentives to create a ‘rally round the flag’ effect. Wang (1996), DeRouen (1995), and Blomberg, Hess and Thacker (2006) find supporting evidence showing that economic decline and use of force are at least indirectly correlated. Gelpi (1997) Miller (1999) and Kisanganie and Pickering (2009) suggest that the tendency towards diversionary tactics are greater for democratic states than autocratic states, due to the fact that democratic leaders are generally more susceptible to being removed from office due to lack of domestic support. DeRouen (2000) has provided evidence showing that periods of weak economic performance in the United States, and thus weak presidential popularity, are statistically linked to an increase in the use of force..

# 1AC

**Have to increase the tax by a dollar to solve**

Mankiw ’06 (Professor of Economics at Harvard> “Raise the Gas Tax” Greg Mankiw October 2006 <http://gregmankiw.blogspot.com/2006/10/pigou-club-manifesto.html>)

With the midterm election around the corner, here's a wacky idea you won't often hear from our elected leaders: **We should raise the tax on gasoline.** Not quickly, but **substantially**. I would like to see Congress **increase the gas tax by $1 per gallon, phased in gradually by 10 cents per year over the next decade.** Campaign consultants aren't fond of this kind of proposal, but policy wonks keep pushing for it. **Here's why:** The environment. **The burning of gasoline emits several pollutants. These include carbon dioxide, a cause of global warming. Higher gasoline taxes**, perhaps as part of a broader carbon tax, **would be the most direct** and least invasive policy to address environmental concerns. Road congestion. Every time I am stuck in traffic, I wish my fellow motorists would drive less, perhaps by living closer to where they work or by taking public transport. A higher gas tax would give all of us the incentive to do just that, reducing congestion on streets and highways. Regulatory relief. Congress has tried to reduce energy dependence with corporate average fuel economy standards. These **CAFE rules are heavy-handed government regulations replete with unintended consequence**s: They are partly responsible for the growth of SUVs, because light trucks have laxer standards than cars. In addition, by making the car fleet more fuel-efficient, the regulations encourage people to drive more, offsetting some of the conservation benefits and exacerbating road congestion. **A higher gas tax would accomplish everything CAFE standards do, but without the adverse side effects.** The budget. Everyone who has studied the numbers knows that the federal budget is on an unsustainable path. When baby-boomers retire and become eligible for Social Security and Medicare, either benefits for the elderly will have to be cut or taxes raised. The most likely political compromise will include some of each. A $1 per gallon hike in gas tax would bring in $100 billion a year in government revenue and make a dent in the looming fiscal gap. Tax incidence. A basic principle of tax analysis -- taught in most freshman economics courses -- is that the burden of a tax is shared by consumer and producer. In this case, as a higher gas tax discouraged oil consumption, the price of oil would fall in world markets. As a result, the price of gas to consumers would rise by less than the increase in the tax. Some of the tax would in effect be paid by Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. Economic growth. Public finance experts have long preached that consumption taxes are better than income taxes for long-run economic growth, because income taxes discourage saving and investment. Gas is a component of consumption. An increased reliance on gas taxes over income taxes would make the tax code more favorable to growth. It would also encourage firms to devote more R&D spending to the search for gasoline substitutes. National security. Alan **Greenspan called for higher gas taxes recently. "It's a national security issue,"** he said. **It is hard to judge how much high oil consumption drives U.S. involvement in Middle Eastern politics. But Mr. Greenspan may well be right that the gas tax is an economic policy with positive spillovers to foreign affairs**. Is it conceivable that the policy wonks will ever win the battle with the campaign consultants? I think it is. Even after a $1 hike, the U.S. gas tax would still be less than half the level in, say, Great Britain, which last I checked is still a democracy. But don't expect those vying for office to come around until the American people recognize that while higher gas taxes are unattractive, the alternatives are even worse.

# Tax Low Now

The federal gas tax hasn’t been raised since 1983-now is key to generate the revenue to revitalize crumbling US infrastructure.

Heydorn 2k10 (Allan, editor of Pavement Maintenance & Reconstruction, “Time to raise the Gas Tax... But by How Much?” <http://www.forconstructionpros.com/blog/10363206/time-to-raise-the-gas-taxbut-by-how-much>, )

Last week Toby Mack, president and CEO of AED, told a group of construction industry writers that it's time to raise the federal tax on a gallon of gasoline. And as much as no one seems to like a tax increase Mack is right and this tax increase is long overdue. As Mack pointed out the tax was originally set at 18.4 cents per gallon in 1983 -- and hasn't been raised since -- so the buying power it generates has declined when inflation is factored in (not to mention the improved gas mileage vehicles now get, which also reduces what the tax brings in). No wonder the feds don't have enough in the Highway Fund to repair the nation's infrastructure -- which by all accounts is in dismal shape. And while the new Congress might not have the stomach to raise the tax they need to look down the road and find the will to do it anyway. But how much should they raise it? The answer should be "as much as possible," but here are a couple of recommendations: Fred Barnes, executive editor **of** "The Weekly Standard**" and a conservative journalist,** advocates for a 10-15 cents per gallon increase**.** "What’s required to restore a great highway system is a hike of 10 to 15 cents in the gas tax," he wrote in an article titled Coercing People Out of Their Cars. "Sounds like a lot, doesn’t it? The gain—more and better highways, less congestion—makes the trade-off worthwhile." Read his full explanation here. A more drastic and better-sounding (to the construction industry anyway) increase was suggested by a blue ribbon panel, The Esquire Commission to Balance the Federal Budget in the November issue of Esquire magazine. Though probably a pie-in-the-sky suggestion, the commission recommends a gradual increase to $1.18 per gallon (a total increase of $1 per gallon) by 2020. Such an increase would generate $130 billion in revenue -- and guarantee steady road and highway construction work for the foreseeable future.

No attempts are being made to increase the gas tax now

CSG 2k12(Council of State Governments , http://www.csg.org/pubs/capitolideas/july\_august\_2011/StateGasTaxes.asp)

The federal gas tax hasn’t been raised since 1993, and has never been adjusted for inflation. But 60 percent of Americans believe the gas tax is raised automatically every year, according to a 2009 survey conducted by Building America’s Future and others. While many states have increased their state gas taxes during the last 20 years, 12 states and Puerto Rico have not done so in more than 20 years. No legislature voted to increase a state gas tax in 2010 or thus far in 2011, although several have tried. Gas tax hikes took effect in January 2010 in Nebraska and Florida. The fluctuations in the price of oil this year have even prompted several states to consider temporary or permanent reductions in their gas taxes. That’s despite the escalating costs of road construction and a growing backlog of maintenance in many states.

# Changes Driving Habits

**Consumers will perceive the tax and change their driving behaviors**

[**Worstall**](http://blogs.forbes.com/timworstall/) **2012** (Fellow at the Adam Smith Institute in London, Of Course Politicians Prefer CAFE to Gas Taxes <http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2012/02/22/of-course-politicians-prefer-cafe-to-gas-taxes/>)

Which rather leads us to the observation that gas taxes are better at changing behavior than CAFE standards are. But why is that a politician would prefer something inefficient to something efficient? A considerable body of economic research suggests that if your policy goal is to reduce petroleum consumption, a gasoline tax or a carbon tax accomplishes the goal at a far lower social cost than fuel economy standards–although for politicians the explicitness of that cost seems to make it a nonstarter. Well quite. A hefty gas tax may well be more efficient but the consumer, who is of course also the voter, can see that efficiency bearing down on them every time they visit the pump. Thus the preference by the politicians for the more expensive, less effective, game of playing with fleet standards where the costs are unseen. I do have to admit that I’ve been most puzzled, even from a political point of view, by the recent moves over the CAFE standards. The Federal budget is crying out for more revenue and a decent sized, say $1 a gallon, gas tax would raise a reasonably large amount even when compared to the budget deficit. It would also be more efficient than the CAFE standards in increasing the mpg of the US car fleet

**Peer-reviewed studies conclude that gasoline taxes drive up fuel efficiency by almost 50%**

Li, 11 [Shanjun Li, Joshua Linn, Erich Muehlegger, March, 2011, JFK School of Government, a panel of annual data on gasoline consumption, VMT and vehicle purchase decisions, data at the state-level from 1966-2008. “Gasoline Taxes and Consumer Behavior” (http://economics.stanford.edu/files/muehlegger3\_15.pdf)]

Table 4 examines the relationship between new vehicle sales, tax-exclusive gasoline prices and gasoline taxes. Column (1) presents estimation results where we include the tax-inclusive gasoline price rather than separately estimate coefficient for the tax-exclusive price and gasoline taxes. The first two parameters capture the effect of gasoline prices on vehicle demand.The first coefficient is positive while the second one is negative, implying that higher gasoline prices decrease the sales of low-mpg vehicles and increase those of high-mpg vehicles. The results from this specification suggest the elasticity of average mpg with respect to gasoline prices to be 4.28%, implying that a one-dollar increase in gasoline prices would increase the average mpg of new vehicles sold by 5.37% (about 1.20 mpg). The estimate of fuel economy elasticity of new vehicles to gasoline prices often varies significantly depending on model assumptions and data used. Our elasticity estimate is close to those in several recent studies: Austin and Dinan (2005) estimate a long run elasticity of 0.22; Gillingham (2010) finds a medium-run (2-year) fuel economy elasticity of 0.09; Klier and Linn (2010) estimate an elasticity of about 0.12 using monthly data. However, tax-exclusive gasoline prices have much smaller effects than gasoline taxes on vehicle demand. The coefficient estimates from column (2) suggest the elasticity of fuel economy to tax-exclusive gasoline price changes to be 0.057 and that to gasoline tax changes to be 0.198. Because tax-exclusive gasoline prices are much larger than gasoline taxes from 1999 to 2006, it is useful to compare the two effects based on semi-elasticities. A one-dollar increase in tax-exclusive gasoline prices would increase the average mpg of new vehicles sold by only 3.6%, the same increase in gasoline taxes would increase the average mpg of new vehicles by 47.7%.This finding is robust across different specifications of fixed effects. In the three other specifications, we find that sales of high fuel economy vehicles rise more with a tax increase than with a tax-exclusive price increase of comparable magnitude.

# Changes Driving Habits

**Economic models of elasticity fail and always under-represent the degree to which gas tax increases would influence behavior**

**Kilian 2009**
(Michigan Economics Dept, Estimating the Eﬀect of a Gasoline Tax on Carbon Emissions <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~lkilian/gasoline27.pdf>)

It is worth reemphasizing that these estimates capture only the short-run response. In the short-run, drivers can adjust discretionary driving patterns, drive slower, for example, or improve fuel eﬃciency by increasing tire pressure. The long-run price elasticity is likely to be larger as agents may employ additional margins of adjustment. For example, one would expect to see widespread substitution toward more fuel-eﬃcient vehicles, some of which may not even be available when the tax is ﬁrst implemented.Likewise households may choose to relocate closer to their workplace in an eﬀort to cut down on commuting or they may demand improved public transportation. Predicting such long-run eﬀects is beyond the scope of any econometric model based on historical data.

# Changes Driving Habits

**A raise in gas taxes would lower oil demand—empirical data proves.**

Muehlegger, 2012. Erich Muehlegger, Harvey Kennedy School. Gasoline Taxes and Consumer behavior, Harvard Kennedy School. February 2012.

Gasoline taxes can be employed to correct externalities associated with automobile use, to reduce dependency on foreign oil, and to raise government revenue. Our understanding of the optimal gasoline tax and the efficacy of existing taxes is largely based on empirical analysis of consumer responses to gasoline price changes. In this paper, we directly examine how gasoline taxes affect consumer behavior as distinct from tax-exclusive gasoline prices.

**Increasing the gas tax leads to greater efficiency – Katrina proves**

Krauthammer, 05. Charles Krauthammer, an American [Pulitzer Prize](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulitzer_Prize)–winning syndicated [columnist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Op-Ed), political commentator, and physician. Pump Some Seriousness Into Energy Policy, Washington Post. 2005

It makes much more sense to reduce consumption, drive the world price down, and let the premium we force ourselves to pay at the pump (which begins the conservation cycle) go to the U.S. Treasury: If the price drops to $2, plow that $1 tax right back into the U.S. economy by reducing other taxes. The beauty of a higher gas tax is that it would make fuel-efficiency standards unnecessary. Just let the market decide. Consumers are not stupid. Within weeks of Hurricane Katrina, SUV sales were already in decline and hybrids were flying off the lots. *Supply* . For decades we've been dithering over drilling in a tiny part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Look, I too love the caribou. They are sweet, picturesque and reputedly harmless. But dire predictions about the devastation that Prudhoe Bay oil development would visit upon the caribou proved false. They have thrived.

**A higher Gas Tax would reduce our dependence on foreign oil and dampen oil shocks**

Samuelson, 2011. (Robert J. Samuelson, Economic Columnist. Egypt and the Gas Pump, World News. February 6, 2011)

What can we do? Well, two things: decrease oil consumption, preferably by a stiffer gasoline tax, and increase production, preferably by less hostile regulation. The Obama administration isn’t doing either. Instead, it’s touting a goal of 1 million plug-in electric hybrids by 2015. This is more public relations than policy. The goal is probably unrealistic; first-year sales of the Chevy Volt may reach 25,000. Even if the 1 million were attained, the oil savings would be tiny—perhaps 40,000 barrels a day, about two tenths of 1 percent of U.S. consumption of 19 million barrels a day. There are already 240 million cars and light trucks using gasoline. A higher gasoline tax—gradually introduced to avoid wrecking the economic recovery—would dampen wild swings in fuel prices and push consumers to buy the more fuel-efficient vehicles that the government is ordering auto companies to make. Americans have traditionally preferred bigger vehicles and, without the prod, might cling to old habits. There is a convergence here between energy and budget policy. An energy tax would help both. It would improve oil security and, with spending cuts, curb budget deficits. Neither the Obama administration nor congressional Republicans seem willing to grasp the possibilities. Oil isn’t going quietly into the night. We need to contain our addiction, even if we can’t end it. A recent ExxonMobil study projects that the number of light-duty vehicles worldwide will grow 50 percent to 1.2 billion by 2030, with two fifths of the increase in China. Most will use gasoline. Competition for global oil supplies will intensify. We cannot escape that reality, even if we ignore it.

# Increases Green Tech

**Increasing gas tax provides sustainable green jobs and mitigates climate change**
Freidman ‘11<New York Times Staff Writer, Pulitzer Prize winner> “Is it weird enough yet?” The New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/14/opinion/friedman-is-it-weird-enough-yet.html?_r=2&ref=opinion>

There is only one effective, sustainable way to produce “green jobs,” and that is with a fixed, durable, long-term price signal that raises the price of dirty fuels and thereby creates sustained consumer demand for, and sustained private sector investment in, renewables. Without a carbon tax or gasoline tax or cap-and-trade system that makes renewable energies competitive with dirty fuels, while they achieve scale and move down the cost curve, green jobs will remain a hobby. President Obama has chosen not to push for a price signal for political reasons. He has opted for using regulations and government funding. In the area of regulation, he deserves great credit for just pushing through new fuel economy standards that will ensure that by 2025 the average U.S. car will get the mileage (and have the emissions) of today’s Prius hybrid. But elsewhere, Obama has relied on green subsidies rather than a price signal. Some of this has really helped start-ups leverage private capital, but you also get Solyndras. The G.O.P. has blocked any price signal and fought every regulation. The result too often is taxpayer money subsidizing wonderful green innovation, but with no sustainable market within which these companies can scale. Let’s fix that. We need revenue to balance the budget. We need sustainable clean-tech jobs. We need less dependence on Mideast oil. And we need to take steps to mitigate climate change — just in case Governor Perry is wrong. The easiest way to do all of this at once is with a gasoline tax or price on carbon. Would you rather cut Social Security and Medicare or pay a little more per gallon of gas and make the country stronger, safer and healthier? It still amazes me that our politicians have the courage to send our citizens to war but not to ask the public that question.

**Raising the gas tax results in the development of hybrid tech**Rogan 2012. **(**Tom Rogan, an MSc in Middle East politics. The Republican case for higher gas tax, the Guardian UK. March 13, 2012.)

First, the economic argument. In order to remain competitive with foreign states that have much lower labour costs, America must maintain its innovative edge in developing industries. The automobile industry provides one pivotal area where this must occur. Currently, hybrid vehicles are too expensive, too inefficient and lack the market desirability to attract increased investment. The central reason for this desirability gap is found in the cost calculations of American drivers. Because gas prices are perceived by most Americans to fluctuate along a long-term but stable trajectory, many buyers continue to purchase the big SUV gas-guzzlers. For most Americans, the economic incentive to purchase, instead, a hybrid vehicle is far from compelling. The solution? An increased but floating federal gas tax. If federal gas taxes were raised from 18.4 cents per gallon to 35 cents per gallon, but in a way that fixed tax engagement below a $4 per gallon ceiling, the economic effects would be substantial, positive and durable. The [increased tax would raise around $25bn](http://www.marketplace.org/topics/economy/budget-hero) annually, providing money that could be put towards debt reduction or transport infrastructure. More importantly, however, the increase would stimulate a marked change to car purchase decisions and hybrid car development.

# Increases Green Tech

**Raising gas tax spurs new, green technology which helps environment**Ferguson ’08 (Jake Ferguson, <Ph.D candidate at University of Northern Iowa> “Should the United States Increase the Federal Gasoline Tax?” University of Northern Iowa <http://business.uni.edu/economics/Themes/ferguson.pdf> )
If gasoline prices increase due to the increased federal gasoline tax, consumers will want cars that use the least amount of fuel but still meet their needs or wants. Consumers often desire a certain style of car, but with the increased gasoline costs they put more value on the mileage the car gets. The demand for cars that get high mileage rates would increase. Manufacturers would then compete to produce cars that get the best mileage but still have the other features that consumers desire. The increased gasoline tax would cause manufacturers to develop new technology to get the best mileage possible to attract the most consumers. Those opposed to the increase believe that there are other ways to promote new technology besides increasing the gasoline tax. One option is to increase the minimum mileage requirement on new cars. Another option is to increase the fines manufacturers must pay if the cars they produce do not meet this standard. Studies have shown that increasing the gasoline tax is actually better than these options, and will be discussed next.

# Increases Green Tech

Gas tax leads to fuel-efficient cars, less emissions, and a booming manufacturing sector

Bender ’11 <Tax policy pundit> Chevy Volt + $1 Gas Tax Will Solve Energy, Deficit<http://www.policymic.com/articles/913/chevy-volt-1-gas-tax-will-solve-energy-deficit>

A higher government tax on gasoline would drive consumers to switch to more fuel-efficient automobiles in order to save money. This approach is more efficient than other methods, like raising [CAFÉ standards](http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/51xx/doc5159/03-09-CAFEbrief.pdf) on automakers. Higher gas prices lead to greater demand for greener cars and greener technologies. The added perk for GM, of course, is that greater demand for green technology will boost the sale of GM’s new green-friendly products. But this tax will also dramatically raise revenues for the federal government, which could go towards significantly cutting into the federal deficit. Opponents argue that, as a regressive tax, this move will do more harm to the working middle class, as it would be harder for people to switch to fuel-efficient cars in the short-term. Moreover, a tax hike of this nature would likely raise prices on most consumer goods, not just gasoline, further decreasing consumer spending all while increasing fears of inflation. As consumer demand falls, they hold, so too will employment, and our current perilous economic situation may further worsen. Sure, these are serious concerns, but not insurmountable problems. If Congress could unite around this issue, it could slowly phase in the tax and even add tax rebates to the working class in order to compensate for the regressive effects of the levy. Such a cautious measure would also minimize the tax’s potential negative effect on the economy by ensuring that gas prices do not rise too fast nor too high, giving the American consumer time to adjust. The tax could even spawn the green revolution we have heard the president speak so much about, finally promoting job growth throughout the energy and manufacturing sectors.

**Higher gas prices spur small business growth in alt energy – emp. proven**

Spors, 2012 Kelly Spors, former small-business and entrepreneurship reporter The Wall Street Journal, May 21, 2012, “Can a Gas Tax Fuel Clean Energy Innovation?”, Small Business Trends, accessed June 28, 2012 from http://smallbiztrends.com/2012/05/gas-tax-fuel-clean-energy-innovation.html

Tax and deficit issues aside, there’s another reason for business owners to think about the gas tax: Higher gas prices may help encourage clean energy innovation and support environmentally sustainable behaviors among business owners and consumers – such as the purchase and development of eco-friendlier vehicles and driving less. While it may raise business costs, it may spur business owners think about how to reduce their gas usage and be more sustainable. Christopher Knittel, an energy economics professor at MIT, has studied how gas prices affect behaviors. He and researchers from Northwestern University found that a $1 increase in prices between 1998 and 2008 led people to buy 21% more fuel-efficient vehicles. (Not surprisingly, the CEO of General Motors has come out in support of a gas tax increase.) Knittel also found that less driving led to less local air pollution and related health problems.

