



**Senator Steve Huffman**  
**Senate Transportation Committee**  
**February 28th, 2023**  
**Senate Bill 48**

---

Chairman Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Transportation Committee, thank you for having me here today to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 48, which would suspend the additional diesel tax increase enacted as a part of the transportation budget of the 133<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly (HB 62). The provision increased the tax on diesel fuel by 19 cents per gallon. My intention with this legislation is to bring this 19 cent increase to 10.5 cents per gallon to make the tax equal to that of gasoline. Before the 2019 increase, gasoline and diesel were taxed at the same rate.

According to data obtained from the Ohio Department of Transportation, the additional 8.5 cents per gallon that is taxed on diesel is anticipated to generate roughly \$665,550,000 over the next five years from FY 2023-FY 2027.

It is also estimated that over the next five years the federal infrastructure bill recently passed by Congress and signed by President Biden will provide approximately 11.3 billion dollars to the state of Ohio to spend on our state's infrastructure. The chart included below in my testimony shows the allocation of funds the state is set to receive.

Highways	\$9,200,000,000
Bridges	\$483,000,000
Transit	\$1,200,000,000
Electric Vehicle Charging	\$140,000,000
Airports	\$253,000,000
Total	\$11,276,000,000

As you have probably noticed, the price of gas has significantly increased over the past few years. According to AAA, the average diesel gas price in Ohio today is \$4.72 per gallon with expected increases. When the diesel gas tax went into effect in July of 2019, the cost of diesel gas was roughly \$2.92 per gallon. While the cause of this increase could be debated by this chamber, one thing we could all agree on is that this drastic increase is causing financial difficulties and stress for Ohioans, particularly those who own small businesses or those who have lower levels of disposable income and means.

Before the 2019 gas tax increase, gasoline and diesel were taxed at the same rate. Now, however, the tax on diesel fuel has faced a 45% increase in comparison to that of gasoline. The supply chain crisis, as well as workplace shortages, has caused a strain on the logistics industry, and truckers are continuing to have to pay higher rates. In order to make progress towards addressing our workforce crisis, I believe it is important to make it easier, not harder, for our truckers to operate.

To close, this idea is not one of a partisan nature. Over the last year, President Biden, as well as democratic members of Congress have introduced and supported a three-month federal gas tax holiday. Additionally, Republicans in states such as Michigan, New York, Virginia, Connecticut, Georgia, and California have supported similar measures. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.