# US Behind on Green Tech

**US lagging behind on issue of alt. energy – ceding our competitive position**

Rosenthal, 2011 Elisabeth Rosenthal, June 8, 2011, “U.S. Is Falling Behind in the Business of ‘Green’”, The New York Times, accessed June 30, 2012 from http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/09/business/09subsidies.html?pagewanted=all

Many European countries — along with China, Japan and South Korea — have pushed commercial development of carbon-reducing technologies with a robust policy mix of direct government investment, tax breaks, loans, regulation and laws that cap or tax emissions. Incentives have fostered rapid entrepreneurial growth in new industries like solar and wind power, as well as in traditional fields like home building and food processing, with a focus on energy efficiency. But with Congress deeply divided over whether climate change is real or if the country should use less fossil fuel, efforts in the United States have paled in comparison. That slow start is ceding job growth and profits to companies overseas that now profitably export their goods and expertise to the United States. A recent report by the Pew Charitable Trusts found that while the clean technology sector was booming in Europe, Asia and Latin America, its competitive position was “at risk” in the United States because of “uncertainties surrounding key policies and incentives.” “This is a $5 trillion business and if we fail to be serious players in the new energy economy, the costs will be staggering to this country,” said Hal Harvey, a Stanford engineer who was an adviser to both the Clinton and the first Bush administration and is now chief executive of the San Francisco-based energy and environment nonprofit organization Climate Works. Although the 2009 stimulus bill provided a burst of funding — $45 billion — that has now tapered off, he said, “We’ve let energy policy succumb to partisan politics.” The aggressive entry of Britain into the field over the last few years shows the power of government inducements to redesign a nation’s energy economy away from traditional fuel. The country’s Green Deal, as it is called, is currently being spearheaded by the Conservative-led coalition government. In Britain, reducing carbon dioxide emissions was one of the few policies supported by political parties of both the right and left, which both accepted that climate change was a serious problem and saw clean technology investment as a growth opportunity rather than an onerous obligation. “We are determined to harness the industrial benefits of the low-carbon economy ahead of the rest of the pack — we see it as a competitive advantage,” said Gregory Barker, Britain’s minister of state for energy and climate change. Last month, Mr. Barker led the first British green trade delegation to the United States; it included a wind energy company and a battery maker, but also Adnams Southwold, a famed brewery that now makes beer using less energy and water, and the Mark Group. President Obama has vowed a switch to cleaner energy, and some states, like California, have taken aggressive measures. But the current patchwork of government inducements remains generally insufficient as a draw for American companies and investors to jump into new fields like wind power, energy-efficient appliances or even mass-market insulation, because upfront costs are large and profits uncertain. Energy Department officials express frustration that they cannot do more at a crucial juncture without the support of Congress. Dr. Arun Majumdar, senior adviser to Energy Secretary Steven Chu, said that the department’s $5 billion budget for research should be tripled as it currently financed less than 5 percent of proposed projects. He said the country needed better low-cost financing methods to bring companies into the market, as well as stricter energy-efficiency standards to stimulate customer demand. “We want this ecosystem to grow and thrive like I.T. and biotechnology,” he said, adding he was “concerned” it would not. While he agreed the United States remained a hotbed of good ideas, he said, “in actual downstream deployment we are at risk of falling behind — we are falling behind already.” Of the three largest operators of wind farms doing business in the United States, only one, NextEra, is American. Iberdrola is Spanish and Horizon Wind Energy is a subsidiary of Energias de Portugal. Among manufacturers making components for the industry, just one American company, General Electric, is in the top 10. The others include Suzlon (India), Vestas (Denmark), Goldwind (China) and Enercon (Germany). Tighter energy-efficiency standards for machinery and appliances established in Europe, Japan and China have “primed the demand pump” for companies in those countries to develop innovative designs that use less energy than United States products, said Stefan Heck, head of McKinsey’s global clean technology practice. California is the only American state to adopt similarly high standards. With less ambitious targets for things like emissions reductions and far lower financial incentives than are common elsewhere, United States policies have had a lackluster incubator effect. The United States’ Energy Star Program, for example, offers homeowners who buy energy-efficient appliances or add insulation to their homes a tax credit equal to 10 percent of the cost — with a cap of $500. When David Slap recently hired the Mark Group to insulate his four-bedroom house in Penn Valley, Pa. — motivated by drafts and a fear of rising fuel prices — he paid over $5,000, all of it out of pocket. Contrast that to the subsidy program offered in Britain. Power companies in Britain have been required to progressively reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and this year 68 percent of that reduction had to come from subsidizing professionally installed insulation in customers’ homes. Low-income and elderly customers got the home improvements free. Others paid less than $1,000 to insulate a four-bedroom home, the full cost subsidized 40 to 60 percent. Residents recouped their investment in 12 to 18 months as fuel bills after insulation typically decreased 20 to 30 percent. “This policy framework allowed the industry to mature — we became cheaper, the quality improved,” Mr. Rumble said. The company developed a mobile infrared scanner operated from a van that could screen 1,000 homes an hour for heat loss as it cruised by. Other British initiatives included money for new offshore wind farms, payments to homeowners who generated electricity and heat with renewable power, and loans for installing rooftop solar panels that could be progressively repaid from savings on home energy bills. With its extensive experience in retrofitting homes in Britain, the Mark Group is expecting success in United States markets like Philadelphia, where the business is largely the province of small local contractors. Some federal incentives may be on the horizon, though many will require Congressional approval. The Energy Department has pressed hard for a new home energy score program that would rate homes for energy efficiency just as cars are rated for gas mileage; that rating would be available to potential buyers. Will United States companies be able to compete on the world market in the future? Not unless the country invests more in basic research in renewable energy and energy efficiency, said Emily Carter, a professor of energy and the environment at Princeton University. “If we don’t invest in ways to efficiently produce sustainable energy, then I worry that once we stop importing from the Middle East, we’ll simply find ourselves importing from China.”

# US Behind on Green Tech

**US lacks technology leadership**

Bolze, 2011 Steve Bolze, President and CEO of GE Power & Water, November 2, 2011, “America Lacks Policy Leadership”, National Journal, accessed June 30, 2012 from http://energy.nationaljournal.com/contributors/steve-bolze.php

Technology leadership is a fragile asset. Lacking robust domestic demand, research, investment and technology development and commercialization will migrate. Almost every other country in the world has established a comprehensive energy policy aimed at diversifying their energy portfolios, reducing emissions and enhancing energy security. While they have an integrated, long-term energy strategy, the United States does not. This frustrates U.S. investment and greatly limits domestic technology growth.

# Green Tech Key to Competitiveness

Green tech is key to US competitiveness and environmental leadership

Holliday 12

(Stuart W., President and CEO of Meridian International, “Green Technology: The Key to More Jobs, Higher Exports, Cleaner Environment, Better Reputation?” http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stuart-w-holliday/green-technology\_b\_1224096.html)

We all agree that America needs to create more jobs, although there is certainly less agreement on how to do so. A few years ago, green technology was the solution to our problems, but energy prices sagged, investment dried up, and our patience for innovation waned. Though it seems the polish of green technology has dulled, let us not forget that the factors driving the rush have not disappeared, and will reemerge sooner than we think. Instead of waiting for the next energy crisis to strike, let us use the current economic situation as the catalyst for renewed investment. While the days of a quick fix through quotas and 100 MPG retrofitted Priuses are largely behind us, a number of reasoned engineers, businesspeople, and government leaders have quietly moved forward using the spirit of the boom and the lessons of the bust to their advantage. At a recent seminar convened by Meridian International Center, an interesting discussion took place among members of the diplomatic, public, and private sectors on this subject. All agreed that investing in green technologies is "common sense" -- but the reasons went well beyond environmental concerns. Research has shown that returns on investment in green tech are nearly certain to include large-scale job creation, increased American exports, add a desperately needed growth sector of the economy, and provide substantial long-term (and often short term) cost savings for companies of all size. Reinvestment anyone? Yet the group also acknowledged the important diplomatic function that green technology plays. Our discussion included representatives from the United States, Finland, Georgia, and Nigeria -- all of whom noted that environmental collaboration must represent part of its overall diplomatic strategy. The realization that we have a common responsibility to protect the world we all share is the first step in tackling larger issues. Borders are man-made -- and the effects of environmental damage and over use rarely have the decency to stop at check-points. Working together to tackle the manageable issues of energy consumption is crucial, and the US has both the opportunity and obligation to take a leadership position in the world.

# Green Tech Key to Competitiveness

**The only way out of economic crisis and stagnation is to become a leader in green tech**

Doerr and Immelt, 2009 (John Doerr, a partner in the venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, Jeff Immelt is chairman and chief executive of General Electric, August 3, 2009, “U.S. Needs to Lead in Clean-Energy Future”, The Washington Post )

America confronts three interrelated crises: an economic crisis, a climate crisis and an energy security crisis. We believe there's a fourth: a competitiveness crisis. This crisis is particularly evident in America's worldwide standing in the next great global industry, green technology. There is no topic of greater importance to America's economic future. The question is whether the United States will lead or lag in tomorrow's global energy markets. And the difference between these two futures is dramatic. Energy in the United States costs more than $1 trillion a year -- for oil, coal, natural gas, nuclear and renewables. This is on top of a similar sum spent on the things that use this energy -- our homes, shops, factories and cars. That means about $2 trillion a year is at stake right here. Do we want to win the race to lead the next great global industry, clean energy? That is the choice before us. We are clearly not in the lead today. That position is held by China, which understands the importance of controlling its energy future. China's commitment to developing clean energy technologies and markets is breathtaking. Consider: Chinese cars are more than one-third more fuel-efficient than U.S. cars. China is investing 10 times as much on clean power, as a percentage of gross domestic product, as the United States is. China is on track to create 150,000 jobs through the deployment of 120 gigawatts of wind power by 2020 -- an amount equivalent to today's global total and nearly five times America's. As a result, China is already curbing its carbon emissions substantially. This year alone, it will abate almost 350 million tons of CO2, as compared with business as usual. That's as much as is emitted by Argentina. What do Amazon, eBay, Google, Microsoft and Yahoo have in common? Two things: They are the world's five leading Internet technology companies, and they are all American. But when it comes to wind power, the most mature of the clean-energy sectors, of the top five manufacturers (Vestas, GE, Gamesa, Enercon and Suzlon) only one is American. Similarly, the United States is home to only one of the 10 largest solar panel producers in the world and two of the top 10 advanced battery manufacturers. How can we catch up? Not through protectionism or massive government intervention but through the power of good old home-grown innovation. We are American businessmen. Our job is building businesses and commercializing innovation. Every year, GE invests 6 percent of its industrial revenue in research and development to produce more efficient and cleaner wind turbines, jet engines, locomotives, power turbines and appliances. Kleiner Perkins has invested $680 million in 48 of the most compelling new clean-energy technologies, with $1.1 billion more to invest. We are trying to do our part. But our government's energy and climate policies are our principal obstacle to success. Right now, the United States has no long-term market signal to tell companies and consumers that it values low-carbon energy. It has no policies to discourage sending hundreds of billions of dollars a year overseas for energy. It does not offer adequate sustained R&D funding to be a serious competitor in this huge business. Today's policies stifle American innovation and competitiveness. But good policy can flip this dynamic. Five basic changes are needed:

**America has the potential for innovation and to be the global energy leader**

Bolze, 2011 Steve Bolze, President and CEO of GE Power & Water, November 2, 2011, “America Lacks Policy Leadership”, National Journal, accessed June 30, 2012 from http://energy.nationaljournal.com/contributors/steve-bolze.php

The good news is that America has the elements required to be the global cleaner energy leader. America can out-innovate and out-compete any other nation. Technology and innovation are an historic national strength. Great American universities produce graduates with innovative ideas. An unparalleled financial system – despite the recent crisis – can deliver capital for good new business ideas. The U.S. government needs to get in the race and push clean energy policy over the finish line.

# Green Tech Key to Competitiveness

**US investment in green energy allows us to compete in the world**

Madrid et al, 2011 Jorge Madrid, Bracken Hendricks, and Kate Gordon, Work at Center for American Progress, March 6, 2011, ThinkProgress, accessed June 30, 2012 from http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2011/03/06/207626/renewable-energy-standards/

It has become quite the trend lately for conservatives and their media cronies to come out with attacks on “clean energy” and “green jobs.” These attacks run the gamut from debates about exactly how many jobs have been created to broad jabs at the very notion that America needs to move to a cleaner, more efficient clean energy economy. While the attacks range widely in their scope and focus, they all miss a critical point: greening our economy is an environmental and energy security imperative, and one that also happens to provide the opportunity for the U.S. to compete in the huge emerging global clean tech marketplace. A recent New York Post article by Shikha Dalmia, “Green Boondoggles” (3/1/2011), is a great example of just how misguided these attacks can be. While attacking the President’s clean energy investment in general, Ms. Dalmia also focuses in on – and utterly mischaracterizes — a national renewable energy standard (RES). First, a quick explanation: a national RES, or a similar policy called a Clean Energy Standard or CES, would require U.S. utilities to produce a percent of their electricity from renewable energy or low-carbon energy sources. Twenty-nine states already have such policies in place, as do China, the E.U. nations, and a host of other countries. Contrary to Ms. Dalmia’s article, which asserts that a national RES is simply a smoke screen for an “anti-warming” agenda, there are a number of strong reasons beyond greenhouse gas reduction (which, by the way, should be enough of a reason on its own) why the U.S. should embrace this type of policy. Energy Security The only way the U.S. can end our current energy insecurity is to diversify our use of energy away from our dependence on fossil fuels – and in fact away from dependence on any one technology or magic bullet energy solution. That means investing now in home grown American renewable energy and energy efficiency. Growing global energy demand, particularly from rapidly industrializing countries like China and India, will increase competition for the earth’s finite resources; this is already increasing scarcity and driving up prices. Unrest in places like Egypt, Libya, and the Middle East only serve to further drives price volatility, sending shockwaves throughout our economy and down to consumers. A renewable energy standard represents an insurance policy for the economy against these gyrations in global energy markets. Indeed, failing to free our economy from volatile fossil fuels is one of the greatest risks to our energy security – not to mention the risks to our public health and national security. Competitiveness Throughout Europe and Asia, countries are not only setting renewable standards but they are surpassing their original goals in favor of stricter pollution controls and stronger economies. As other countries continue to invest in renewable energy, supported by a strong energy policy, not only is the United States falling farther behind, but investments will continue to leave this country in search of stronger, more reliable markets overseas. In the last few years, China has invested a large percentage of total GDP into clean energy R&D and deployment and it outpaced the world in manufacturing, being the world’s leading supplier of solar PV panels and solar hot water heaters. China’s huge success has not been because of their historical strengths of efficiency and cost cutting in its manufacturing sector but because of its development of stringent renewable energy policies.

# Environmental Leadership

The US green tech sector is key to the globe – creates a virtuous circle that leads to effective environmental spinoffs and job growth

Holliday 12

(Stuart W., President and CEO of Meridian International, “Green Technology: The Key to More Jobs, Higher Exports, Cleaner Environment, Better Reputation?” http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stuart-w-holliday/green-technology\_b\_1224096.html)

Throughout the world, you can now see dozens of examples of American technology combating the single greatest use of energy worldwide -- interior climate control. While there's rarely a shortage of energy in our country, many countries are not as fortunate -- and by setting an example in this simple issue, we not only showcase our technology, we reduce demand on burdened electricity systems at home and at US properties globally, and create jobs domestically. A virtuous cycle is set in motion when other countries follow our lead. While politicians wrangle with government's role in business, Multistack's experience is one example of a public-private collaboration that works. After years wondering where our economy is going, it's nice know we can work together to move smartly in the right direction. And for those of us who go about our life rarely thinking about energy efficiency -- usually only when watching the gas pump tick ever-higher, or paying our electric bill in the summer -- we are missing a tremendous amount of innovation and development in a sector that we are wise to invest in and seek to lead. It is time to start building on some united successes with the smartest people in industry and governments around the world. And that is energy well spent.

# Environmental Leadership

Climate Leadership- leads to global solutions
Khosla 09 **–** Ashok**,** IUCN President, International Union for Conservation of Nature, A new President for the United States: We have a dream, 1-29-09

A rejuvenated America, with a renewed purpose, commitment and energy to make its contribution once again towards a better world could well be the turning point that can reverse the current decline in the state of the global economy, the health of its life support systems and the morale of people everywhere. This extraordinary change in regime brings with it the promise of a deep change in attitudes and aspirations of Americans, a change that will lead, hopefully, to new directions in their nation’s policies and action. In particular, we can hope that from being a very reluctant partner in global discussions, especially on issues relating to environment and sustainable development, the United States will become an active leader in international efforts to address the Millennial threats now confronting civilization and even the survival of the human species. For the conservation of biodiversity, so essential to maintaining life on Earth, this promise of change has come not a moment too soon. It would be a mistake to put all of our hopes on the shoulder of one young man, however capable he might be. The environmental challenges the world is facing cannot be addressed by one country, let alone by one man. At the same time, an inspired US President guided by competent people, who does not shy away from exercising the true responsibilities and leadership his country is capable of, could do a lot to spur the international community into action. To paraphrase one of his illustrious predecessors, “the world asks for action and action now.” What was true in President Roosevelt’s America 77 years ago is even more appropriate today. From IUCN’s perspective, the first signals are encouraging. The US has seriously begun to discuss constructive engagement in climate change debates. With Copenhagen a mere 11 months away, this commitment is long overdue and certainly very welcome. Many governments still worry that if they set tough standards to control carbon emissions, their industry and agriculture will become uncompetitive, a fear that leads to a foot-dragging “you go first” attitude that is blocking progress. A positive intervention by the United States could provide the vital catalyst that moves the basis of the present negotiations beyond the narrowly defined national interests that lie at the heart of the current impasse. The logjam in international negotiations on climate change should not be difficult to break if the US were to lead the industrialized countries to agree that much of their wealth has been acquired at the expense of the environment (in this case greenhouse gases emitted over the past two hundred years) and that with the some of the benefits that this wealth has brought, comes the obligation to deal with the problems that have resulted as side-effects. With equitable entitlement to the common resources of the planet, an agreement that is fair and acceptable to all nations should be easy enough to achieve. Caps on emissions and sharing of energy efficient technologies are simply in the interest of everyone, rich or poor. And both rich and poor must now be ready to adopt less destructive technologies – based on renewables, efficiency and sustainability – both as a goal with intrinsic merit and also as an example to others. But climate is not the only critical global environmental issue that this new administration will have to deal with. Conservation of biodiversity, a crucial prerequisite for the wellbeing of all humanity, no less America, needs as much attention, and just as urgently. The United States’ self-interest in conserving living natural resources strongly converges with the global common good in every sphere: in the oceans, by arresting the precipitate decline of fish stocks and the alarming rise of acidification; on land, by regenerating the health of our soils, forests and rivers; and in the atmosphere by reducing the massive emission of pollutants from our wasteful industries, construction, agriculture and transport systems.

# Environmental Leadership

And, lack of leadership means other countries will never jump on board
Shepard 11 – Don, Natural Resources/Water Resources University Laboratory Teacher and Former Financial Representative [“US Environmental Policy and Leadership,” May 22,

The Bush administration’s failure to see the big picture in reference to global environmental change can clearly be seen in the resulting outcomes of his eight years as president. The withdrawal of the U.S. from the Kyoto treaty is both an important symbol of American isolationism from Europe and a direct link as to why the country (and perhaps the world as a whole) has not reduced greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants that affect the global environment. The Kyoto agreement is not without flaws but the unwillingness to negotiate, or inaction, was not conducive to a good outcome for the global environment. "Greenhouse" Gases According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA) the United States greenhouse gas emissions went up by 1.4% in 2007. An article in the LA times states carbon dioxide emissions rose by nearly 2.0% in the U.S. in 2007 while Denmark’s went down by 8%, the U.K. and Germany 3%, and France and Australia 2%. Granted, this is only a single year, but considering the breadth of the consequences and that Bush had been in office since 2000, these numbers sum up rather well the effect of his administration on global environmental change. The ironic nature of the Bush administration’s response to environmental change is that the best aspect of it is reflected in policy’s that did not take effect. The administration made a habit of changing environmental regulations, many of which have been overturned by the Supreme Court. It's a tribute to our system that these efforts were not allowed to come to fruition. An example is the blocking of “changes to the rules that govern what kind of logging, mining or other activities can be allowed in national forests.” (Shogren, 2007) Carol Browner, head of the EPA in the Clinton administration and Obama energy “czarina”, is quoted as saying: "As dreadful as the Bush administration has been with respect to clean air and forests and all these environmental issues, the courts have been really our savior. And have time and time again in the last years [it has] stepped in." (Shogren, 2007) Another example of Bush environmental policy being thwarted is President Obama’s retracting of regulations inserted by Bush before he left office. One such regulation “would have opened 2 million acres of public land in Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah for oil-shale drilling.” (O'Carroll, 2009) It appears that Bush was mired in the old ways of pitting the environment against the economy. In an April 2008 speech Bush states “The [Kyoto Protocol](http://www.brighthub.com/guides/kyoto-protocol.aspx) would have required the United States to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The impact of this agreement, however, would have been to limit our economic growth…” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2008) I maintain that this did not have to be, and that Obama has offered a glaring contrast to this outdated thinking. Obama campaigned on stimulating the economy in part by creating “green” jobs and fostering [energy](http://www.brighthub.com/guides/energy.aspx) efficiency that will both save money and reduce fossil fuel use. There are numerous goals and programs of the new administration that were never considered by the Bush administration. These include a national Renewable Portfolio Standard, proposing a carbon cap and trade system, and already making it so states such as California can pass their own automobile fuel mileage standards that will likely be followed by other states. One of the biggest and perhaps controversial measures thus far is the April Environmental Protection Agency ruling making carbon dioxide a pollutant. A fairly novel idea being studied is to provide incentives for land owners (and money for planting in government owned forest land) to plant trees that can provide sinks for carbon. This is being carried out by a new department called the Office of Ecosystem Services and Markets. (Wilkinson, 2009) Even with these goals and very early achievements it is unclear if the overall “political will”, no matter how different from the last eight years, is sufficient to tackle the challenges of global environmental change, particularly when the will of the presidential administration may not be enough. There are many representatives who do not share Obama’s enthusiasm for environmental issues. As pointed out previously, there have already been compromises made that have decreased funding for environmental initiatives. The American people can help by not letting the environmental agenda once again take a back seat, though only time will tell just how strong the will and influence of the Obama administration is. The U.S. is the world superpower. I argue that the latest world economic troubles only serve to accentuate the extent to which this is true, as economies of the world are suffering due to the domino effect triggered by the collapse of the U.S. housing market. The Kyoto treaty was only a piece of paper without the U.S. on board. The other major polluting nations such as China and India will not take the problem of global environmental change seriously until America does. Copenhagen is a chance to right the ship before it is too late. Our nation is just as capable of steering the ship in the right direction as it is in the wrong direction. This means allowing Earth to take the helm, and remembering humanity adapts to her, not her to humanity. Dissapointment seems to be the predominant reaction from environmental organizations to the Copenhagen Climate Summit. Indeed, no binding agreement, or even a pledge to make a binding agreement in 2010 was achieved. This was not, however, the true test of the Obama administration's environmental policy. The real test is whether Obama can get a legitimate climate bill through the Senate. U.S. environmental leadership can still be the beacon it needs to be with a strong message from our lawmakers.

# Obesity 2AC Add-on

An increase in gas taxes decreases obesity.

VTPI 2012 (Victory Transport Policy Institute “Fuel Taxes: Increasing Fuel Taxes and Fees” 5.30.12. Web. <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm17.htm>)

Courtemanche (2008) found that gasoline prices are positively associated with walking activity, and negatively associated with body weight and the frequency of eating at restaurants. The analysis implies that 8% of the rise in obesity between 1979 and 2004 can be attributed to a decline in real fuel prices, and that a permanent $1 increase in gasoline prices would reduce U.S. overweight and obesity rates by 7% to 10%.

**280,000 adults die from obesity each year and the number is growing.**

Korman 2012 (Jeremy: medical doctor. “Concerning Statistics on Obesity Infographic Pulished by L.A. Bariatricss” PRWeb. 5/31/12. Accessed on 6/30/12. Web. <http://www.prweb.com/releases/infographics/obesity/prweb9563222.htm>)

It is estimated that there are 280.000 adult deaths in the U.S. every year because of obesity or problems related to overweight. According to the infographic more than half of the adults in the U.S. are overweight. The total percentage of overweight adults in the United States is 54.9%, meaning that 97.1 million people over the age of 20 are overweight. There are 46.9 million overweight women living in the U.S. today. In US 50.2 million men are overweight. These numbers increase continuously every year and are also affecting children being overweight; childhood obesity reaching a high percentage as well of 25%. While as mentioned above, more than half of the American adults are overweight, more than a quarter of them reached the state of obesity.

# Obesity Solvency

**High gas prices solve obesity**

Courtemanche, 08 – Professor of Economics at University of North Carolina

[Dr. Charles Courtemanche, “A Silver Lining? The Connection between Gasoline Prices and Obesity,” Social Science Research Network, 12/18/08, <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=982466> SJE]

A rise in gasoline prices has the potential to affect body weight in three ways. First, individuals may substitute from driving to more physically-demanding modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, or taking public transportation. Second, substitution and income effects may lead people to eat out at restaurants less and instead prepare their own meals at home, which tend to be healthier. Third, higher gas prices may impact eating habits more generally, either through income effects or increases in food prices. Using pooled cross-sectional individual-level data from the 1984-2004 waves of the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) matched with state-level gasoline prices, I estimate a negative relationship between state gasoline prices and body mass index, probability of being overweight, and probability of being obese using state fixed effects models with demographic controls. Results are robust to the inclusion of year fixed effects; a quadratic time trend; controls for state food prices, population density, and unemployment rate; state-specific quadratic time trends; region-year interactions; and the use of gasoline tax rate as an instrument for prices. I also add lags of gas price to the models and \_nd evidence that the effect is gradual. I estimate that 8% of the recent rise in obesity from 1979 to 2004 can be attributed to the decline in real gasoline prices during the period. Although we should use caution when assuming that the effect is symmetric, my results imply that a permanent $1 rise in the price of gasoline would reduce overweight and obesity by 7% and 10% in the U.S. The reduction in obesity would save approximately 11,000 lives and $11 billion per year, savings that would offset 10% of the increased expenditures on gasoline. I also provide evidence that a rise in gas prices is associated with an increase in walking and a decrease in the frequency of eating at restaurants, explaining the effect on weight, but no other clear changes in eating habits. These results suggest that the recent spike in gas prices may have the silver lining of reducing obesity in the coming years.

# Obesity Bad—Death

**Obesity causes 190,000+ deaths per year**

Scott 6/15.Betsy: Staff writer. “Obesity to take toll on younger generation (with video and document)” The News-Herald. 6/15/12. Accessed on 6/30/12. Web. <http://news-herald.com/articles/2012/06/15/news/nh5544265.txt?viewmode=default>

Because of the obesity epidemic, the current generation of children will be the first not to live longer than their parents, Deputy Lake County Health Commissioner Ron Graham said, based on the latest research. "We have benefited from high levels of education and median income in Lake County resulting in a healthy community," he said. "However, obesity will begin to erode our success as our future work force will be less healthy and ultimately cost more to our health care system." Being overweight increases one's risk of diabetes, heart disease and many other illnesses. The severely obese are most at risk and the most expensive to treat. Conservative estimates suggest obesity-related problems account for at least 9 percent of the nation's yearly health spending, or $150 billion a year. "By losing even as few as 10 pounds, you can lower your heart disease risk," said Geauga County Health District Personal Health Services Director. One-third of 571,950 cancer deaths are expected to be linked to being overweight or obese, (lack of) physical activity and poor nutrition, according to American Cancer Society information.

The obesity crisis massively increases rates of cancer, heart disease, and death

Ravn, 11 [Karen Ravn, “Obesity: 'Like the new smoking',” Los Angeles Times, 3/7/11, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/mar/07/health/la-he-cancer-obesity-20110307> SJE]

Two out of three adult Americans are at greater risk for getting cancer — and for dying of it — than they need to be. Not because of smog in their air or radon in their basements. Not because of tobacco in their cigarettes or mutations in their genes. No, the particular cancer risk shared by these 150 million or so Americans comes from having too many calories in their diet and too little exercise in their daily lives. Surprised? It's widely known that simply being overweight, let alone obese, dramatically increases the risk for high blood pressure, heart attacks, strokes and diabetes. But according to a 2009 survey by the American Institute for Cancer Research, only about 50% of Americans know that size also matters when it comes to cancer. The risk is not trivial. The same institute estimates that every year about 100,000 Americans get a cancer they wouldn't have gotten if they had kept their weight in check. And researchers have estimated that about 14% of cancer deaths in men and 20% in women could be avoided by this same restraint. Obesity can raise the risk for a number of major cancers — colon, postmenopausal breast, endometrial, kidney and esophageal — the National Cancer Institute says, and when paired with physical inactivity, it can be held liable for 25% to 30% of cases of those cancers. Obesity has also been linked to a number of other cancers, including liver, gallbladder, pancreatic and ovarian. "Obesity is almost like the new smoking," says Dr. Anne McTiernan, director of the Prevention Center at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. "The effect isn't as big for most cancers, but it's so prevalent that it will have a huge impact." Indeed, the National Cancer Institute estimates that smoking accounts for 37.5% cancer deaths in men and 22.8% in women. But smoking does most of its dirty work in lung cancer victims. When lung cancer is taken out of the picture, smoking can only be blamed for 12% of cancer deaths in men and 6% in women — fewer than can be chalked up to excess pounds. No one knows for sure exactly how weight increases cancer risk, but it's likely that it does so in multiple ways, with the precise mechanism differing from cancer to cancer. High levels of estrogen, insulin and inflammatory compounds are among the suspects that have been implicated in research to date. A more precise understanding of the biology behind all this may someday lead to drugs that can mitigate the damage. In the meantime, of course, there's an excellent way to avoid the obesity risk, and that's to never become obese at all. That would require major lifestyle changes for many of us, and making such changes is exceedingly hard, says Dr. John Glaspy, an oncologist at UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center. "Sure, we could make it a death penalty offense to sell sugared drinks," he says. But short of such extreme modes of encouragement, a widespread thinning of America is not to be expected anytime soon. Not only is there strong evidence that if you're overweight, you're more likely to die of cancer. It's also been shown that the more overweight you are, the more deadly the trend gets, according to a landmark study published in the New England Journal of Medicine in 2003.

# Obesity Bad—Hegemony

Obesity kills military and economic leadership

Blumenthal, 12 – former Assistant Surgeon General of the United States and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Women's Health[Susan Blumenthal, M.D., “Obesity: America's Next Great National Security Threat?,” Huffington Post, 6/8/12, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/susan-blumenthal/obesity_b_1580563.html> SJE]

Napoleon Bonaparte famously quipped that “an army marches on its stomach.” Unfortunately, as America’s obesity epidemic grows, Napoleon’s warning may prove literally true. While obesity is traditionally considered a public health and medical issue, the rapid increase in the national prevalence of obesity from 15 percent in 1980 to over 30 percent today and overweight from 50 percent to 68 percent is affecting America’s ability to defend itself militarily and perform competitively in business. In fact, today, obesity is the leading medical reason why applicants fail to qualify for military service. As 27 percent of young people aged 17 to 24 are too heavy to serve in the armed forces and because overweight employees reduce workplace productivity, obesity is quickly becoming a significant national security concern. Of particular worry is the rapidly rising rates of obesity among children — the future leaders and workers of the nation. The prevalence of this epidemic demands action before obesity further erodes American competitiveness and our national security. The fact that current and retired military leadership has called obesity a serious national security threat warranting immediate action reflects the gravity of the issue. Indeed, the last major instance of the military becoming involved in nutrition in America was after the Great Depression, during World War II. Military planners were keenly aware that the health of school-aged children would have a bearing on the fitness of future military recruits. In fact, the 1946 Congressional testimony of Major General Lewis Hershey about the uniformed services having to reject 16 percent of willing recruits during World War II because of their malnourishment convinced lawmakers of the importance of establishing the Federal School Lunch Program as critical to the national security of the United States. Today, as economic growth remains sluggish and young people contemplate career options, joining the military represents an opportunity for young people to serve their country, learn marketable skills for their future careers, and to earn income that helps some to rise out of poverty. Although the military is currently meeting its recruitment goals, leaders in the armed forces worry that 75 percent of young people aged 17 to 24 cannot serve in the military today. The reasons for ineligibility vary from felony convictions to lack of a high school diploma or its equivalent. However, one-third of those ineligible cannot serve because they are overweight — even though the armed forces have relaxed their entry requirements to accept females (aged 21 to 27) with body fat content of 32 percent or less and males with 26 percent or less, which is twice that expected of current soldiers. Although the military has made an effort to accept people at borderline weight, in the Navy for instance, 2,000 personnel are discharged annually from service because of obesity — at a cost of $ 300 million to taxpayers. Furthermore, overweight soldiers tend to suffer more orthopedic stress injuries. In fact, it is estimated that a quarter of military air evacuations to Germany from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were due to such injuries — a percentage that is greater than due to combat. Furthermore, because a significant portion of the defense budget is allocated to caring for military service members and their families, obesity and its accompanying complications impose a real financial cost on, and threat to, military programs. In fact, military health care spending has shot up to over $ 50 billion annually — a 167 percent increase since 2001 that dwarfs the rate of increase in national health care spending. This amount represents 10 percent of the overall Department of Defense budget. Of that, DoD’s obesity-related expenses totaled over $ 1 billion and, as the military pays for healthcare costs throughout a service member’s lifetime through Tricare (37 percent of veterans are obese and gain approximately 13 pounds after completing their military service), these mounting expenditures will begin to overwhelm other defense spending needs. Indeed, even as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan draw to a close, DoD’s health care costs are not expected to fall appreciably. As policymakers consider cutting the defense budget over the next several months, addressing health care costs and implementing strategies to prevent obesity-related conditions will be critical for stretching limited financial resources. However, obesity harms U.S. national security by not only weakening this nation’s fighting forces but also diminishing productivity in the workplace. For instance, America’s system of first responders requires fit individuals who can handle physically stressful situations. With the growth of the obesity epidemic, the pool of applicants for jobs such as firefighters, policemen, and other law enforcement personnel who meet weight requirements is shrinking. The problem, though, is not confined to first responders. Some manufacturing jobs require rapid or flexible movement that obese individuals simply cannot perform efficiently or safely — physically disqualifying them from these jobs, decreasing their productivity, and increasing occupation-related injuries.

# Obesity Bad--Hegemony

**Obesity threatens national security**

Gattis, 11 – Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army

[Vanessa Gattis, “Obesity: A Threat To National Security?,” Strategy Research Project, 3/16/12, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA547350>, SJE]

In order to meet the strategic and operational demands placed upon the U.S. military as a joint war fighting force, service members must be physically fit. Obesity, poor physical fitness and health are seriously threatening the overall readiness and operational effectiveness of our U.S. military. Currently serving military men and women are increasingly overweight and out-of-shape while many of those who aspire entry into our Armed Forces are alarmingly, “Too Fat to Fight.” The recent strategic implication of obesity within our Armed Forces is threatening the National Security of this nation. Currently, each branch of service has its own physical fitness and weight standards for both entry and longevity of service members‟ careers. The operational effectiveness of our military ranks is dramatically decreased as the number of overweight and obese service members within our ranks increase. The overall health and fitness for U.S. military men and women is paramount for a ready and trained fighting force. Regardless of current individual service fitness programs, each branch of the Armed Forces must show unity of effort and create a Joint Fitness Program that brings commonality to our force and helps to combat the obesity epidemic.

# Accidents Add-on

**Gasoline taxes are the best way to reduce accidents and congestion, saving up to 40,000 lives per year**

**Parry 2002** (Ian W.H. RFF Fellow, “Is Gasoline Undertaxed in the United States?” *Resources* Issue 148, Summer)

Nonetheless, peak-period fees and mileage related taxes have not been widely implemented in the United States (though there have been limited experiments with congestion pricing in California and Texas). Gasoline taxes might be the next-best response for curbing congestion and accidents, so it is still appropriate to consider congestion and accident benefits in an overall assessment of gasoline taxes. For congestion, this would require estimating marginal congestion costs averaged across both urban and rural roads and peak and off-peak travel periods, for the whole United States. Congestion costs are measured by the extra time it takes to drive under congested conditions compared with free-flowing traffic, multiplied by the monetary value of travel time (usually taken to be about half the market wage). Based on the available evidence, Kenneth Small and I concluded that the best estimate for the “averaged” congestion cost is about 3.5¢ per mile, or 70¢ per gallon. The cost to society from traffic accidents largely depends on human fatalities and injuries—in the United States around 40,000 people are killed on the roads each year. Other costs include traffic hold-ups and property damage. The costs of fatalities and injuries include not only economic costs (such as medical expenses) but also the personal or “quality-of-life” costs; economists usually measure people’s willingness to pay for improved safety at the equivalent of several million dollars per fatality avoided.

# Accidents Solvency

**Higher gas taxes can decrease traffic deaths by almost 20%**

VTPI: 5/30 (Victory Transport Policy Institute “Fuel Taxes: Increasing Fuel Taxes and Fees” 5.30.12. Web. <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm17.htm>)

Grabowski and Morrisey (2004) estimate that each 10% fuel price increase reduces total automobile deaths by 2.3%, with about twice as large an impact on younger drivers, who tend to be more sensitive to fuel prices. Sivak (2008) found that a 2.7% decline in vehicle travel caused by fuel price increases and a weak economy during 2007-08 resulted in much larger 17.9% to 22.1% month-to-month declines in traffic deaths, probably due to disproportionate reductions in vehicle travel by lower income drivers (who tend to be young and old, and therefore higher than average risk) and speed reductions to save fuel.

# Accidents Impacts

**33,808 people where killed in addition to 2,217,000 more injured during 2009 in car crashes.**

DOT: ‘12“Analysis of the Proximity of Fatal Motor Crash Locations to the Availability of Helicopoter Emergency Medical Service Response”. Department of Transportation. 1/12. Access on 6/30/12. Web. <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811542.pdf>

In 2009, 33,808 people were killed in an estimated 5,505,000 police-reported motor vehicle traffic crashes that also resulted in an estimated 2,217,000 people injured. 1 One of the first steps to understanding the impact of EMS on the injury outcomes of motor vehicle crashes is to determine the extent of the coverage area of EMS transport to the highest level of trauma care facilities. EMS transport can be either land-based or air-based. 2 For this report only helicopter EMS coverage was used because geographic positional information for exclusively land-based EMS was not available in electronic format at the time of writing. Having said that, most land-based EMS coverage is contained within the helicopter coverage and therefore the helicopter coverage closely approximates the total coverage for all forms of EMS response. Based on the helicopter EMS coverage, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration performed a geospatial analysis of fatal motor vehicle crash locations and their relationship to the availability of helicopter EMS.

# Speeding

**Speeding is responsible for 1/3rd of traffic accidents**

Sprattler ’12 Karen Sprattler is a nationally recognized highway safety professional, who has been active in the field for more than twenty years, Speeding and Aggressive Driving, 3/1/12 accessed: 7/1/12 http://www.ghsa.org/html/publications/pdf/survey/2012\_speed.pdf

<The problem of speeding, generally defined as the driver behavior of exceeding the posted speed limit, driving too fast for conditions, or racing, has been with us for more than a century. The earliest accounts of driver consequences for driving too fast date back to Great Britain where Walter Arnold of East Peckham, Kent had the dubious honor of being the first person to be successfully charged with speeding on January 28, 1896. Traveling at approximately 8 miles per hour, he had exceeded the 2 miles per hour speed limit for towns. Fined one shilling and costs, Arnold had been caught by a policeman who had given chase on a bicycle. 1 It didn’t take long for Americans to follow suit. On May 20, 1899, a 26-year-old New York City cab driver named Jacob German was arrested for speeding. He was driving 12 miles per hour down Lexington Avenue in Manhattan when the limit was set at 8 mph, with 4 mph for turning corners.  German was imprisoned, but did not have to surrender his registration and license, as those weren’t required by law until 1901 in New York. 2,3 While speed enforcement has come a long way since the late nineteenth century, the problem of drivers exceeding the speed limit has not. Traffic safety professionals continue to be concerned about the significant toll in life and limb speeding takes on our roadways**.** Year in and year out, speeding isone of the most prevalent factors involved in all crashes, cited by law enforcement as a contributing factor in almost one-third of all fatal crashes in 2010, 4 a number that has not changed significantly in several decades.>

# \*\*\*OIL\*\*\*

# Solves Oil Dependence

**An increased gas tax reduces oil dependence**

**Krauthammer ‘09**<Pulitzer Prize winning economic columnist> “The Net-Zero Gas Tax”
<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/015/949rsrgi.asp?page=2>
So why even think about it? Because the virtues of a gas tax remain what they have always been. A tax that suppresses U.S. gas consumption can have a major effect on reducing world oil prices. And the benefits of low world oil prices are obvious: They put tremendous pressure on OPEC, as evidenced by its disarray during the current collapse; they deal serious economic damage to energy-exporting geopolitical adversaries such as Russia, Venezuela, and Iran; and they reduce the enormous U.S. imbalance of oil trade which last year alone diverted a quarter of $1 trillion abroad. Furthermore, a reduction in U.S. demand alters the balance of power between producer and consumer, making us less dependent on oil exporters. It begins weaning us off foreign oil, and, if combined with nuclear power and renewed U.S. oil and gas drilling, puts us on the road to energy independence.

Raising the federal gas tax demands innovation, drops oil reliance, and mitigates terrorism
**Krauthammer ‘09**<Pulitzer Prize winning economic columnist> “The Net-Zero Gas Tax”
<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/015/949rsrgi.asp?page=2>

Now that we have lived with $3.50-a-gallon gas, $3 seems far less outrageous. That gives us an opportunity to permanently depress demand for gas by locking in higher gas prices with a tax. Let's put a floor at $3 a gallon. Every penny under $3 that the market price goes should be recaptured in a federal gas tax so that we pay at least $3 at the pump. Why is this a good idea? Because it's the simplest way to induce conservation. Higher prices will make people alter their buying habits. It was the higher fuel prices of the 1970s and early 1980s that led to more energy-efficient cars and appliances, which so reduced the demand for oil that prices fell through the floor. By 1986, oil was $11 a barrel. Then we got complacent and resumed our old wasteful habits. Now, oil is around $60 a barrel. The worst part is that much of this $60 goes overseas to foreigners who wish us no good: Saudi princes who subsidize terrorists and the nuclear-hungry, death-to-America Iranian mullahs, for example. This is insanity. It makes much more sense to reduce consumption, drive the world price down, and let the premium we force ourselves to pay at the pump (which begins the conservation cycle) go to the U.S. Treasury: If the price drops to $2, plow that $1 tax right back into the U.S. economy by reducing other taxes. The beauty of a higher gas tax is that it would make fuel-efficiency standards unnecessary. Just let the market decide. Consumers are not stupid. Within weeks of Hurricane Katrina, SUV sales were already in decline and hybrids were flying off the lots.

# Oil Dependence Impacts—Economy

**Oil dependence threatens our economy – trade deficit**

Williford 11 – College of Charleston (10 February 2011, Sam Williford, “Oil Dependence Threatens Economic Stability”, http://economyincrisis.org/content/oil-dependence-threatens-economic-stability)

We cannot continue to let our nation and economy be held hostage by a volatile oil market. Supply side shocks and disruptions cannot be planned, which threatens constant uncertainty (and thus higher prices). The cost of energy isn’t even factored into government inflation reports, which affects cost of living increases for government employees and Social Security benefits. Oil is also one of the leading contributors to our trade deficit. In 2008, when prices were above $140 a barrel, oil imports made up nearly half of the value of our trade deficit. Obviously, assaulting this issue would go a long way toward creating balanced trade in this nation. As we continue to send money overseas, our money is no longer staying in America to support domestic industries. As much as many politicians and activists wish America would stop using oil tomorrow, that simply is no realistic. In the meantime, we must focus on pragmatic solutions to mitigate the damage our oil importation causes to the economy, and steadily work for a tomorrow where America’s energy is produced in America.

**Oil dependency stops us from recovering economically**

Lefton and Weiss, 2010 Rebecca Lefton is a Researcher for Progressive Media and Daniel J. Weiss is a Senior Fellow and Director Climate Strategy at the Center for American Progress, January 13, 2010, Center for American Progress, “Oil Dependent Is a Dangerous Habit”, accessed June 28, 2012 from http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/01/oil\_imports\_security.html

A recent report on the November 2009 U.S. trade deficit found that rising oil imports widened our deficit, increasing the gap between our imports and exports. This is but one example that our economic recovery and long-term growth is inexorably linked to our reliance on foreign oil. The United States is spending approximately $1 billion a day overseas on oil instead of investing the funds at home, where our economy sorely needs it. Burning oil that exacerbates global warming also poses serious threats to our national security and the world’s security. For these reasons we need to kick the oil addiction by investing in clean-energy reform to reduce oil demand, while taking steps to curb global warming.

# Oil Dependence Impacts—War

US oil dependency supports unfriendly regimes which increases economic disparity and violence

Lefton and Weiss, 2010 Rebecca Lefton is a Researcher for Progressive Media and Daniel J. Weiss is a Senior Fellow and Director Climate Strategy at the Center for American Progress, January 13, 2010, Center for American Progress, “Oil Dependent Is a Dangerous Habit”, accessed June 28, 2012 from http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/01/oil\_imports\_security.html

As a major contributor to the global demand for oil the United States is paying to finance and sustain unfriendly regimes. Our demand drives up oil prices on the global market, which oftentimes benefits oil-producing nations that don’t sell to us. The Center for American Progress finds in “Securing America’s Future: Enhancing Our National Security by Reducing oil Dependence and Environmental Damage,” that “because of this, anti-Western nations such as Iran—with whom the United States by law cannot trade or buy oil—benefit regardless of who the end buyer of the fuel is.” Further, the regimes and elites that economically benefit from rich energy resources rarely share oil revenues with their people, which worsens economic disparity in the countries and at times creates resource-driven tension and crises. The State Department cites oil-related violence in particular as a danger in Nigeria, where more than 54 national oil workers or businesspeople have been kidnapped at oil-related facilities and other infrastructure since January 2008. Attacks by insurgents on the U.S. military and civilians continue to be a danger in Iraq.

# Oil Dependence Impacts—War

**Oil dependency has caused a multitude of wars, financial obligations, and countless deaths**

Stadnik, 2012 Bill Stadnik, New-Leader.com, June 21, 2012, “Reliance on foreign oil too costly”, accessed June 28, 2012 from http://www.news-leader.com/article/20120621/OPINIONS02/306210043/Bill-Stadnik-Afghanistan-war-al-qaida-foreign-oil

For decades, presidents have promised to lessen our dependence on foreign oil. Promises prompted by the threats to oil in the Mideast where half the oil we import and 20 percent of the world’s supply goes through the Strait of Hormuz. Starting with the 1973 OPEC embargo; the 1979 Iranian-caused gas shortage; the 1990 Kuwait takeover by Iraq; the 1991 Desert Shield for Saudi’s oil fields; and finally the Desert Storm Iraq invasion. Threats that created wars, wars whose final costs are predicted to be between $3.2 and $4 trillion, including military engagement, medical care, disability and family support for the surviving veterans (over $1 trillion for future loan interest payments alone). Even with the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq, Afghanistan will continue to cost the United States close to $300 million a day for decades after the complete withdrawal occurs. The tragic irony is that our country has the world’s largest fossil fuel deposits. As an alternative for oil, they are far cleaner, cheaper and not subject to global pricing nor need to be imported. Yet, we borrow billions we don’t have, to aid Mideast countries so they can produce and export oil that we safeguard through the Strait of Hormuz. Last year, we actually exported more than 17 million barrels of oil and 7.4 billion gallons of gasoline. However, regardless of how much oil we produce domestically, our gasoline prices are based on the same global oil prices the rest of the world is paying … with one extraordinary exception: Mideast countries do not pay us for having our military safeguarding their oil exports. Factor in our military expense in the Mideast as a “hidden” cost for oil and we could be paying over $23 per gallon of gasoline. This year more than 400 Americans died in action in Iraq and Afghanistan, and more will die and be wounded long after President Obama’s pledge of complete withdrawal in 2014. It should be unacceptable by every American, when the cost of oil unnecessarily includes almost two military deaths and seven wounded (some horrifically) every day.

# Solves Oil Shocks

**Oil dependence makes the US susceptible to economic shocks – gas tax shields us**

Houser and Mohan 11 Trevor Houser - fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics and Shashank Mohan – research analyst with RHG in New York, “America’s Energy Security Options”, 30 March 2011 http://bbokstore.iie.com/publications/pb/pb11-10.pdf

The cumulative effect of these five factors depends importantly on the severity of the shock (how many barrels per day) and its duration. There are also differences between supply and demand shocks in how they impact the economy. Noting that oil shocks have preceded five of the past six US recessions (figure 5), the academic literature puts their cost at between 0.5 and 5 percent of GDP (Kilian 2009; Hamilton 2009a; Huntington 2005; Jones, Leiby, and Paik 2004; Leiby 2007). The current consensus among private-sector analyses is that a $10 and $20 sustained increase in crude oil prices translates into a 0.2 and 0.5 percent reduction in GDP, respectively (Goldman Sachs 2011; JP Morgan 2011; Morgan Stanley 2011; Deutsche Bank 2011; Credit Suisse 2011; Macquarie 2011). It is important to note that the impact on the US economy of an increase in oil prices resulting from a supply or demand shock is fundamentally different than that from changes in domestic tax policy. Even at current prices, US drivers pay significantly less for gasoline and diesel than their counterparts in Europe or Japan due to differences in tax policy. 5 For example, the average US driver paid $0.41 per gallon in gasoline taxes in June 2011 while the average German driver paid $4.89 per gallon. Fuel taxes are a domestic revenue transfer rather than an international wealth transfer, and they are generally implemented gradually and with sufficient advanced warning to avoid most of the economic damage associated with demand or supply shocks. To the extent that fuel taxes reduce oil demand, they may in fact make an economy more resilient to international oil-market disruptions.

**Increased gas tax would shield our economy from the impacts of price shocks**

Williford 11 – College of Charleston (10 February 2011, Sam Williford, “Oil Dependence Threatens Economic Stability”, http://economyincrisis.org/content/oil-dependence-threatens-economic-stability)

The recent protests in the Middle East prove yet again that our economy is too heavily dependent upon foreign oil for its survival and that we must takes steps to correct this issue. While Egypt is a relatively small provider of oil (only 700,000 barrels per day, compared to more than 8 million per day from Saudi Arabia), the Suez Canal is a vital lifeline between Asia and Europe. If disturbances were to affect the flow of traffic through this corridor, it would greatly disrupt international commerce, causing oil prices to spike further than they have already. This is due to the fact that America imports a vast amount of black gold everyday. Our reliance on gasoline powered personal transportation and shipping are the largest causes. Thus, to minimize the impact of price shocks, we must implement measures to reduce demand. Goals to increase usage of electric vehicles is a start, but alone will do too little, too late in dealing with the problem. A gradual raising of the gasoline tax that would go to fund public transportation alternatives would encourage people to drive less.

# Solves Oil Shocks

Gas tax increase solves oil dependence and shocks, spurs green tech

The Washington Post, 2012 (May 25 “Raise the gas tax”, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/raise-the-gas-tax/2012/05/25/gJQA46siqU\_story.html)

The recent gas-price drop, unaided by any big change in federal policy, underscores that economically and psychologically destabilizing short-term price swings are out of the U.S. government’s control, which would be true even if America produced loads more oil. That, in turn, underscores the obvious on oil policy: The best way to insulate the country from price volatility, and everything else that makes America’s oil dependence unattractive, is to use less. And the best way to make that happen is to raise the federal gas tax. Yes, doing so would increase the cost of fuel. But experience shows that drivers respond to higher prices by using energy much more sensibly, buying more fuel-efficient cars and cutting out unnecessary trips. A recent Consumer Reports survey found that fuel-efficiency is now the predominant consideration among U.S. car buyers. And a higher gas tax would accomplish much more than a price blip here and there. It would provide predictability to consumers and automakers that prices won’t bottom out, thereby ushering in an SUV renaissance. Automakers would design more fuel-efficient cars to satisfy higher demand for them, investing in clean-transportation research and development without a government mandate.

# Solves Oil Shocks

**Increasing the gas tax is key to growth and protecting the economy against price fluctuations**

Gordon ’11 Deborah writer for CNN, “5 myths about your gasoline tax”, December 7, 2011 (<http://www.cnn.com/2011/11/18/opinion/tsay-gordon-gas-tax-myths/index.html>)

The reverse is true when it comes to gas taxes. Investing in transportation facilitates reinvestment in America that is vital to economic growth. The U.S., once No. 1 in the world for its infrastructure, has fallen to 15th. China and India are cruising ahead with transportation infrastructure investments each at 9% of GDP compared to 2% in the U.S. This lackluster level of investment prevails despite well-documented needs—aging infrastructure, growing population, and shifting demographics. An upgraded, well-maintained, operationally-efficient transportation system, on the other hand, offers a significant competitive edge. Plus, the gas tax spreads the burden over hundreds of millions of system beneficiaries. Beyond system efficiency gains, vehicles themselves are becoming more fuel-efficient and less wasteful. A proposal to double car- and SUV-fuel economy standards by 2025, while highly beneficial in terms of energy will translate into lower gas tax expenditures by higher-mpg cars. The rational way to deal with this is to increase gas taxes slightly over time to account for the fiscal impacts that cleaner, more efficient cars have on transportation infrastructure investments.Will Domestic gas prices are largely influenced by world oil markets. With transportation accounting for about 70% of U.S. oil consumption and record oil-company profits reached when world oil prices go up, it's only fair that oil companies share the cost of providing transportation infrastructure. Structuring an oil fee assessed on producers and a variable gas tax paid by consumers can further stabilize the price at the pump. When oil prices go up, the retail gas tax can be abated. The oil security fee will make up for the revenue gap. When oil prices go down, the gas tax can be slowly reinstated. There isn't much that can be done about external events that affect global oil price volatility, but gas taxes can be designed to better manage abrupt price swings domestically. In short, the transportation system is a critical component of America's economy. The United States cannot be a superpower if it starves public investment in infrastructure. Taxes tend to be more politically acceptable when people understand how funds provide benefits. And nobody understands better than travelers that the nation's infrastructure needs serious improvements. It's time to face the fact: The gas tax is a good way to invest in America.

# Oil Shocks Impacts

**Oil shocks are the biggest threat to the economy – collapse is coming**

*CNBC 12* (CNBC, quoting experts in the oil industry, “U.S. Unprepared For Oil Supply Crisis: Government Report”, March 29, <http://www.cnbc.com/id/17860269/U\_S\_Unprepared\_For\_Oil\_Supply\_Crisis\_Government\_Report >

As crude oil prices surge on rising political tensions with Iran, a new government report released Thursday said that the U.S. is unprepared to face an oil supply crisis and urged U.S. policymakers to develop a strategy in order to reduce potential risks related to an oil shock. The report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office concluded that the U.S. has no plans in place to address "peak oil," the future point in history of maximum oil production, which would be followed by irreversible declines in oil fields around the world. "While the consequences of a peak would be felt globally, the United States, as the largest consumer of oil and one of the nations most heavily dependent on oil for transportation, may be particularly vulnerable," the GAO report said. An expert told CNBC on Thursday that peak oil is the "the single biggest issue to threaten sustainable society" in the United States. "We are on the verge of actually replacing global warming by this term peak oil," said Matthew Simmons, author of Twilight in the Desert: The Coming Oil Shock and the World Economy. "We have demand roaring ahead and supply is faltering." Most studies predict oil production will peak sometime between now and 2040, the agency said. "We're basically held hostage by countries that aren't friendly to us in terms of what's available," John Kilduff, senior vice president of energy risk management at Fimat USA, told CNBC. "That is so dangerous to the United States economy you can't believe it. We have big problems on our hands."

# Oil Shocks Impacts

**Oil shocks are unpredictable and lead to a slew of impacts – more power to the Middle East, exacerbates financial vulnerabilities, destroys consumer confidence, and collapses the world economy**

Roubini and Setser 4(Nouriel Roubini Stern School of Business, NYU and Brad Setser Research Associate, Global Economic Governance Programme, University College, “The effects of the recent oil price shock on the U.S. and global economy”, August 2004)

< http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~nroubini/papers/OilShockRoubiniSetser.pdf >

However, there are several reasons to worry that the current oil price shock may have larger growth effects than currently expected by most economists: Most forecasters did not expect the 2000 shock to lead to a recession, yet it clearly contributed to the resulting slowdown. While current oil prices are high mostly as a result of booming global demand, not a fall in supply, high oil prices stemming from a booming Asia have a similar impact on the U.S. as high oil prices that arise from limits on supply. The tight oil market gives market power to Saudi Arabia, which is the only producer with significant spare capacity. It also makes the world extremely vulnerable to any major interruptions in supply. Major price spikes -- like that of 1973 -- happen when supplies are already tight. On the other hand, oil consuming nations do hold larger strategic stockpiles now than in 1973, providing some protection against supply disruption. Other financial vulnerabilities may exacerbate the output effects of an oil shock. Financial markets are quite unsettled, as market players are trying to reposition themselves ahead of the Fed’s anticipated tightening and are taking off the carry trades they put on to profit from extremely low U.S. interest rates. The U.S. economy has other sources of vulnerability as well. U.S. consumers are by many measures already overstretched: consumption growth has been spurred by borrowing in the face of stagnant real incomes for many wage earners. High oil prices might dent their confidence. Recent data suggests that a slowdown in consumer spending linked in part to higher oil prices accounted for the fall in the pace of U.S. growth in the second quarter of 2004. The Fed also has less room to direct monetary solely toward policy to maintaining output than it did in 2000: unlike in 2000, when inflation was falling, inflation was already picking up in 2004 - admittedly from a very low level - prior to the recent surge in oil prices; and recent inflation news have shown a worrisome pickup in the inflation rate. The combination of low pre-existing rates, a weak dollar and high oil prices limit the Fed’s ability to maneuver. With some concerned that the Fed is already “behind the curve” in terms of responding to the recent inflation increase, the Fed would have to increase the Fed Funds rate more and faster than currently expected by the markets if further oil price shocks were to feed into the inflation rate. Finally, markets are concerned about the size and pace of the Chinese slowdown following a period of unsustainable overheating. While a slowdown in China would reduce demand driven pressures on oil and likely would lead to lower prices barring any changes in supply, it also would remove one of the main engines of world growth.

# AT: Cushions against Shocks

**Even a 10% disruption in oil would cause Mad-Max style social collapse—there are few cushions**

Black 12 (Edwin Black, American [syndicated columnist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Print_syndication), and [journalist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Journalist) specializing in the historical interplay between economics and politics in the [Middle East](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East), “When the Pump Runs Dry, February 27)< http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2012-02-27/news/bs-ed-oil-interruption-20120227\_1\_crude-abqaiq-international-energy-agency >

The crude realities: America uses approximately 19 million to 20 million barrels of oil per day, almost half of which is imported. If we lose just 1 million barrels per day, or suffer the type of damage sustained from Hurricane Katrina, the government will open the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which offers a mere six- to eight-week supply of unrefined crude oil. If we lose 1.5 million barrels per day, or approximately 7.5 percent, we will ask our allies in the 28-member International Energy Agency to open their SPRs and otherwise assist. If we lose 2 million barrels per day, or 10 percent, for a protracted period, government crisis monitors say the chaos will be so catastrophic, they cannot even model it. One government oil crisis source told me: "We cannot put a price tag on it. If it happens, just cash in your 401(k)." Exactly how could America be subjected to a protracted oil interruption — that is, a 10 percent shortfall lasting longer than several weeks? It will not come from hurricane action in the Gulf of Mexico, or even major refinery accidents or other oil infrastructure damage. Such damage would be repaired within days and the temporary losses absorbed by the small, half-million-barrel-per-day global cushion available. But a disruption of the vital Persian Gulf chokepoints — the Abqaiq processing plant in eastern Saudi Arabia, the Ras Tanura terminal on the Saudi Arabian coast, or the two-mile-wide sea lane of the Strait of Hormuz — would be devastating. If one, two or three of them is hit by terrorists flying hijacked jumbo jets or shut down by Iranian military action, as much as 40 percent of all seaborne oil will be stopped, as much as 18 percent of all global supply will be interrupted, and more than 10 percent of the U.S. supply will be cut off. Estimates on the U.S. shortfall suggest the percentage lost could be far higher. Repeat attacks, and the difficulty of anti-mine operations in a hostile environment, could prolong the crisis for many months — which is exactly what al-Qaeda and the Iranian regime have promised. Yet, apparently, there is no government plan. The best experts predict that if we suffer as much as a 10 percent shortfall for any period of time, let alone 20 percent, it will be a **neighbor-against-neighbor, "Mad Max" scenario as food shortages swell and a** storm of economic collapse surges across the country. Indeed, experts have been warning about this looming calamity for years. But the government and presidential candidates refuse to even consider the possibility or develop a contingency plan. Even if a secret plan exists, who would execute such a monumental undertaking? Yet American allies have developed oil contingency legislation and other administrative plans that will permit their nations to survive a stoppage. These measures include severe vehicle traffic reductions, enabling fast alternative fuel production and mass vehicle fuel retrofitting, as well as rush public transit enhancement and mandated changes in driving habits. Unquestionably, for America to survive such a catastrophe would require a very painful, multi-layered program of immediate-term, short-term, mid-term and long-term fixes that would change our society and transform it off of dependency on oil. Currently, the nation has no real alternative fuel delivery or retrofitting infrastructure. Lawmakers, mayors, governors and candidates have not developed such a plan during the half decade the interruption has been looming. The notion that Saudi Arabia can make up the shortfall from an Iranian disruption is impossible. Saudi oil too must pass through the narrow sea lanes of the Strait. The trans-Arabian Petroline that terminates at Yanbu can carry only a few million barrels per day, and a rush project to double its capacity would require an estimated $600 million and some two years of construction and chemical changes; this presupposes Iran would not simply attack the line with a barrage of medium range missiles from its Red Sea forward ports. For America to have prepared intelligently for a Persian Gulf oil interruption would have required a decade of planning. To absorb the hit from a sudden oil stoppage, as is now once again threatened, will be very painful indeed.

# US Transportation Sector Key to Global Market

**US Transport Determines Oil Demand**

Amadeo, 2012. Kimberly Amadeo, . How Oil Prices Affect Gas Prices, useconomy.com. 2012

The U.S. uses 20% of the world's oil. Two-thirds of this is for transportation. This is a result of the country's vast network of Federal highways leading to suburbs built in the 1950s. This decentralization was in response to the threat of nuclear attack, which was a great concern then. As a result, the country has not developed the infrastructure for a national mass transit system. The [European Union](http://useconomy.about.com/od/worldeconomy/p/european_union.htm) is the next biggest user, at 15% of the world's oil production. [China](http://useconomy.about.com/od/worldeconomy/p/China_Economy.htm) only uses 10%, but its use has grown rapidly. (Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy, CIA World Factbook)

# AT: Oil Price DA’s

Increase in Gas Tax will not result in a reduction of oil price—OPEC will just hold back supply

Ferguson, 7. (Jake Ferguson, PhD Economics. Should the United States Increase The Federal Gasoline Tax?, Northern Iowa University. 2007)

The reduced demand in the U.S. would lead to lower oil prices if the world oil market were perfectly competitive. But the world oil market is not perfectly competitive. It is controlled by the world’s largest cartel, OPEC, which restricts the quantity of oil produced [Friedman, 2006, para. 5]. Although the current market price for a barrel of oil is about $54, one researcher asserts that the competitive market price for oil would be between $4 and $10 per barrel [Stern, 2006, 1650; Energy Information Administration, 2006, table 13].

# \*\*\*Warming Advantage\*\*\*

# Solves Warming

**Annual carbon emissions are increasing at a dangerous level that increasing the gas tax would offset**

Davis and Kilian, 9 [Lucas Davis and Lutz Kilian, January 2009, National Bureau Of Economic Research, “ESTIMATING THE EFFECT OF A GASOLINE TAX ON CARBON EMISSIONS” (http://www.nber.org/papers/w14685.pdf?new\_window=1)]

Several policymakers and economists have proposed the adoption of a carbon tax in the United States.1 In the United States 33.8% of carbon dioxide emissions are derived from the transportation sector, so the responsiveness of gasoline consumption to tax changes will play a significant role in determining the evolution of overall carbon dioxide emissions in response to policy interventions.2 It is widely recognized that a carbon tax in practice must take the form of a tax on the consumption of energy products such as gasoline (e.g. Fullerton and West, 2002). A tax of $10.00 per ton of carbon dioxide, as suggested by Nordhaus (2007), for example, would increase gasoline taxes by approximately 9 cents.3 In this paper, we evaluate how effective a gasoline tax increase would be in reducing gasoline consumption. Our most credible estimates imply that a 10 cent tax increase would decrease U.S. carbon emissions from the transportation sector by about 1.5% and decrease total U.S. carbon emissions by about 0.5%. To put this estimate in context, total U.S. carbon dioxide emissions increased by 1.1% annually between 1990 and 2007, so a 10 cent gasoline tax increase would approximately offset half a year of growth in total U.S. emissions.4 This estimate captures only the short-run response resulting from reduced discretionary driving and reduced driving speed, for example. The long-run response is likely to be considerably larger as drivers substitute toward more fuel-efficient vehicles. Despite the policy relevance of the question to be addressed in this paper, empirical evidence on the effectiveness of gasoline taxes on carbon emissions is virtually nonexistent. … Even this panel approach, however, does not fully address the issue of price endogeneity. An alternative approach to this endogeneity problem has been the use of instruments for gasoline prices. While this approach is appealing, the challenge has been to find instruments that are both truly exogenous and strong in the econometric sense (see Stock, Wright and Yogo, 2002).6 In this paper we use changes in gasoline taxes by state and month as an instrument. Even though tax legislation may respond to current prices, the implementation of tax changes typically occurs with a lag making it reasonable to believe that changes in tax rates are uncorrelated with unobserved changes in demand. In constructing our instrument we are careful to exclude ad valorem gasoline taxes (used in many states) because they are functionally related to price, violating the endogeneity assumption. For the national data our instrumental variable (IV) estimates rely on the historical variation in gasoline taxes over time. We find a price elasticity that is much larger, but not statistically distinguishable from zero, even after accounting for weak instruments. An alternative IV approach is to exploit additional variation in gasoline taxes across states. The resulting panel IV estimates are substantially larger than the OLS panel estimates. In our preferred estimates that restrict attention to dates of nominal state tax increases, we find a statistically significant price elasticity of −0.46. We examine a variety of alternative IV specifications including specifications that control for factors potentially correlated with gasoline tax changes and we consider alternative estimators. The results are remarkably similar across specifications. In addition, we contrast the IV estimates to alternative elasticity estimates obtained from recursively identified vector autoregressions in which the percent change in gasoline prices (or alternatively the percent change in gasoline taxes) is ordered first and the percent change in gasoline consumption is ordered second. With this approach the elasticity is identified under the assumption that changes in gasoline prices (or taxes) are predetermined with respect to all factors driving U.S. gasoline consumption.7 Overall, our results indicate that gasoline consumption is more sensitive to gasoline taxes than would be implied by recent estimates of the gasoline price elasticity. A likely reason is that price changes induced by tax changes are more persistent than other price changes and thus induce larger behavioral changes. In addition, gasoline tax increases are often accompanied by extensive media coverage. Even under the largest plausible estimates, however, gasoline tax increases of the magnitude that have been discussed would have only a moderate short-run impact on total U.S. gasoline consumption and carbon emissions based on our estimates. A natural conjecture is that the long-run elasticities will be larger, but standard econometric models based on historical data do not allow us to predict such long-run effects. The format of the paper is as follows. Section 2 describes the data used for the analysis and describes the evolution of gasoline taxes in the United States over the period 1989-2008. Section 3 presents least squares and IV estimates from log differenced single-equation specifications. Section 4 presents results from structural VAR models. Section 5 assesses the effects of the proposed gasoline tax on carbon emissions, and section 6 summarizes the policy implications.

# Solves Warming—Modeling

#### **Plan is key to developing countries**

Summers, 7 [Lawrence Summers, former U.S. Treasury Secretary, currently Professor at Harvard University (from Practical Steps to Climate Control, The Financial Times May 28, 2007) taxblog.com/jealdy/tax-based-approach-slowing-global-climate-change/]

The U.S. must engage in an energy efficiency program that takes effect without delay and has meaningful bite. As long as developing countries can point to the U.S. as a free rider there will not be serious dialogue about what they are willing to do. I prefer carbon and/or gasoline tax measures to permit systems or heavy regulatory approaches because the latter are more likely to be economically inefficient and to be regressive.”

#### Plan promotes the only global solution to climate change

Zedillo, 8 [Ernesto Zedillo, former president of Mexico, currently Director of the Center for the Study of Globalization at Yale University (from Carbon Prices, Not Quotas, Forbes March 24, 2008) http://taxblog.com/jealdy/tax-based-approach-slowing-global-climate-change/]

Frankly, a Kyoto-type framework—one with global quantitative emissions targets allocated among countries … is not feasible. The only approach that will fulfill the conditions and relieve countries’ apprehensions regarding sovereignty and free riding is one in which all countries agree to penalize their carbon emissions in such a way that, over time, an internationally harmonized carbon price prevails. Consequently, the negotiation’s focus would not be on emissions quotas but on the harmonized carbon-price trajectory. Of course, carbon taxes (on burning fossil fuels) would provide the easiest way for countries to comply with the system, and each country could then decide what to do with the tax revenue. Some might make their carbon tax revenue-neutral by reducing other taxes. The regime would allow countries (or associations of countries such as the EU) to comply with the internationally agreed-upon carbon price by means of their own national cap-and-trade systems. It would also let poor countries move toward the agreed trajectory of carbon prices more slowly than rich countries. If you’re worried about climate change but don’t like carbon taxes, think about the messy or even impossible alternatives!

# Solves Warming—Modeling

#### **Plan is the first step to global gas tax efforts**

Aldy, 12 [Joseph E. Aldy, Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, USA, March 1, 2012, “A Tax-Based Approach to Slowing Global Climate Change” (http://taxblog.com/jealdy/tax-based-approach-slowing-global-climate-change/)]

There is widespread agreement on the desirability of a globally based effort to mitigate emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), particularly the primary gas, carbon dioxide (CO2), with the ultimate objective of stabilizing atmospheric GHG concentrations.[1] Of course, considerable dispute continues regarding how rapidly to scale back global CO2 emissions. For practical policy purposes, however, the immediate issue is how to develop an international climate policy regime with a robust emissions mitigation effort as its centerpiece, one that can progressively incorporate rapidly industrializing nations, and that can adjust over time as more is learned about the science, economics, and technological change that characterizes the climate change problem. For mitigating GHG emissions, economists favor emissions taxes and cap-and-trade systems. Most of the policy discussion has focused on cap-and-trade systems, with the introduction of the European Union’s Emission Trading Scheme (ETS), and the emphasis on trading in most climate bills currently pending in the U.S. Congress. However, as the quotes by Secretary Summers and President Zedillo suggest, and as we argue below, a potentially strong case can be made for carbon taxes. The policy landscape is not void of carbon taxes, as evident by the use of such taxes in northern Europe since the early 1990s, the recently implemented carbon tax in the province of British Columbia, and a couple of bills in the U.S. House of Representatives. And even if additional governments do not implement CO2 taxes in the near term, it is important to assess the possible case for transitioning to a tax-based system over the longer haul. Thus, it is critical to understand how to design a CO2 tax at domestic and international levels and to compare its advantages and disadvantages with those of a cap-and- trade approach. Because cap and trade is often heralded as a market-based approach in the political discourse, it is worth noting at the outset that both systems are equally market-based in the sense that their effectiveness relies in affecting market behavior through emissions pricing.

# \*\*\*Air Pollution Advantage\*\*\*

# Cars Cause Pollution

**Increased miles driven is responsible for a ton of pollution, including particulate matter, ozone, and smog.**

**Sipes and Mendelsohn 2001** (Kristin and Robert, Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, “The effectiveness of gasoline taxation to manage air pollution”, Ecological Economics 36 (2001) 299–309)

Dropping real gasoline prices and rising incomes have led to a 30% increase in motor vehicle travel in the United States in the past decade (National Research Council, 1997). From 1998 to 1999, US gasoline consumption rose by 2.5% and vehicle miles traveled increased by 1.4% (Federal Highway Administration, 1999). Although increases in gasoline prices over the last 6 months have taken many Americans by surprise, the inﬂation-adjusted price of gasoline is still cheaper today than it was for most of the post-World War II period. Unfortunately, these increasing vehicle miles have caused serious local pollution problems, such as increasing emissions of particulate matter, and regional problems from the emissions of the precursors for ozone and photochemical smog. These pollutants are detrimental to human health (Wilson and Spengler, 1996), reduce visibility, harm crops, and damage vegetation (US Envi ronmental Protection Agency, 1997). Further, mobile sources produce 22% of carbon dioxide emissions, contributing to global greenhouse gas problems (Michaelis et al., 1996).

**Cars emit lots of pollutants that are dangerous to humans**

Amin, 10 [Zeeshan Amin, Suite101, professional mechanical engineer with a diverse experience of over 5 years in oil & gas and food industries, “[Automobiles and Air Pollution: Cars,Their parts and Pros & Cons](http://suite101.com/article/introduction-to-automobiles-a230254#ixzz1ywpacnnm)” (<http://suite101.com/article/introduction-to-automobiles-a230254#ixzz1ywpacnnm>)]

According to Environmental Defense Fund of United States, automobile emissions account for more than 20 percent of U.S. global warming emissions each year. Automobiles undermine our environment by adding several obnoxious chemicals during their life cycle. However, major environmental damage is caused by pollutants emitted through automobile tailpipes during driving. Automobiles exhausts contain several hazardous pollutants and have a profound impact on the air we breathe in and ultimately on human health. Although such pollutants are also spewed at power plants, refineries and other industrial units, car emissions are significantly dangerous as they have a direct exposure to the people. Pollutants in Car Emissions Almost all cars use internal combustion engines for power generation. In an internal combustion engine, fuel (Generally, gasoline or diesel) is burnt in an enclosed cylinder and the resulting explosion is used to drive a piston in a certain manner. Like all physical processes, fuel combustion in an internal combustion engine is imperfect. As a result, some part of the fuel remains unburnt or is incompletely burnt. The major pollutants emitted in car exhausts as a consequence of imperfect combustion as well as poor fuel quality include particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide,sulphur dioxide, carbon dioxide and unburnt hydrocarbons. Particulate matter refers to fine particles of dust, carbon or other liquid or gaseous materials suspended in air. They are commonly categorized based on size with the smallest particulates being PM 2.5 referring to a diameter of 2.5 micron. While soot and smoke are visible in air, particulate matter is almost invisible to human sight and therefore is particularly dangerous as can be inhaled easily. Once inhaled, it might cause asthma, damage to lung tissues, cardiovascular diseases and even cancer. Diesel engine emissions are a major source of particulate matter. Natural air contains 78 % nitrogen and 21 % oxygen in its composition. Thus, a naturally aspirated car engine takes in both nitrogen and oxygen in these proportions. High temperatures developed in internal combustion engine during its combustion cycle favor a chemical reaction between nitrogen and oxygen resulting in formation of nitrogen oxides. Nitrogen oxides if inhaled from the atmosphere cause lung irritation and may lead to more complex lung diseases. Moreover, they combine with unburnt hydrocarbons in the air resulting in formation of smog (combination of smoke and fog) in large industrial cities. Carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide are collectively known as greenhouse gases as their accumulation in the atmosphere is considered as a major cause of climatic changes such as global warming and greenhouse effect. While carbon dioxide is not considered as dangerous, carbon monoxide is named as silent killer. The name originates from the fact that carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless, and poisonous and is not easily detectable. When inhaled it combines with hemoglobin in the blood and ultimately blocks blood supply to brain and other important parts of body. Usually, it is created during incomplete combustion of fuel such as during cold start up. … Automobiles are one of the most attractive constituents of the modern society. However, they are a also a substantial source of air pollution. Better vehicle designs with effective emission control devices and adoption of wiser driving habits can significantly reduce our contribution to obnoxious vehicular emissions.

# Air Pollution Solvency

**Gas prices would reduce pollutants and health problems**

Dizikes, 12 [Peter Dizikes, March 5, 2012, MIT News Office, “The Benefits of a Gas Tax”, (http://economistsview.typepad.com/economistsview/2012/03/the-benefits-of-a-gas-tax.html)]

How do car owners respond when fuel prices rise? (They really do ditch their gas-guzzlers.) How large are the collateral health benefits of removing dirty vehicles from the nation’s fleet? (are Very large.) ... One of his papers, “Automobiles on Steroids,” recently published in the American Economic Review, examines technological progress in the auto industry. From 1980 through 2006, the fuel efficiency of America’s vehicles has increased by just 15 percent — at first glance, a lethargic rate of improvement. But as Knittel points out, cars’ average horsepower has roughly doubled since then, and average curb weight of those vehicles rose 26 percent... Adjusting for these changes, fuel economy has actually increased by 60 percent since 1980, but as Knittel observes, “most of that technological progress has gone into [compensating for] weight and horsepower.” On the stagnation of overall fuel efficiency since 1980, Knittel adds, “It’s no fault of the manufacturers and consumers. Firms are going to give consumers what they want, and if gas prices are low, consumers are going to want big, fast cars. If you’re going to blame anyone, it’s the policymakers for not creating the incentive structure for putting that technological progress into fuel economy.” Pain at the pump Cars and light trucks produce about 15 percent of U.S. greenhouse gases. The best policy for reducing energy consumption from those sources, Knittel believes, would be higher fuel prices. “That would incentivize all the things we want,” Knittel says. “When gas prices go up, people shift to more fuel-efficient cars, they drive fewer miles, and insofar as there are lower-carbon-intensive fuels out there, people shift to them. They get rid of their clunkers faster.” That’s not just an assumption; Knittel has studied the responses of auto owners nationwide to rising gas prices from 1999 to 2008 in another research paper, “Pain at the Pump,” co-authored with Meghan Busse and Florian Zettelmeyer of Northwestern University. The researchers found that with each $1 rise in the price of gas, purchases of highly fuel-efficient autos increase 21 percent, while purchases of gas-guzzling vehicles drop 27 percent. A shift to newer, more fuel-efficient vehicles would actually help people in another way, besides releasing fewer greenhouse gases: It would reduce the amount of harmful local pollution in the air, as Knittel detailed in a paper written with Ryan Sandler of U.C. Davis, based on a study of California from 1998 to 2008. “When gas prices go up, you’re getting bigger mileage reductions from cars that are worse in terms of these pollutants,” Knittel observes. That produces significant health benefits beyond the problems associated with climate change. “We’re talking about asthma attacks and respiratory problems,” he adds. “This isn’t just a matter of helping the world two generations from now. You can point to this and say, ‘Here is a more immediate, salient reason for a gas tax.’” According to Knittel and Sandler, 70 percent of the costs of a gas tax of $1 per gallon could be recouped by immediate health benefits from reduced pollution. Other possible benefits from the tax — reductions in climate change, traffic congestion and accidents — could make it a net winner for people in economic terms alone.

# Air Pollution Solvency

**Gas taxes reduce hazardous local air pollution**

Parry, 2 [Ian W.H. Perry, “Is gasoline undertaxed in the United States?”, fellow at Resources for the Future, (http://www.rff.org/rff/Documents/RFF-Resources-148-gasoline.pdf)]

A number of arguments are made for implementing high gasoline taxes. By discouraging driving and fuel combustion, gasoline taxes help to reduce local air pollution, carbon dioxide emissions (a greenhouse gas), traffic congestion, traffic accidents, and oil dependency. Taxing gasoline is one way of forcing people to take into account the social costs of these problems when deciding how much, and what type of vehicle, to drive. Gasoline taxes also provide a source of government revenues. In Britain, gasoline tax revenues are several times highway spending, and the Labour government has argued that if gasoline taxes are reduced, schools and hospitals will have to close. But this argument is somewhat misleading as the revenues could always be made up through other sources, such as income taxes. The real issue is what level of gasoline taxation might be justified when account is taken of the full social costs of driving, and the appropriate balance between gasoline taxes and other taxes in raising revenues for the government. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS Gasoline combustion causes local air pollution, notably smog and carbon monoxide. This pollution can reduce visibility, but its main harm is to human health. For example, poor air quality can exacerbate respiratory problems and lead to premature mortality. Economists have assessed the damages caused by air pollution using epidemiological evidence on the link between air quality and human health, and studies estimating people’s willingness to pay to reduce risks of adverse health effects. Damage estimates have fallen over the last 20 years or so as the vehicle fleet has become cleaner, at least partly in response to emissionsper-mile regulations that are imposed on new vehicles. According to a recent study by Kenneth Small and Camilla Kazimi (University of California–Irvine), pollution damages are around 2¢ per mile (after updating to 2000), or about 40¢ per gallon, though there is still much uncertainty over these estimates.

**Gas price increases empirically have lowered air pollution**

Spors, 12 [Kelly Spors, May 21, 2012, Small Business Trends, based on a study by MIT economics professor Christopher Knittel, “Can a Gas Tax Fuel Clean Energy Innovation?” (http://smallbiztrends.com/2012/05/gas-tax-fuel-clean-energy-innovation.html)]

Tax and deficit issues aside, there’s another reason for business owners to think about the gas tax: Higher gas prices may help encourage clean energy innovation and support environmentally sustainable behaviors among business owners and consumers – such as the purchase and development of eco-friendlier vehicles and driving less. While it may raise business costs, it may spur business owners think about how to reduce their gas usage and be more sustainable. Christopher Knittel, an energy economics professor at MIT, has studied how gas prices affect behaviors. He and researchers from Northwestern University found that a $1 increase in prices between 1998 and 2008 led people to buy 21% more fuel-efficient vehicles. (Not surprisingly, the CEO of General Motors has come out in support of a gas tax increase.) Knittel also found that less driving led to less local air pollution and related health problems.

# Air Pollution Impacts

**Air pollution causes 100,000 deaths per year in the US alone.**

**Air Quality News 2-08-12** (Study: Air pollution kills more than 100,000 in U.S. each year, <http://www.iqair.com/newsroom/2012/study-air-pollution-kills-more-than-100000-in-u-s-each-year/#.T-0bA7WJd54>)

How important is it to have a high-efficiency air purifier at home? Consider this: A study published last month by the Society for Risk Analysis concludes that particle and ozone air pollution cause more premature deaths every year in the U.S. than do accidents. Or Alzheimer’s. Or influenza. More than 100,000 premature deaths every year in the U.S. are caused by outdoor particle air pollution, according to the study. And ozone pollution adds tens of thousands of additional premature deaths to that number, the study concludes.

**50k premature deaths**

**NOAA 2012** (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, “Air Quality Overview” <http://www.noaawatch.gov/themes/air_quality.php>)

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), issues [daily air quality forecast guidance](http://www.weather.gov/aq%20) as part of a national Air Quality Forecasting Capability. Air quality has improved significantly since the passage of the[Clean Air Act](http://www.epa.gov/air/caa/peg/) in 1970. However, there are still many areas of the country where the public is exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollutants and sensitive ecosystems are damaged by air pollution. Poor air quality is responsible in the U.S. for an estimated 50,000 premature deaths each year; costs from air pollution-related illness are estimated at $150 billion per year. The goal of the air quality program is to provide the U.S. with ozone, particulate matter and other pollutant forecasts with enough accuracy and advance notice to allow people to limit harmful effects of poor air quality, saving lives and reducing the number of air quality-related asthma attacks, eye, nose, and throat irritation, heart attacks and other respiratory and cardiovascular problems.

# \*\*\*Highways Advantage\*\*\*

# Highways On Brink

**Our highways are on the brink—the longer we wait the bigger economic blow and the more costly they will be to fix**

Frank 2012 (Cornell Economics “Repairing Roads Can End All Kinds of Gridlock” The New York Times. 6.2.12)

[In its 2009 assessment](http://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/sites/default/files/RC2009_full_report.pdf) of the nation’s roads, bridges and other infrastructure, the[American Society of Civil Engineers](http://www.asce.org/) identified more than $2 trillion in long-overdue repairs. Of course, when maintenance is postponed, its cost rises rapidly. If Interstate highway repairs are delayed even briefly, damage from heavy trucks and winter weather can cause costs to rise several fold. According to the [American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials](http://transportation.org/), [substandard roads also cause $335 in annual damage per vehicle](http://roughroads.transportation.org/) on the road. Still more troubling, those roads cause many easily preventable deaths and injuries. What could possibly justify further delay? Some people object to the additional government debt that infrastructure repairs would require. As austerity proponents like to say, governments can’t spend beyond their means indefinitely, any more than businesses or families can. It’s a fair statement if we’re talking about the long run. But in the short run, it’s utterly false. When prudent investment opportunities arise, families, businesses, and governments can and should spend more than they take in. Consider an indebted family that must decide whether to borrow $5,000 to install additional insulation in its attic, a project that would reduce its utility bills by an average of $100 a month and require loan payments of $50 a month. In the short run, obviously, the project would increase the family’s indebtedness. But can there be any doubt that the family would be better off, in both the short and the long run, by going ahead with it? Even while making payments on the loan, it would have $50 more each month. And once the loan was paid off, it would have $100 a month more. What possible argument could be offered against this project? The same logic applies to overdue infrastructure investments. Yes, paying for them requires more government debt. And while austerity advocates fret that such projects will impoverish our grandchildren, they concede that the investments can’t be postponed indefinitely, and that they’ll become much more expensive the longer we wait. Our lingering economic doldrums reinforce the case. Many skilled people who can do these jobs are unemployed today. If we wait, we’ll have to bid them away from other useful work. And with much of the world still in a downturn, the required materials are cheap. If we wait, they’ll become more costly. Annual interest rates on 10-year [Treasury notes](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/t/treasury_department/treasury_securities/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) have fallen below 1.5 percent. Those rates will also be higher if we wait. So it’s actually our failure to undertake these projects that’s saddling our grandchildren with gratuitously larger debt.

# Key To Highway Trust Fund

**An increase in gas tax will stop the Highway Trust Fund from losing money.**

Braun & Shounce 2011 (Political Science and Psychology at the University of Evansville, “Indiana University Public Policy Institue Policy Choices for Indiana’s Future”. 2011. Accessed on 6/26/12.)

The Highway Trust Fund balance was $23 billion in 2000. Today, it has an estimated deficit of $8.1 billion, which required a taxpayer bailout (Kahn & Levinson, 2011). Despite the immediate need to repair our current network of roads and bridges, currently, about one-third of federal highway spending goes to new projects that expand the existing system. Nichols and Holywell (2011) detail a road map of possible solutions: 1) REVAMP THE HIGHWAY TRUST FUND: the nation’s highways are largely financed through this fund, which gets most of its revenue from a gas tax of 18.4 cents per gallon, a rate that has not changed since 1993. This tax also is not tied to the price of gas or inflation, which has caused a drastic decline in its purchasing power and significant short- and long-term problems. In the short term, this has caused the fund to spend more money than it collects. In the long term, as more people choose to drive hybrid/electric vehicles, and cars become more fuel efficient, our highways are reliant on a fund that is consistently under-funded. To resolve this problem, the authors recommend a shortterm 10 cent per gallon increase, indexed to inflation, which would generate an additional $20 billion in revenue for the fund and restore the purchasing power of the tax. According to Nichols and Holywell, this would cost households only $9 more per month on average, but gas prices are already high and many families still struggle to recover from the recession. No state raised its gas taxes last year.

**Key to replenishing the Highway Trust fund**

Evans ‘8 (Chritopher W. B.Sc. Mechanical Engineering University Manitoba, 2004 Submitted to the Engineering Systems Division in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Technology and Policy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology : “Putting P olicy in Drive: Coordinating Measures to Reduce Fuel Use and Greenhouse Gas Emissions from U.S. Light-Duty Vehicles” MIT. June 2008. Accessed on 6/28/12. Web. <http://web.mit.edu/sloan-auto-lab/research/beforeh2/files/evans_2008_thesis_final.pdf>)

Second, fuel tax increases are a straightforward and increasingly essential means of raising revenue to maintain America’s highways. From an equity perspective, taxes and fees placed on private vehicle use should balance government expenditures on the infrastructure and services provided for private vehicles (Delucchi, 2007; Wachs, 2003). In the U.S., there is strong evidence that vehicle users do not current pay enough to offset the level of investment required to sustain and improve surface transportation infrastructure. Nearly all of federal government spending on surface transportation comes through the Highway Trust Fund (HTF), a fund established in 1954 to cover federal highway expenditures. Although HTF revenues swelled in 1997, recent increases in spending have dramatically reduced the balance of the HTF (CBO, 2007, pp. 3-4). As a result, the Highway Account—the portion of the HTF responsible for highway funding— is projected to carry a negative balance beginning in 2009 if no corrective action is taken (see Table 11). To keep the Highway Account solvent, a nine-to-three majority on the blueribbon National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Commission panel recommended an immediate 25 to 40-cent increase in the federal fuel tax between 2008 and 2013.

# Key To Highway Trust Fund

**Raising the gas tax is only way to save transportation infrastructure
Warburg ’11**<Assistant Executive Director of Spur- Planning and Urban Research Association> “Why a Gas Tax Extension Is No Longer Enough to Save Our Roads, Jobs — or Economy” 11/8/11, <http://www.spur.org/blog/2011-09-08/why-gas-tax-extension-no-longer-enough-save-our-roads-jobs-%E2%80%94-or-economy>

On Tuesday, Congress returned to Washington with only 11 days to pass essential legislation: the reauthorization of all major national transit and highway projects and the gas tax that funds them. Stalemate or delay will cost [billions of dollars and millions of jobs](http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/178989-obama-delay-in-passing-highway-bill-could-cost-thousands-of-jobs), shutting down highway and transit construction projects nationwide and putting hundreds of thousands of Americans out of work in the midst of an unstable, jobless recovery. Passage of regular infrastructure spending packages used to be routine in Washington, but in today’s fractious Congress, all bets are off. Already this summer we’ve witnessed costly Congressional standoffs over the raising of the debt ceiling and the funding of the FAA — other spending measures that used to attract bipartisan support. In less contentious times, a federal surface transportation bill is passed roughly every six years. This regular package uses our current gas tax of 18.4 cents per gallon to generate the billions of dollars necessary to maintain our interstate highway network, many transit systems around the country, bicycling and pedestrian facilities, and freight-rail operations. Even in periods of divided government, infrastructure investment has typically provided an area of consensus. Investment in reliable roads and transit provides immediate construction jobs and lays the foundation necessary for long-term economic growth. Yet in today’s hyper-partisan environment, the two parties have failed to agree upon a new bill, allowing nearly two years to pass since the last package expired. During this time the nation’s infrastructure has relied on a series of tensely negotiated extensions that provide no new direction or funds for the improvements desperately needed to the country’s decaying bridges, highways and transit networks. The mounting shortfall in government spending is undermining the economy more and more. The most recent [report by the American Society of Civil Engineers](http://www.asce.org/reportcard/) states that “glaring deficiencies in America’s surface transportation systems drained households and businesses of nearly $130 billion last year, including about $97 billion of increased costs to operate and repair vehicles and $32 billion of increased travel time because of congestion and delays.” Investment is sorely needed, but the latest temporary measure authorizing spending on federal infrastructure is about to expire, and the divided Congress is likely to spend the next two weeks bickering over another mere extension. In fact, what is desperately needed is not another extension, but a new long-term bill — one that raises the gas tax. In most of the developed world, users pay a duty on gasoline at the pump. The revenue goes directly into investment in the country’s transportation infrastructure. Since 1932, maintenance of the United State’s transportation infrastructure has been largely funded through this kind of user fee. Every president Since Herbert Hoover has raised the federal gas tax to keep apace with the country’s transportation needs. Presidents Reagan and Bush Sr. raised it the most of any. But since 1993 the fee has been stalled at 18.4 cents, a mere 5 percent of the [$3.62 that the average American pays](http://fuelgaugereport.aaa.com/?redirectto=http://fuelgaugereport.opisnet.com/index.asp) for a gallon of gas and about a tenth of what the average European pays. Our political leaders’ failure to raise the tax for the last two decades means the Highway Trust Fund faces what the Washington Post calls [“a near term insolvency crisis”](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/05/AR2010020504790_2.html?sid=ST2010100402281)— just as most of America’s midcentury infrastructure has started to need upgrading. Experts from [Gregory Mankiw of the Wall Street Journal](http://gregmankiw.blogspot.com/2006/10/pigou-club-manifesto.html)to [Dan Akerson, the CEO of General Motors](http://news.firedoglake.com/2011/06/09/ceo-of-gm-raise-the-gas-tax-by-1/)have insisted a gas tax is necessary to maintain safe and functional roads, bridges and transit — and to reduce the economic losses caused by the inadequacy of the country’s transportation network. Our current gas tax is much too low to support a first-world level of infrastructure. And we will be lucky to see it merely extended this fall. Raising the gas tax is a political non-starter in a Congress cowed by the specter of the Tea Party. What the United States really, desperately needs is not another temporary extension, arrived at after extended and wasteful posturing. We need real investment in our roads and transit. That means passing a comprehensive new surface transportation bill and raising the gas tax to a level that can support first-world transportation infrastructure for our first-world (last time we checked, anyway) country

# Key To Highway Trust Fund

**89% of Highway Trust Fund monies come from the gas tax**

**National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Commission 2009** (“Paying our way: A New Framework for Transportation Finance”, <http://financecommission.dot.gov/Documents/NSTIF_Commission_Final_Report_Mar09FNL.pdf> )

**Motor fuel taxes yield far greater revenue than the other HTF funding mechanisms: about 89 percent of the HTF net receipts. Currently, each 1¢ per gallon of gasoline tax yields approximately $1.4 billion annually and each 1¢ per gallon of diesel fuel tax yields approximately $400 million.** Other revenues (not based on motor fuel consumption) account for only about 11 percent of the HTF net receipts. Although official data on 2008 receipts were not available when this report was finalized, preliminary figures indicate that HTF net revenues in 2008 were about $3 billion lower than in 2007. 18 Compared with 2007 actual revenues, 2008 preliminary revenues from motor fuel taxes were relatively constant, as were HVUT revenues. Revenues from the retail tax on trucks and the tire tax, however, apparently declined by about 62 percent and 16 percent, respectively.

# Highway Trust Fund Key To Infrastructure

Highway trust fund key to nation’s infrastructure
Donohue ‘08 President and CEO of the United States Chamber of Commerce> “Cash to Shore Up the Highway Trust Fund,” <http://www.freeenterprise.com/2008/09/cash-to-shore-u/>

Economic growth, public safety, and long-term development plans will be threatened if Congress does not act now to shore up the nearly bankrupt Highway Trust Fund. Congress must quickly approve legislation transferring $8 billion from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund or it will go broke. Any reduction or delay in spending would disrupt projects already underway and further delay necessary maintenance, upgrades, and expansion of our nation’s infrastructure. The Highway Trust Fund has been hammered by a sharp reduction in fuel purchases as Americans drive billions of fewer miles due to high gas prices, depriving the Highway Trust Fund of badly needed revenue. Without adequate investments, our crumbling infrastructure will only get worse, increasing congestion and pollution and undermining economic growth and job creation. An infusion of cash is only a short-term fix. We must develop a long-term solution when we reauthorize the surface transportation law next year. Every funding option must be put on the table. Well-maintained and adequately funded roads and bridges are critical to America’s global competitiveness, job creation, the environment, and our standard of living. Delay is no longer an option. The crisis is at hand.

Highway trust fund is effective- just needs more funding
Millar ’11<President, American Public Transportation Association> “Transforming the Highway Trust Fund” <http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2011/02/transforming-the-highway-trust.php?comments=expandall#comments>

The highway trust fund is a proven mechanism for financing public transit and highway projects. The Administration’s proposal ensures that the existing user fees paid for highways and transit will continue to be used for those purposes. If adequate new revenue sources can be found, then creating two new accounts for rail and large projects of national and regional significance regardless of mode could provide the long term stable funding mechanism necessary to make progress in these areas. But as several policy commissions, others on this blog and the President himself have stated, the Highway Trust Fund will not support even current levels of investments for the transit and highway program, let alone an expansion. Simply put, there is not enough money to meet the nation’s needs. We strongly urge Congress to work with the President to create a predictable long-term stable funding to invest in highways, public transportation, freight and passenger rail.

# Generic Economy Cards

**Gas tax key to rebuilding highways and maintaining competitiveness**

Perk ’11 Rob, Member of the Natural Resource Defense Council Staff, Author “Learn to Love the Gas Tax” December 2, 2011 (<http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/rperks/whos_afraid_of_a_gas_tax.html>)

In reality, the reverse is true when it comes to gas taxes. Investing in transportation facilitates reinvestment in America that is vital to economic growth. The U.S., once No. 1 in the world for its infrastructure, has fallen to 15th. China and India are cruising ahead with transportation infrastructure investments each at 9% of GDP compared to 2% in the U.S. This lackluster level of investment prevails despite well-documented needs -- aging infrastructure, growing population, and shifting demographics. An upgraded, well-maintained, operationally-efficient transportation system, on the other hand, offers a significant competitive edge. Plus, the gas tax spreads the burden over hundreds of millions of system beneficiaries.

**Highways help the economy--competitiveness**

Aschauer 11 (David Alan Senior Economist Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. “Intrastructure and the Economy”. 2011 <http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1492&context=jcwre&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fscholar.google.com%2Fscholar%3Fas_ylo%3D2011%26q%3Dhighways%2Beconomy%26hl%3Den%26as_sdt%3D0%2C5#search=%22highways%20economy%22>)

Thus, a root cause of the decline in the competitive position of the United States in the international economy may be found in the low rate at which our country has chosen to add to its stock of highways, port facilities, airports, and other facilities which aid in the production and distribution of goods and services. In the words of Nancy Rutledge, past Executive Director of the National Council on Public Works Improvement, “~i]f we spend too little on public works...society loses more than the direct public cost. In the long run, our ability to compete in the international economy will be weakened, and our standard of living will suffer.”

# Plan Solves Deficit Spending

#### *Gas tax creates $100 billion of revenue every year, allows for realistic deficit reductionFerguson 08**<Ph.D candidate at University of Northern Iowa “Should the United States Increase the Federal Gasoline Tax?” University of Northern Iowa* [*http://business.uni.edu/economics/Themes/ferguson.pdf*](http://business.uni.edu/economics/Themes/ferguson.pdf)*>*

#### *With the ever growing budget deficit,* ***politicians are searching for ways to raise revenue for the government.*** *Some have proposed to use revenue from an increased gasoline tax to cover government spending. Mankiw believes that* ***if the gasoline tax is increased by one dollar, $100 billion will be generated in one year in increased revenue*** *[Mankiw, 2006b, A12].* ***This increased revenue can be used to start covering the deficit currently facing the U. S. government.*** *Those who oppose the increase in the gasoline tax believe it will only increase the government’s spending. They believe that if the government generates more revenue, the government will increase its spending. If this is the case, increasing the gasoline tax will not help decrease the deficit but may make it worse.* ***Government spending is not as simple as opponents of the gasoline tax make it seem.*** *The amount of government expenditures is dependent on many factors including current economic conditions, which party is in office, the current military situation, and other factors.*

**Refusal to raise gas taxes contributes to deficit spending and excessive borrowing**

**Wachs 2003** (Martin, “A dozen reasons for raising gas taxes”, Research Reports, Institute of Transportation Studies (UCB), UC Berkeley, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2000f8t0#page-4>)

In the absence of growing fuel tax revenues, the fastest-growing source of money for transportation projects and programs has been borrowing. Between 1995 and 1999, while collections of user fees (taxes and tolls) rose by only 18%, borrowing for transportation projects rose by 92%. Proponents of a variety of forms of borrowing prefer to call this approach “creative financing.” A few states have created “infrastructure banks,” and others have developed financial instruments that enable them to borrow against anticipated future federal appropriations and future revenues from a variety of taxes earmarked for transportation. But in the end, borrowed money is not really revenue at all, since it must later be repaid using revenues from taxes or user fees. In addition to repaying the borrowed funds, the state must bear the cost of interest, which, if funds are held for twenty or thirty years, often exceeds the value of the principal.

# Plan Solves Systemic Economic Problems

**Increasing the gas tax would alleviate the systematic drag that congestion and accidents provide upon the economy—saves hundreds of billions**

Dubner and Levitt ‘8 (Economists and Freakonomics blog authors. “Not so free ride: the trouble with negative externalities.” The New York Times. April 20, 2008)

Which of these externalities is the most costly to U.S. society? According to current estimates, carbon emissions from driving impose a societal cost of about $20 billion a year. That sounds like an awful lot until you consider congestion: a Texas Transportation Institute study found that wasted fuel and lost productivity due to congestion cost us $78 billion a year. The damage to people and property from auto accidents, meanwhile, is by far the worst. In a 2006 paper, the economists Aaron Edlin and Pinar KaracaMandic argued that accidents impose a true unpaid cost of about $220 billion a year. (And that’s even though the accident rate has fallen significantly over the past 10 years, from 2.72 accidents per million miles driven to 1.98 per million; overall miles driven, however, keep rising.) So, with roughly three trillion miles driven each year producing more than $300 billion in externality costs, drivers should probably be taxed at least an extra 10 cents per mile if we want them to pay the full societal cost of their driving. How can this be achieved? Higher tolls, especially variable tolls like congestion pricing, are one option. This seems to have worked well in London but was recently quashed in New York City, where the political hurdles proved too high. A higher gas tax might also work. If a typical car gets 20 miles to the gallon, then the proper tax would be about $2 per gallon. But with the current high market price for gas and the political hysterics attached to it — well, good luck with that one.

# \*\*\*Case Arguments\*\*\*

# AT: Regressive

**Increased gas taxes are not as regressive as the alternatives and actually benefit the poor in many ways**

**Wachs 2003** (Martin, “A dozen reasons for raising gas taxes”, Research Reports, Institute of Transportation Studies (UCB), UC Berkeley, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2000f8t0#page-4>)

People almost instinctively ask whether higher fuel taxes wouldn’t harm the poor. Upon close reflection, this concern would appear to be exaggerated and, depending upon specific circumstances, higher fuel taxes might even benefit lower income communities. This is so, in part, because the fairness of a tax is a complex matter. Regressivity is one aspect of the fairness of a tax. Regressivity is usually measured by the extent to which the proportion of a population’s income is taken by the tax as income rises. When the poor have a larger fraction of their income taken by a tax than do higher income groups, the tax is said to be regressive; a progressive tax is one that takes a greater fraction of income from richer people. Fuel taxes and sales taxes are both moderately regressive. Regressivity is by itself an inadequate test of fairness. The income tax provides a perfect example of this. Income taxes are in principle very progressive because richer people occupy higher tax brackets and pay higher income tax rates than poorer people. On the other hand, polls have shown that a majority of Americans think the income tax is unfair because the rich benefit from tax deductions that are not available to the poor. While a flat income tax would be less progressive, many people consider it to be fairer than our graduated income tax. An analogous situation exists with respect to the fuel tax. Rich people and truckers drive more than poor people, and thus pay a larger share of fuel tax collections. Nevertheless, the fuel tax is fairly regressive because the poor do pay a higher proportion of their income in fuel tax than the rich. On the other hand, there are at least three ways in which the fuel tax appears to be fairer than alternative ways of funding transportation. First, only those poor people who drive actually pay the fuel tax, so only the poor who benefit from the road system pay the tax, while those whose poverty precludes them from driving are not charged. Second, the users of public transit as a group have much lower incomes than highway users; to the extent that fuel taxes are “diverted” to transit expenditures, lower income people are the primary beneficiaries. Third in most jurisdictions in which the fuel tax is kept low, the most rapidly rising alternative source of transportation finance is sales taxes, which, according to most measures, are roughly as regressive as gasoline taxes. But, sales taxes are paid by people whether or not they use highways, and are less fair because they charge the non-driving poor as much for highways as they charge the poor who do drive. Fourth, it is reasonable to expect that jurisdictions that increase fuel taxes earmarked for transportation are less likely to raise general sales taxes specifically to use their proceeds for transportation improvements. Since most jurisdictions have some practical upper bound on their sales taxing capacity, greater reliance on fuel taxes for transportation allows governments to devote their general sales taxing capacity to the support of non-transportation programs that could benefit everyone including the non-driving poor — such as education, police services, and health care. In many circumstances, therefore, reliance on earmarked transportation fuel taxes would benefit the poor by providing them with both lower general sales taxes and a higher level of non-transportation services that rely for funding upon general sales taxes.

# AT: Regressive

**The best economic studies destroy the notion that gas taxes are regressive—proportionately, the poor are hurt the least by gas taxes**

**Poterba 1991** (MIT Economist, Is the Gasoline Tax Regressive? Tax Policy and the Economy, Volume 5, ed. David Bradford, <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c11271.pdf>)

This paper argues that annual expenditure provides a more reliable indicator of household well-being than annual income. Whether a given tax is regressive should therefore be analyzed by testing whether it places higher burden on low-expenditure households than on their high-expenditure counterparts. My empirical analysis uses data from the Consumer Expenditure Survey to compute the share of total expenditures that high-spending and low-spending households devote to retail gasoline purchases. This alternative approach to measuring the distributional burden of gasoline taxes yields results that are strikingly different from those using the traditional approach based on annual income. Low-expenditure households devote a smaller share of their budget to gasoline than do their counterparts in the middle of the expenditure distribution. Although households in the top 5% of the total spending distribution spend significantly less on gasoline (as a share of expenditures) than those who are less well off, gasoline's expenditure share is much more stable across the population than the ratio of gasoline outlays to current income. The reduced estimate of gasoline tax regressivity is not an inherent feature of using expenditures rather than income as a basis for assessing incidence. Some other energy expenditures, such as electricity, exhibit different cross-sectional patterns with much higher expenditure shares for low- rather than high-income households.

**The poor actually spend less on gasoline proportionate to other classes—the best economic studies prove**

**Poterba 1991** (MIT Economist, Is the Gasoline Tax Regressive? Tax Policy and the Economy, Volume 5, ed. David Bradford, <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c11271.pdf>)

Claims of the regressivity of gasoline taxes typically rely on annual surveys of consumer income and expenditures, which show that gasoline expenditures are a larger fraction of income for very low-income households than for middle- or high-income households. This paper argues that annual expenditure provides a more reliable indicator of household well-being than annual income. It uses data from the Consumer Expenditure Survey to reassess the claim that gasoline taxes are regressive by computing the share of total expenditures that high-spending and lowspending households devote to retail gasoline purchases. This alternative approach shows that low-expenditure households devote a smaller share of their budget to gasoline than do their counterparts in the middle of the expenditure distribution. Although households in the top 5% of the total spending distribution spend less on gasoline than those who are less well off, the share of expenditure devoted to gasoline is much more stable across the population than the ratio of gasoline outlays to current income. The gasoline tax thus appears far less regressive than conventional analyses suggest.

# AT: Regressive

**No link—lifetime analysis finds that gas taxes compassionately serve low-income households**

Aldy, 12 [Joseph E. Aldy, Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, USA, March 1, 2012, “A Tax-Based Approach to Slowing Global Climate Change” (http://taxblog.com/jealdy/tax-based-approach-slowing-global-climate-change/)]

Low-income households are more vulnerable to increases in the price of energy-intensive goods, such as electricity, home heating fuels, and gasoline, because they spend a larger share of their budget on these items compared with wealthier households. The regressivity of CO2 taxes—reflected by the greater burden-to-income ratio for lower-income groups than for higher- income groups—varies by the time frame of measurement. Generally, analysts prefer using a measure of lifetime income in incidence analysis, as this better reflects households’ long-run consumption possibilities, though measuring lifetime income presents difficult technical and data challenges. Studies that use a measure of lifetime, as opposed to annual, income find that CO2 taxes are less regressive than static analyses suggest (see Parry et al. 2006 for a review). Traditional cap-and-trade systems with free allowance allocation provide no mechanism for addressing concerns about the disproportionate burden of higher energy prices on lower- income households. In fact, they make the problem worse by widening the disparity in burden- to-income ratios among lower- and higher-income households. The distribution of free allowances with market value raises firm profits and equity values; this ultimately benefits shareholders, who tend to be concentrated in upper-income groups. In fact, Dinan and Rogers (2002) find that a cap-and-trade system with free allocation mitigating CO2 emissions by 15 percent overcompensates the wealthiest households, as their additional capital income substantially exceeds the burden on them from higher energy prices. In contrast, under a CO2 tax or auctioned allowance system, policymakers can address fairness concerns, at least in part, by recycling some of the revenue in ways that disproportionately benefit low-income households, such as reductions in payroll taxes, or increases in income tax thresholds. For example, Metcalf (2007) outlines a scheme for a $15 per ton tax on CO2 emissions ($55 per ton of carbon) in the United States, with revenues funding payroll tax rebates in a manner that imposes the same approximate burden-to-income ratio across income deciles. Some elderly or other nonworking households, however, do not benefit from payroll tax reductions and may require compensation through other means, such as targeted energy assistance programs. Recycling CO2 tax revenues in ways that disproportionately help lower-income households may involve some sacrifice of economic efficiency compared with across-the-board reductions in distortionary taxes, although the potential empirical magnitude of these losses has not received attention in the literature.

# AT: Coercion—Shift

**The alt is impossible—lack of gas taxes just means it comes from other, more coercive sources.**

**Wachs 2003** (Martin, “A dozen reasons for raising gas taxes”, Research Reports, Institute of Transportation Studies (UCB), UC Berkeley, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2000f8t0#page-4>)

Reluctance to increase federal and state gasoline taxes does not mean that consumers are going to pay less for transportation. Declining revenue from gasoline taxes, coupled with continually rising costs, means that money to support transportation infrastructure has to come from other sources. Like everyone else, I would prefer not to pay more in taxes. But, declining fuel tax revenue leads to increases in alternative forms of taxation, which I believe are inferior to fuel taxes.

# AT: Coercion—Gas Tax>Free Market

**Turn: Free market principles ensure climate destruction—only a gasoline tax can hope to reverse the trend**

Max, 2012(Study suggests gas tax hike to improve car fuel efficiency”, NY Daily News, http://articles.nydailynews.com/2012-02-08/news/31039477\_1\_gas-prices-regular-gallon-gas-tax)

It’s official – we don’t want cars that get 200 or more miles to the gallon, and it’s consumers’ fault, not automakers’. A new report issued by Massachusetts Institute of Technology economist Christopher Knittel says major innovations in miles-to-the-gallon have been stymied by cars that are larger and more powerful than they were 30 years ago. Between 1980 and 2006, the average gas mileage of vehicles sold in the United States increased by slightly more than 15 percent — a relatively modest improvement, says Knittel. “But during that time, the average weight of those vehicles increased 26 percent, while their horsepower rose 107 percent. All factors being equal, fuel economy actually increased by 60 percent between 1980 and 2006.” If cars had stayed the same weight and size since 1980, says Knittel, we’d all be getting an average of 73 MPG instead of our current average of 27. “Most of that technological progress has gone into [compensating for] weight and horsepower,” he says, adding that we ought to make drivers cough up for their own pollution. “When it comes to climate change, leaving the market alone isn’t going to lead to the efficient outcome,” Knittel says. “The right starting point is a gas tax.” Knittel conducted his study by using data from auto trade journals, manufacturers and data from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, which revealed that Americans have chosen to buy larger, less fuel-efficient vehicles over the last 30 years despite far more public awareness of pollution, global warming and other serious environmental issues. In 1980, for example, light trucks accounted for about 20 percent of passenger vehicles sold in America. By 2004, light trucks, including SUVs, accounted for 51 percent of sales. And despite current national gas prices being higher than they’ve ever been in the history of the internal combustion vehicle - $3.48 per regular gallon - gas prices dropped by 30 percent when adjusted for inflation between 1980 and 2004, Knittel says. The blame, he says, lies with the consumer, not the seller. “I find little fault with the auto manufacturers, because there has been no incentive to put technologies into overall fuel economy,” Knittel says. “Firms are going to give consumers what they want, and if gas prices are low, consumers are going to want big, fast cars. I think 98 percent of economists would say that we need higher gas taxes.”

# AT: SQ Fuel Efficiency Solves

**Gasoline will still dominate the market for domestic transportation for at least the next 3 decades**

**Wachs 2003** (Martin, “A dozen reasons for raising gas taxes”, Research Reports, Institute of Transportation Studies (UCB), UC Berkeley, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2000f8t0#page-4>)

Over the long term it is probably not wise to rely on fuel taxes to finance roads or transit systems. The current development of hybrid engines which dramatically improve fuel economy is only a hint of changes likely to occur over the coming two to three decades. The world’s supply of petroleum is finite, and we are already developing a variety of bio-fuels and other synthetic fuels. Fuel cells are seen by many as the likely source of motive power for the future, and they may not in the longer term use petroleum-based fuels. At the very least, over a longer period of time we can foresee a changing and uncertain relationship between travel and the consumption of petroleum based fuels. We could, of course, tax hydrogen or biofuels as we do gasoline. Doing so, however, would likely conflict with other policy goals like reducing pollution and achieving energy independence, so in the long term we will undoubtedly charge on the basis of road use rather than fuel use. Dramatic improvements in fuel economy, whatever their source, make fuel taxes less promising in the future as the fundamental instrument of transportation finance. But, every reasonable projection of technological change would indicate that the use of gasoline and diesel fuel will dominate the market for surface transportation fuel for at least two decades, and probably three.

# AT: Alternative Taxation schemes

**Fuel taxes are critical to the inevitable transition to more technologically advanced collection schemes**

**Wachs 2003** (Martin, “A dozen reasons for raising gas taxes”, Research Reports, Institute of Transportation Studies (UCB), UC Berkeley, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2000f8t0#page-4>)

Traffic will continue to grow and funds will be needed for transportation infrastructure construction, operation, and maintenance. User fees will still be a valid basis thirty years from now for financing that infrastructure, even as fuel taxes decline in usefulness. Electronic toll collection is growing very dramatically and is probably the way we will charge users of transportation facilities in the future. People will someday soon pay electronically for each use of the system, with charges reflecting the cost of using particular facilities at particular times of day by vehicles having particular characteristics. While the technology by which this will be achieved is advancing, there is a need to the address enormous institutional changes that will be needed to transition from the current system. During that transition, fuel taxes will remain viable for a large though decreasing proportion of the vehicle fleet.

# Phased In Gas Tax

**Phased-in gas tax would result in a lower demand for gas**

Blodget, ’11. Henry Blodget, CEO of Business Insider. Is it time for an oil tax, the Huffington Post. 2/25/2011.

Over the long-term of course, given a finite supply of oil and ever-increasing demand for it, oil prices are going to keep on rising. And remaining in denial about that--and postponing the day that we actually deal with it--isn't going to help anyone. So what can we do about it? Well, we can develop a comprehensive long-term energy policy. This policy would include LONG-TERM [investments](http://articles.businessinsider.com/2011-02-24/news/29986406_1_gas-prices-gas-tax-oil-supply) in sustainable energy sources (not short-term tax breaks that can be killed at any time), as well as investments in other conventional energy sources that aren't oil. And, it would include a phased-in gas tax that would gradually increase prices at the pump to make alternatives relatively more affordable and encourage companies and consumers to conserve more gas. Importantly, this gas tax should not a flat-rate gas tax. It should be a floating-rate one...one that would adjust to the price of oil (and help minimize price spikes). And it should not suddenly be enacted now, because then it would be another hammer blow to a fragile economy. It should be phased in over several years, with a year or two of warning, so people and industries have enough time to adjust.

# Good Solvency Evidence

**Raising Gas Taxes has a plethora of benefits including reducing oil dependence**

Rossi, 2012. AJ Rossi, Political Science and Economics student at the University of Pennsylvania. Why Gasoline Should Cost $10 per Gallon, NextGenJournal. February 3, 2012.

It is not just that Americans are stereotypically lazy and don’t want to ride bikes or take the subway; we live in a geographically spread-out nation with a life style that requires more constant commuting over larger distances than in most other countries. The only way people will change their consumption habits is if either the supply runs out or prices rise. Thus, raising the price of gasoline through the federal excise tax will help free America from its reliance. European gas prices are nearly double what Americans pay at the pump, and only Kuwait and Saudi Arabia (both net exporters of oil) charge lower gasoline taxes than the U.S. The federal excise tax on gasoline is 18.4¢ per gal, and it has not changed in over 18 years. What impetus is there for technological innovation when gas is so inexpensive? Mandates requiring higher efficiency standards for vehicles are merely a stop-gap measure; fuel efficiency only reduces our carbon footprint and oil dependency so much. In fact, investing in higher MPG technology allows the driving population to drive more than before, but with the same gasoline consumption. Taxing gasoline would not only help relieve America’s dependence on oil, fight global climate change, and stimulate R&D in alternative energy sources and vehicle design, but it would raise much needed revenue for the federal government. With an embarrassing public transportation system (compare Amtrak to Eurorail, for example), heavy reliance on individual cars and trucks has resulted in significant wear to our highway infrastructure. The gasoline tax was last raised in 1993, and even then it was not indexed for inflation. The result? Erosion in the value of the tax and decreasing finances for the Highway Trust Fund, leading to a lack of maintenance of roads, bridges, and toll systems. Additional revenue from the tax could be put toward further improving (rather than simply repairing) our urban and regional public transportation systems, as well as reducing public transport fares in an effort to increase the use of these services. Unfortunately, any significant increase in the gas tax has little hope of implementation, especially in today’s tenuous economic situation. Increasing the final price of oil at the pump would be extremely painful in the short run before non-cost-prohibitive alternatives fully reach the market, something that politicians cannot afford with elections looming. Consumers’ purchasing power would be negatively affected, and the economy as a whole would suffer. At least, that is what the powerful oil lobbyists want you to believe. If, as oil producers argue, gasoline is so vital to the American economy, an increase in the price per barrel would cause a serious shock, yet manufacturers and consumers would have no alternative but to continue buying due to the inelasticity of demand. In reality, however, the demand for gasoline is responsive to changes in price. Look no further than the large decrease in gallons purchased during July 2008 and then in June 2011 when average gas prices neared or eclipsed $4 per gallon. During that time, the number of hybrid cars purchased also spiked. These trends reflect the reality that, for many Americans, much of driving is discretionary, both in terms of the number of miles driven and the unnecessary ownership of gas-guzzling SUV’s. Despite its positive economic consequences, the gas tax – like most taxes – is highly unpopular. Nearly everyone drives a car and must buy gas, and no politician wants to displease the majority of his or her constituents. This pressure is further compounded by domestic oil producers who have clear interests in keeping the gas tax low (especially if the demand for gasoline is at all elastic). Gas tax proponents, meanwhile, are comprised primarily of eco-minded environmentalists or producers/developers of alternative energy sources such as wind, hydrogen fuel cells, nuclear, geothermal, and solar. We can see the conflict between these opposing interest groups in the current presidential campaign rhetoric.

# Good Solvency Evidence

#### Gas tax solves econ, reliance on foreign oil and environmental concernsMankiw ’06*(Professor of Economics at Harvard> “Raise the Gas Tax” Greg Mankiw October 2006* [*http://gregmankiw.blogspot.com/2006/10/pigou-club-manifesto.html*](http://gregmankiw.blogspot.com/2006/10/pigou-club-manifesto.html)*)*

With the midterm election around the corner, here's a wacky idea you won't often hear from our elected leaders: **We should raise the tax on gasoline.** Not quickly, but **substantially**. I would like to see Congress **increase the gas tax by $1 per gallon, phased in gradually by 10 cents per year over the next decade.** Campaign consultants aren't fond of this kind of proposal, but policy wonks keep pushing for it. **Here's why:** *The environment*. **The burning of gasoline emits several pollutants. These include carbon dioxide, a cause of global warming. Higher gasoline taxes**, perhaps as part of a broader carbon tax, **would be the most direct** and least invasive policy to address environmental concerns. *Road congestion*. Every time I am stuck in traffic, I wish my fellow motorists would drive less, perhaps by living closer to where they work or by taking public transport. A higher gas tax would give all of us the incentive to do just that, reducing congestion on streets and highways. *Regulatory relief*. Congress has tried to reduce energy dependence with corporate average fuel economy standards. These **CAFE rules are heavy-handed government regulations replete with unintended consequence**s: They are partly responsible for the growth of SUVs, because light trucks have laxer standards than cars. In addition, by making the car fleet more fuel-efficient, the regulations encourage people to drive more, offsetting some of the conservation benefits and exacerbating road congestion. **A higher gas tax would accomplish everything CAFE standards do, but without the adverse side effects.** *The budget*. Everyone who has studied the numbers knows that the federal budget is on an unsustainable path. When baby-boomers retire and become eligible for Social Security and Medicare, either benefits for the elderly will have to be cut or taxes raised. The most likely political compromise will include some of each. A $1 per gallon hike in gas tax would bring in $100 billion a year in government revenue and make a dent in the looming fiscal gap. *Tax incidence*. A basic principle of tax analysis -- taught in most freshman economics courses -- is that the burden of a tax is shared by consumer and producer. In this case, as a higher gas tax discouraged oil consumption, the price of oil would fall in world markets. As a result, the price of gas to consumers would rise by less than the increase in the tax. Some of the tax would in effect be paid by Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. *Economic growth*. Public finance experts have long preached that consumption taxes are better than income taxes for long-run economic growth, because income taxes discourage saving and investment. Gas is a component of consumption. An increased reliance on gas taxes over income taxes would make the tax code more favorable to growth. It would also encourage firms to devote more R&D spending to the search for gasoline substitutes. *National security*. Alan **Greenspan called for higher gas taxes recently. "It's a national security issue,"** he said. **It is hard to judge how much high oil consumption drives U.S. involvement in Middle Eastern politics. But Mr. Greenspan may well be right that the gas tax is an economic policy with positive spillovers to foreign affairs**. Is it conceivable that the policy wonks will ever win the battle with the campaign consultants? I think it is. Even after a $1 hike, the U.S. gas tax would still be less than half the level in, say, Great Britain, which last I checked is still a democracy. But don't expect those vying for office to come around until the American people recognize that while higher gas taxes are unattractive, the alternatives are even worse.

# Good Solvency Evidence

#### Gas tax solves current climate problems- creates demand for fuel-efficient transit—98% of economists agree *Global Network Consulting ’12* *<a strategy consulting firm and member of*[*Monitor*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monitor_Group) *Group, that helps businesses, NGOs, and governments use*[*scenario planning*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scenario_planning)*to plan for multiple possible futures> “Carbon Emissions: Is gas tax the answer?”* [*http://gnconsulting.com.br/site/index.php?option=com\_k2&view=item&id=3857:carbon-emissions-is-a-gas-tax-the-answer&Itemid=245*](http://gnconsulting.com.br/site/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=3857:carbon-emissions-is-a-gas-tax-the-answer&Itemid=245)*)*

According to a recent report by Reuters, “…new cars with traditional engines are showing striking fuel efficiency gains thanks to technologies such as turbochargers, direct injection, and engines that shut down when the vehicle stops, then spring back to life when the driver presses the accelerator.” To put a number on all this progress, cars on the road today are 60 percent more fuel efficiency than what we were driving just 20 years ago. Yet for some reason, the average driver has yet to see it translate into a significant boost in gas mileage. For instance, in 1980, the country’s fleet of autos offered car owners an average of about 23 miles per gallon, whereas by 2006 that average increased just slightly to around 27 mpg. So what gives? Christopher Knittel, an economist at MIT, has sifted through many of these confounding figures and came up with an explanation. All these gains in fuel economy, he says, have been offset by the fact that cars on the road today have also become bigger and more powerful. His analysis found that during that 26 year period, the average curb weight of vehicles increased 26 percent, while their horsepower rose 107 percent. And had that not been the case, a typical vehicle today would boast an average mileage rating of 37 mpg. I know it sounds a bit counter-intuitive but here’s additional evidence of consumers trending toward ever-more muscular cars: In 1980, light trucks represented about 20 percent of passenger vehicles sold in the United States. By 2004, light trucks — including SUVs — accounted for 51 percent of passenger-vehicle sales. To conduct the study, detailed in the journal American Economic Review as part of a report titled “Automobiles on Steroids,” Knittel drew upon data from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, auto manufacturers and trade journals. “I find little fault with the auto manufacturers, because there has been no incentive to put technologies into overall fuel economy,” Knittel said. “Firms are going to give consumers what they want, and if gas prices are low, consumers are going to want big, fast cars.” Even from a mile away, we can all see what he’s getting at. While the benefits of better gas mileage and reduced emissions are attractive selling points, it appears that most consumers would still rather eschew them for something along the lines of an SUV or Dodge Ram. So there you have it. Once again, just more proof that free market forces are at odds with the environmental imperative. Still, the solution Knittel proposes, which works similarly in principle to taxing cigarette smokers, does come off as somewhat radical. “When it comes to climate change, leaving the market alone isn’t going to lead to the efficient outcome,” Knittel said. “The right starting point is a gas tax.” So far, government has opted for a less meddlesome approach to curb emissions by putting the impetus on car manufacturers instead of the consumers. The Obama administration has required that the industry design vehicles that meet certain fuel economy benchmarks known as the Corporate Average Fuel Economy or CAFE standards. For instance, future models are expected to travel an average of 35.5 mpg by 2016, and 54.5 mpg by 2025. These rules, according to Knittel’s calculations, may lead to car companies rolling back the weight and horsepower capacity in future models as well as potentially spurring further innovation in fuel efficiency technologies. But even so, Knittel foresees any such gains being further offset by what he calls a “rebound effect,” where an apparently ideal scenario ends up encouraging people to drive even more. A gas tax, he believes, would create demand for more fuel-efficient cars without as much rebound, the phenomenon through which greater efficiency leads to potentially greater consumption. “I think 98 percent of economists would say that we need higher gas taxes,” he added.

# Good Solvency Evidence

#### **Gas tax tames hostile states and it’s empirically proven- raising gas tax spurs green tech which reduces warmingNguyen ‘12<Freelance science and tech writer, worked for ABC News, U.S News and World Report, MSNBC> “**Carbon emissions: Is a gas tax the answer?” **1/5/12** <http://www.smartplanet.com/blog/thinking-tech/carbon-emissions-is-a-gas-tax-the-answer/9736>>

But in the long run — as difficult as this is to accept — low gasoline prices hurt America more than they help. They encourage continued reliance on gas-powered vehicles and harm the efforts to lower carbon emissions that contribute to global warming. They discourage research into new, nonpolluting transportation energy sources — the single greatest technological challenge of the 21st century. Consider what happened during the early 1980s, when gas prices soared to the then-unheard-of price of $1.38 a gallon. It triggered a surge of research into alternative energy sources such as solar power and electric vehicles. But as soon as prices began to drop, as they did in 1982, so did the rush of investment and research into alternative energy. Adjusted for inflation, that previous average high gas price of $1.38 was the equivalent of $3.14 a gallon. We didn't see average retail prices that high again until this year. But when gas prices and investment in alternative energy fell in this country in the 1980s, they didn't drop everywhere. In Europe and in Japan, high gasoline taxes kept fuel prices relatively high. That encouraged conservation and provided investors with greater confidence that the money they pumped into developing new technologies would earn an acceptable return. The result was that Japanese car companies were the first to market new hybrid cars, and European companies led the way in producing new, cleaner diesel vehicles. American car companies, meanwhile, kept churning out large, gas-guzzling SUVs. After years of failed attempts to increase mileage requirements for new cars — efforts steadfastly opposed by American auto manufacturers and their unions, Congress finally succeeded last year. As a result, U.S. cars must average 35 miles per gallon by 2020. European cars, in contrast, averaged 38 miles per gallon in 2006. If increasing mileage standards has been difficult, hiking gas taxes has been unthinkable. Although the idea is floated occasionally (most incongruously by then-Rep. Dick Cheney in the 1980s, who supported a plan to tax imported oil), it never has received a serious airing. It should. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reported in 2004 that increasing the federal gasoline tax — which has been 18.4 cents a gallon since 1993 — would reduce consumption faster and at less cost than increasing mileage standards. Obviously, it would not be painless. Consumers would be paying significantly higher prices, and the federal Energy Information Administration predicts that as the global recession abates, gasoline prices will resume their upward climb. But the impact of higher gas prices could be offset somewhat by reducing other taxes or through a federal income tax rebate. In the meantime, it would reduce gas consumption significantly. That would help undercut the financial strength of such countries as Iran and Russia **that, armed with a surplus of petrodollars, have been unfriendly to U.S. interests.** And combined with other tax incentives, it would encourage U.S. investment in energy alternatives. The nation that succeeds in developing and deploying new, green technologies will have a major economic advantage in the decades to come. It's crucial that the United States be that nation. Congress should raise the federal gas tax and push America toward innovation and energy independence.

# Good Solvency Evidence

**Gas tax key to the econ, fuel efficiency, lower oil dependency, and repair our highways**

Burgess, 2012 Scott Burgess, Senior Editor for AOL Autos, May 7, 2012, “Opinion: America Needs $1 A Gallon Gas Tax”, http://autos.aol.com/article/america-needs-gas-tax/

As much as it pains me to say this: America needs a $1 a gallon gas tax. And right now would be the perfect time to start. Vote, pass, sign. Please.This gas tax could rebuild America, create jobs, help the auto industry, improve the environment and do something no politician likes to do: Pay as you go. Last week, the Congressional Budget Office released a report that said if car-makers meet the government regulated fuel efficiency standards, the government will lose billions and billions of dollars in gas tax revenue. Please take a moment to relish the irony of unintended consequences. You see, higher fuel standards mean people buy less gas, which may curb America's addiction to oil, but doesn't curb our government's addiction to money. The CBO points out that by 2025, the federal government will lose $57 billion in tax money. This, any government official will tell you, is bad. Worse yet, for the past 10 years, the government has been collecting less money than it spends on the nation's roads. This, most motorists and their tires and suspensions will tell you, is bad. Currently, the government gets 18.5 cents for every gallon of gasoline sold. That money is supposed to go the Highway Trust Fund, where the cash is doled out to fix highways and supplement mass transit projects, minus a few dollars of overhead and handling fees for the Department of Transportation. But that amount was set in 1993, nearly 20 years ago, and it obviously needs to go up, if simply adjusting for inflation. I say, round it up to exactly $1. The time is right While I hate the idea of giving government a nickel more than it needs, right now is a golden opportunity to raise the federal gas tax. It is easy enough to implement. Raise it 10 cents every year for the next 10 years, or 25 cents every year for the next four years. A bold politician might raise it the full dollar right now. I promise, nothing catastrophic will happen. The world will not end. Z mbies will not roam our streets. Doomsday forecasters will gleefully sit in their bunkers and proclaim over ham radios that they were right. Gas will just cost a buck more than it does right now. We'll get over it. We're Americans, and we don't remember anything prior to last fall's TV lineup. In fact, a recent study by Autotrader.com found that more than 70 percent of drivers said they wouldn't change their buying habits for a new vehicle unless gasoline went above $5 a gallon or higher. At current prices, gas prices wouldn't go that high with with the tax, except in a few quarters of the country like the area around Disneyland in Florida. And we could always tell the people gassing up there that the higher gas prices are just part of the European experience at Epcot Center. The CBO says that just raising the current tax 5 cents would cover the future deficit for highway work. But that's not enough. It never is. People know gasoline prices are going to continue to go up. They're ready for prices to climb. Forcing the price of gasoline higher through a tax could significantly change consumer behavior. People will drive less, and they'll carpool more. They'll find innovative ways to work around higher gas prices. A tax could help sell more cars Furthermore, a gas tax would push some people into new, more fuel-efficient vehicles. The evidence is very clear that when gas prices go up, people buy more efficient cars. When gas prices drop, sales of those cars dip. So, jack up the prices of fuel and open dealerships 24 hours a day. There's lots of iron to move. Additionally, a real gas tax – I recommend calling it an oil-based revenue stream – would create an environment that makes the Corporate Average Fuel Economy rules make sense. Right now, CAFÉ is one of the most idiotic, nonsensical regulatory mess of rules on the books. It penalizes an automaker for building a good pickup, truck or SUV. Paying for our future - today Our changing transportation modes in the future require massive cash injections. Cities from Maine to California need to overhaul their public transportation systems (something that should be done before anyone rolls out the pipe dream that is high speed rail), and infrastructure repairs are desperately needed on our nation's roads, highways, bridges and tunnels. Our nation is literally falling apart before our eyes. It needs to be fixed, and it needs to be paid for by the people using it. A gas tax will actually mean when a dollar of work is done, there's a dollar waiting to pay for it. A novel idea, for sure, but one worth exploring.

# \*\*\*States CP\*\*\*

# Unions DA

**CP shifts highway funding to state legislatures with union-busting agendas**

Stirewalt, 11 [Chris Stirewalt, August 31, 2011, Fox News, “Obama Picks Gas Tax For First Round of Fiscal Fight” (http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/08/31/obama-picks-gas-tax-for-first-round-fiscal-fight/)]

President Obama wants Congress to quickly pass an unconditioned extension of the federal gasoline tax**,** which is set to expire at the end of the government’s fiscal year on Sept. 30. The federal gas tax has been 18.4 cents per gallon since 1993 and generates more than $32 billion a year that is then mostly passed out to states for road construction and repair. About 15 percent goes to other federal efforts, like subsidizing public transportation or other efforts to discourage driving. The average American motorist pays about $100 a year in the federal tax. Conservatives in Congress want to cut out the federal middleman and allow states to raise and spend their own road money. Not only would **letting states collect the taxes directly** reduce the money spent on federal behavioral engineering efforts (bike paths etc.), but **would also allow states to avoid federal laws that require union workers be used on highway projects**.

# States Can’t Solve Infrastructure

**States can’t control highways – won’t have necessary money and puts our entire transportation system at risk**

Kain, 2011 Ron Kain, a former chief of staff to Vice President Joe Biden and senior adviser to President Barack Obama on the Recovery Act, Bloomberg News, August 22, 2011, “Tea Party Gas Tax Fix Is Bad Economics, Worse History: Ron Klain”, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-08-23/tea-party-gas-tax-fix-is-bad-economics-worse-history-ron-klain.html

As transportation policy, the notion of the states taking over federal highway work is even more misguided. We have a national road system because we have national transportation needs -- to move people and goods from state to state, region to region. States with many miles of highways and few people are likely to have less revenue to keep up these national roads and less interest in doing so, because many of the goods and visitors are just passing through on their way to someplace else. Trucks carrying goods from Chicago to Seattle, Atlanta to San Francisco and Philadelphia to Los Angeles travel through large, lightly populated Mountain West states that may be unable to finance a world-class highway system for such long-distance needs. Just “letting the states do it” puts our national transportation system at risk. The idea is so misguided that calling it a Third World transportation system is unfair to the Third World: Developing countries are virtually all striving to build the sort of national infrastructure that the Tea Party wants to unwind in the U.S.

# State Diversion Takeouts

Some states only use 20 cents per dollar on transportation infrastructure – means the cp only has 20 percent solvency

Dutzik and Davis 11

Tony Dutzik and Ben Davis (Frontier Group Ph.D. Education Fund) “Do Roads Pay for Themselves?” Frontier Group January 2011 http://www.frontiergroup.org/sites/default/files/reports/Do-Roads-Pay-for-Themselves\_-wUS.pdf

Many states use gas tax revenue for a variety of purposes – While many states have historically dedicated their own state gasoline taxes to highways, that decision has not been universal. According to Federal Highway Administration data, roughly 20 cents of every dollar collected in state gas taxes, motor vehicle fees or tolls nationwide is used for public transportation and other governmental purposes. Many of the states that do use gasoline taxes solely for highways do so because they remain bound by constitutional earmarks of gasoline taxes imposed three-quarters of a century ago, regardless of whether those decisions still make sense today.

Revenue from states gas tax increases end up in its general fund and not spent on transportation

Phaneuf 3/28

Keith M. Phaneuf (CT state budget reporter) “Legislature adopts 'circuit breaker' on gas tax” The CT Mirror March 28 2012 http://www.ctmirror.org/story/15847/democrats-drop-plan-sunset-cap-gas-tax

But Daily didn't mention a point that critics of those gas tax hikes have raised repeatedly since then: fuel tax revenue frequently is spent on non-transportation programs. According to state budget records, in the first five years after those tax increases were ordered, 60 percent of the nearly $1.5 billion raised by the wholesale tax was not spent on transportation. Though Malloy has worked to wean non-transportation programs off gasoline tax revenue since he took office last year, nearly 40 percent of the tax from this year's wholesale levy, about $146 million, still is expected to end up in the general fund.

# Corruption Takeouts

**Less media oversight makes state contracts corrupt**

*NEWMAN**2011* <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/rick-newman/2011/09/23/why-federal-government-trumps-the-states> Why Federal Government Trumps the States ( Society of Professional Journalists Award for Public Service | National Press Club Consumer Journalism Award)

It's worth keeping in mind that the national press corps is centered in Washington and New York, and for all its flaws, there are still hundreds of dogged journalists eager to ferret out wrongdoing and pounce on scandalous behavior. The same goes for interest groups like Common Cause and Consumers Union, which tend to focus their limited efforts on national issues rather than local ones. All of that oversight helps keep Washington more honest than it would otherwise be. In state capitals, by contrast, there's far less oversight and a thin press corps that can't possibly keep tabs on every shady deal.

# Transportation=Federal Issue

Transportation infrastructure is a federal issue

House Transportation and infrastructure Committee 2012
 <http://transportation.house.gov/singlepages.aspx/764>

Ever since the first Congress authorized a lighthouse on Cape Henry, Virginia as an aid to ships sailing through Hampton Roads, the Congress of the United States has been involved in providing for the nation’s transportation infrastructure. In the more than two hundred years since the Cape Henry Lighthouse first shown out across the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, the Committees of the House of Representatives responsible for public works and infrastructure have changed names and grown in scope. What was once the Rivers and Harbors Committee is now the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. However, the mission remains essentially the same: provide a strong backbone upon which the nation’s people and commerce can flourish. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee currently has jurisdiction over all modes of transportation: aviation, maritime and waterborne transportation, roads, bridges, mass transit, and railroads. But the Committee has jurisdiction over other aspects of our national infrastructure, such as clean water and waste water management, the transport of resources by pipeline, flood damage reduction, the economic development of depressed rural and urban areas, disaster preparedness and response, activities of the Army Corps of Engineers and the various missions of the Coast Guard. When combined, these areas of jurisdiction provide a comprehensive view of how communities across the United States are connected to one another, how infrastructure affects the growth and flow of commerce at home and abroad, and how an effective government can improve the lives of its citizens

**Fed pays more for highways then either state or local governments**

**National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Commission 2009** <http://financecommission.dot.gov/Documents/NSTIF_Commission_Final_Report_Mar09FNL.pdf> Section 11142(a) of SAFETEA-LU established the ***National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission***and charged it with analyzing future highway and transit needs and the finances of the Highway Trust Fund and making recommendations regarding alternative approaches to financing transportation infrastructure

Another way to look at the federal share of transportation spending is in terms of capital spending only (i.e., excluding spending on maintenance and operations), since nearly all federal funding is for investment in capital projects. The federal share of total highway capital investment has ranged from 16 percent (in the first year of the HTF) to just over 50 percent in the mid-1980s. As illustrated in Exhibit 2–6, the federal contribution to highway capital spending was 44 percent in 2006, close to the long-term average of about 45 percent. Of the 56 percent non-federal share in 2006, about 34 percent represents state-level investment and about 24 percent represents capital spending by local governments.

# \*\*\*Other CP’s\*\*\*

# AT: VMT CP

**CP Doesn’t solve fuel efficiency as well—no access to the oil advantage**

VTPI: 5/30 (Victory Transport Policy Institute “Fuel Taxes: Increasing Fuel Taxes and Fees” 5.30.12. Web. <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm17.htm>)

Higher fuel prices cause a combination of reduced driving and increased vehicle fuel efficiency (Institute for Transport Studies 2004; CBO 2008). Short-term fuel savings consist of reduced driving and a shift toward more fuel-efficient vehicles owned in multi-vehicle households. Over the long-term, higher fuel prices encourage consumers to purchase more fuel-efficient vehicles. About two-thirds of long-term fuel savings typically come from increased fuel efficiency and one third from reduced vehicle travel. As a result, increased fuel taxes cause greater fuel savings but less vehicle travel reductions then the same amount of revenue collected through per-mile fees, road tolls or parking charges.

**VMT bad-Costly, hackable, and large timeframe**

[**DeWitte**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CJoe%5CDropbox%5CDeWitte) **2011** (UI study: drivers would accept new kind of highway tax <http://thegazette.com/2011/03/17/ui-study-drivers-would-accept-new-kind-of-highway-tax/>)

The type of electronic equipment used in the system likely couldn’t be implemented on a nationwide basis for five to 10 years, Hanley said. The type of cellular service used to transmit the data is too expensive at present rates, and the high cost of deploying the equipment in more than 600 million existing vehicles could also outweigh the benefits, Hanley said. Requiring that the systems be installed as original equipment in new vehicles would significantly reduce the cost, Hanley said, and reduce the vulnerability of systems to tampering.

**Can’t solve inefficacies through fuel tax-not a large enough dent in gas costs**

**Whitty 2007 (**<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/RUFPP/docs/rufpp_finalreport.pdf> Oregon’s Mileage Fee Concept and Road User Fee Pilot Program (James M. Whotty Manager, Office of Innovative Partnerships and Alternative Funding)

The most common issue raised about a flat mileage fee rate structure concerns removal of the incentive for motorists owning gas guzzling vehicles to trade up to fuel efficient vehicles. This point derives from distress about the environmental impact of driving for reasons of climate change and air quality. Considering the mileage fee rate issue from the perspective of environmental sensitivity alone, this point has some validity. Two counter arguments tend to soften the point. First, road charges imposed on vehicles—whether gas taxes or mileage fees—comprise only a minor portion of total fuel costs for operation. This counterpoint argues the change to a flat mileage fee rate would have a negligible impact—cost per mile driven—on vehicle choices. Recent research by Oregon State University provides evidence supporting this point. 83 This argument observes that people trade up for greater fuel efficiency primarily because of fuel cost not tax or fee cost.

# AT: VMT CP

**A VMT tax ignores the needs of rural areas**

Lumis 11.

Cynthia Lumis, Congresswoman from Wyoming. Lummis: Vehicle Miles Traveled Tax Would Be Unfair to Rural Americans, Roll Call. July 21, 2011.

<http://www.rollcall.com/features/Transportation-2011_Policy-Briefing/policy_briefings/Cynthia-Lummis-VMT-Tax-Would-Be-Unfair-to-Rural-Americans-207560-1.html>

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle agree that something must be done to restore the integrity of the country’s transportation infrastructure. But as Washington considers new revenue-raisers for the Highway Trust Fund, as we have seen time and again, some of Washington’s worst ideas can’t seem to be put to rest. This is the case with the disclosure of recent Congressional Budget Office recommendations that would impose a pay-by-the-mile tax to make up for the declining gas tax revenue. Although the vehicle miles traveled tax has been shot down several times in recent years, the CBO memo suggests that this misguided approach is a viable alternative. The VMT tax sounds like music to the ears of Washington bureaucrats and city dwellers — people who drive little and have access to a multitude of options when it comes to public transportation. Unfortunately, this proposal puts rural-living Americans, who have no other alternative, in the back seat. For those of us living in rural areas, the VMT tax approach would be downright hostile to our everyday life. It’s typical for people living in nonurban areas to drive 100 miles to go to work, to the grocery store or to the doctor. It is not difficult to imagine how damaging this tax would be for rural America. As the state with the smallest population but which is ninth-largest, my home state of Wyoming would be one of the hardest hit by a VMT tax. Wyoming’s most recent data report that on an annual basis, the average person in the state drives 17,735 miles, putting Wyoming at the top of the list in terms of miles driven. Undoubtedly, the VMT tax was thought up by people who were raised east of the Mississippi and who do not understand the miles people need to drive in states west of the Mississippi.

# AT: VMT CP

**A VMT tax takes a “Big Brother” approach that violates privacy rights**

Lumis 11.

Cynthia Lumis, Congresswoman from Wyoming. Lummis: Vehicle Miles Traveled Tax Would Be Unfair to Rural Americans, Roll Call. July 21, 2011.

<http://www.rollcall.com/features/Transportation-2011_Policy-Briefing/policy_briefings/Cynthia-Lummis-VMT-Tax-Would-Be-Unfair-to-Rural-Americans-207560-1.html>

Not only would the VMT tax unfairly target nonurban Americans, the approach has significant civil liberty implications and raises considerable privacy concerns. The CBO said implementing the tax would require the installation of “metering equipment in the nation’s cars and trucks.” This Big Brother approach would electronically track miles driven and report it directly to the government to determine the car owner’s taxes. Like many issues facing Washington today, mission creep and redirected spending priorities are core problems for the Highway Trust Fund. Federal gas tax revenues that are paid into the trust fund by highway users should be used for programs that benefit highway users. Currently, a portion of federal highway dollars must be spent on non-highway projects. When Washington shifts highway dollars to highway beautification and cityscapes, it takes dollars away from the maintenance and improvement of our highways. Especially during these difficult budget times, federal gas tax dollars should be used for highways. States can and should have the flexibility to use state gas tax or other revenues for their states’ unique transportation-related needs. While restoring a sense of fiscal discipline to Congress is a top priority, infrastructure spending is an important and necessary task of government. Our nation’s long-term debt requires us to prioritize and economize with every tax dollar. Instead of imposing a tax that disproportionately harms rural Americans, Washington must prioritize and eliminate wasteful spending and give priority to the highway programs

# AT: Toll Roads/License Fees CP

**Tolls and License Fees charge drivers unfairly and don’t change driving behavior**

ITEP, 2011.

ITEP, Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. Building a Better Gas Tax: How to Fix One of State Government’s Least Sustainable Revenue Sources, ITEPnet. December 2011. http://www.itepnet.org/bettergastax/bettergastax.pdf

Unfortunately, these developments appear to be part of a long-term trend. An analysis done by Pew’s Subsidy scope project found that taxes and fees paid by drivers (the most significant of which is the gas tax) make up a smaller share of total highway funding than at any point since the creation of the Interstate Highway System in 1957. While Pew finds various reasons for this decline, they highlight the fact that “states have had trouble increasing fuel taxes to keep up with inflation.” Other lawmakers have proposed additional toll roads or vehicle and license fees in order to fund transportation, often because such approaches are deemed more politically palatable than anything labeled a “tax.” But while both of these approaches do target drivers, they fall short of the ideal in that neither is designed to accurately account for how much one actually drives. Toll roads result in drivers paying vastly different amounts depending on where they drive, while vehicle and license fees charge occasional drivers the same amount as long distance commuters.

# AT: Cap and Trade CP

**Gas taxes solve emissions 5 times better**

Aldy, 12 [Joseph E. Aldy, Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, USA, March 1, 2012, “A Tax-Based Approach to Slowing Global Climate Change” (http://taxblog.com/jealdy/tax-based-approach-slowing-global-climate-change/)]

Uncertainty over the future costs of emissions abatement is inevitable as costs will vary with fuel prices, the strength of domestic energy demand, unpredictable advances in energy- saving technologies, and so forth. Abatement costs, however, will also depend on the choice of emissions control instrument. CO2 taxes fix the price of emissions, and therefore the marginal costs of abatement, while allowing the quantity of emissions to vary with economic conditions. In contrast, a pure cap-and-trade system fixes the quantity of emissions, leaving marginal abatement costs to fluctuate with economic conditions. From the perspective of maximizing expected economic welfare, CO2 taxes have an advantage over cap-and-trade systems. CO2 taxes and cap-and-trade systems both affect the flow of emissions, although it is the atmospheric stock of gases that drive climate change damages. The stock changes slowly, because of the long atmospheric residence of CO2 (on average about a hundred years). For example, the Mauna Loa record dating to 1959 shows that atmospheric CO2 concentrations grow about 1 to 2 parts per million (ppm) annually, on a preindustrial base of about 270 ppm. Because global emissions in any given year have a proportionately small impact on the stock of CO2, the marginal benefits of abatement are essentially perfectly elastic. Figure 1 illustrates the potential welfare effects of ex ante efficient policies in this setting (based on Weitzman 1974). MCE is the expected marginal cost schedule for emissions abatement, and MB is the marginal benefit from abatement. If marginal costs turn out to be higher than anticipated, MCH, then the efficient amount of abatement is QH, whereas if costs are lower than expected, MCL, the optimal abatement is QL. A Pigouvian emissions tax of T\*, equal to marginal benefits, automatically generates these efficient abatement levels, regardless of the position of the marginal cost curve. In contrast, under a fixed emissions cap of QE, abatement will be excessive if marginal costs are higher then expected, or too low if marginal costs are lower than expected, resulting in deadweight losses (DWL), relative to the emissions tax, shown by the shaded triangles in Figure 1. In fact, the welfare differences between carbon emissions taxes and cap-and-trade systems can be striking. For example, simulations in Pizer (2002) and Newell and Pizer (2003) suggest that a CO2 tax could result in welfare gains up to five times those of the expectation-equivalent cap-and-trade system[.7]

# T Cards

The gas tax directly funds mass transit and highways

Bloomberg et al ’11 [Michael, “Transportation Infrastructure Report 2011” Building America’s Future Educational Fund (BAF Ed Fund) is a bipartisan coalition of elected officials [**http://www.bafuture.org/sites/default/files/Report\_0.pdf**](http://www.bafuture.org/sites/default/files/Report_0.pdf)**]**

Government transportation spending, at all levels of government, is overwhelmingly directed toward roads. Since 1956, the largest portion of public funding for transportation infrastructure was dedicated to building and maintaining highways. Although a small portion (15%) of the federal gas tax is dedicated to a fund for mass transit, the vast majority of federal gas tax revenue is spent on highways. The same is true for state gas taxes: 30 states are actually constitutionally or statutorily required to spend 100% of their gas tax revenues on roads. The disproportionate channeling of transportation dollars toward highways has encouraged more and more construction of roads, even as the demand rises for other forms of transportation.

**Transportation infrastructure investment is funded by the gas tax**

Bloomberg et al ’11 [Michael, “Transportation Infrastructure Report 2011” Building America’s Future Educational Fund (BAF Ed Fund) is a bipartisan coalition of elected officials [**http://www.bafuture.org/sites/default/files/Report\_0.pdf**](http://www.bafuture.org/sites/default/files/Report_0.pdf)**]**

In addition to lacking vision, the size and scale of our infrastructure investment is far below adequate. The American transportation network has been under-funded for decades. Only about 1.7% of U.S. GDP is spent on transportation infrastructure. American infrastructure spending in real inflation-adjusted dollars is about the same level now as it was in 1968—when the economy was far smaller. 4 Transportation spending is a complicated patchwork of dollars distributed by federal, state, and local governments, financed by a mix of gas taxes, other motor vehicle and commercial truck taxes, and general revenue funds. About a quarter of transportation dollars are provided by the federal government, with the rest covered by state and local governments. 5 Federal dollars for transportation infrastructure are largely generated by the federal gasoline tax, which has stood at 18.4 cents a gallon since 1993. Federal gas taxes are deposited in the Highway Trust Fund, which was established in 1956 to provide ongoing revenue for federal highway construction. Because the federal gas tax is not tied to inflation, its purchasing power has dwindled substantially over the years. And because American cars have become so much more fuel efficient in recent decades, federal gas taxes have raised fewer and fewer funds, even as Americans drive more and more. As a result, the Highway Trust Fund, which is almost entirely comprised of gas tax receipts, no longer covers the costs of operating and maintaining our highway system. Over the past two years, Congress has bailed it out with $34.5 billion of general revenue funds to cover its outlays. 6 Our government commitment to infrastructure as a share of GDP has shrunk over the years, and now our primary funding stream is drying up. What made sense in the Eisenhower Era does not seem sustainable today

# T Cards

**Gasoline tax is infrastructure investment**

O’Malley ’12 [Martin, governor of Maryland, “Gas tax increase is a necessary investment” 2/23/12 <http://www.thesentinel.com/pgs/opinion/gas-tax-necessary>”]

To create jobs, a modern economy requires modern investments: investments by all of us for all of us. That’s not a Democratic or a Republican idea; it is an economic and historic truth. It was true for our parents, it was true for our grandparents, and it is a truth that has built our state and has built our country. There is a connection between the investments we make today in our infrastructure and our ability to create jobs, expand opportunity and move forward on the road to recovery. Infrastructure investments not only create and save jobs — they help us strengthen our competitiveness, attract foreign investment and bring new businesses to Maryland. Right now, the pace of our transportation infrastructure investments is not sufficient to meet the needs of our state. And our inadequate transportation systems are presenting a growing threat to safety on our roads, to our quality of life, and to our economic competitiveness. Maryland has some of the worst traffic in America. We pay a heavy price in terms of the time we spend idling in bumper-to-bumper traffic when we could be at home with our families. With a growing population and aging infrastructure, we might soon pay an even steeper price — because unlike trees, bridges do not grow stronger with age. Today, with gasoline above $3.50 per gallon, our primary source of revenue for transportation is the same flat 23 cents it was during Gov. Schaefer’s second term, when gas was $1.08 per gallon. Meanwhile, it costs more to paint the Bay Bridge today than it did to build the first span.  As the Baltimore Sun editorializes, “If Maryland continues to embrace a 1992 tax rate, it will have to settle for crumbling 1992-era infrastructure.”To help meet our infrastructure funding needs, I recently introduced legislation to repeal the current sales tax exemption on a gallon of gasoline, phasing it out by two percent a year, with a “braking mechanism” to protect consumers in the event that the price of gas spikes. Our legislation also strengthens protections to better safeguard these new investments in the Trust Fund.An enhanced investment on this scale would allow us to create 7,500 new jobs building needed roads, bridges and public transit throughout our state. And it would give us greater flexibility to move forward with projects like the Purple Line, which would operate between New Carrollton and Bethesda, connecting riders to four branches of the WMATA Metro system. With the right approvals and funding, we could begin construction in 2015, and the Purple Line could be up and running by 2020.I know that every family is still feeling the hurt of this recession. And I know this is a very difficult ask. But nobody else is going to do this for us. We’re all in this together, and we need to work together in order to move our state forward to the better and more prosperous times that lay ahead.