From a gas tax repeal in California to a proposed gas tax increase in Missouri and from a lockbox amendment in Connecticut to dueling bonding proposals in Colorado, state ballots this November will include a variety of measures that could have a profound impact on the future of transportation around the country. Transportation is also being raised as an issue in many of the nation’s gubernatorial contests this year. Here’s a roundup of some of the transportation policy-related choices voters will face on Election Day and links to where you can read more.

State and Local Ballot Measures

State and local transportation-related ballot measures to be considered November 6 include several that will be closely watched. Among them:

- **California** will consider Proposition 6 [2], a measure to repeal the gas and diesel tax increases and vehicle fees enacted in 2017 and require voter approval for future increases.
- **Colorado** will consider Proposition 109 [3], which would authorize $3.5 billion in bonds to fund statewide transportation projects including bridge expansion, construction, maintenance, and repairs, and require the state to repay the debt from the general fund without raising taxes. Voters can also decide on Proposition 110 [4], which would authorize $6 billion in bonds to fund transportation projects and raise the state sales tax rate to repay the debt. It would also establish the Transportation Revenue Anticipation Notes Citizen Oversight Committee.
- **Connecticut** will consider Amendment 1 [5], which would prohibit lawmakers from using the state transportation fund for anything other than transportation purposes.
- **Florida**, where voters in Hillsborough County will consider Referendum No. 2 [6], which would allow the county to raise the sales tax from 7 percent to 8 percent for 30 years, with the funds designated for transportation and road improvements.
- **Louisiana** will consider Amendment 4 [7], which would end the dedication of revenue from the Transportation Trust Fund to state police for traffic control.
- **Maine** will consider Question 3 [8], which would authorize $106 million in general obligation bonds for transportation infrastructure projects.
- **Missouri** will consider Proposition D [9], which would increase the gas tax by 10 cents per gallon, with revenue dedicated to the state highway patrol and create a dedicated fund for certain road projects that reduce traffic bottlenecks that affect freight. The measure would also exempt prizes for the Special Olympics, Paralympics and Olympics from state taxes. The latter is included because supporters of the gas tax missed a legal deadline for it to appear on the ballot and the Olympic prizes tax change was already approved for the ballot.
- **Utah** will consider Nonbinding Opinion Question 1 [10], which would support advising the state legislature to pass a gas tax increase of 10 cents per gallon to fund local road construction and maintenance, thereby freeing up additional funding for education.

Further Reading on Ballot Measures


CALIFORNIA: “Initiative to repeal gas tax hike sparks debate over how transportation funds are spent in California.” [16] Los Angeles Times, October 18, 2018.


CALIFORNIA: “Californians, Step Away From Your Cars: The planet depends on it. California can show true leadership on climate by rejecting a ballot measure that could cut off money for mass transit,” [23] (op-ed), The New York times, October 11, 2018.


“Which States Are Voting on Transportation Funding This Year?” [34] Governing, September 25, 2018.

CALIFORNIA: “Voters want a gas tax repeal. Many California leaders call it a horrible idea.” [35]
Sacramento Bee, September 24, 2018.


- **FLORIDA**: “Hillsborough transit tax campaign funding approaches $1M.” [37] Florida Politics, September 17, 2018.

- **CALIFORNIA**: “These GOP Lawmakers Gave Money to California Gas Tax Repeal Push.” [38] Roll Call, August 20, 2018.

- “Podcast: Transportation at the Ballot Box.” [39] Eno Center for Transportation.

### Governors’ Races

Thirty-six states and three U.S. territories have gubernatorial elections this year. Transportation has become an issue for candidates in several states, including:

- **California**, where Republican gubernatorial candidate John Cox has made the gas tax repeal (see above) a key part of his campaign and has argued the state could pay for transportation projects with the revenues it was bringing in before the tax increase. Democratic nominee Gavin Newsom has said repealing the increase would eliminate $5 billion for transportation projects. The candidates have also disagreed over the future of the state’s high-speed rail project, Governing reported [40].

- **Colorado**, where Democrat Jared Polis and Republican Walker Stapleton have both weighed in on the dueling bonding/sales tax ballot measures (see above). Polis opposes Proposition 109 and has no position on 110. Stapleton is for 109 and against 110, according to FOX 31 Denver [41].

- **Connecticut**, where Democrat Ned Lamont has proposed highway tolls on heavy cargo trucks, similar to those in neighboring Rhode Island, which he estimates would generate $350 million annually to help the state fund airport expansions, foster economic development around train stations and expand train and bus offerings. His Republican opponent, Bob Stefanowski opposes tolls but has suggested there are savings to be had from unspecified budget cuts and a reorganization of the state’s bonding priorities, which could free up money for transportation projects, The CT Post reported [42].

- **Georgia**, where Democratic candidate Stacey Abrams has proposed setting aside $150 million in bonds and allowing motor fuel tax revenues to be used on transit projects. Republican opponent Brian Kemp has promised to continue investment in targeted transit projects but he would seek private investment as well, according to The Atlanta Journal-Constitution [43].

- **Illinois**, where a possible future mileage-based user fee became an unlikely point of disagreement [44] between Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner and his chief opponent, J.B. Pritzker. Rauner has claimed that Pritzker wants to tax vehicles by the mile; Pritzker has denied he has a plan to do so but has said previously he’s “open to all ideas” to find more money for transportation, Illinois News Network reported [45].

- **Massachusetts**, where Democratic challenger Jay Gonzalez has proposed a millionaire tax to pay for improvements to transit and commuter rail. Incumbent Gov. Charlie Baker has touted his administration’s ongoing efforts to improve transportation systems in different parts of the state, according to South Coast Today [46].

- **Michigan**, where Democratic candidate Gretchen Whitmer wants to use either user fees or bonding to add $2 billion in capital to the state’s infrastructure bank, which could then issue low interest loans to help fund transportation projects around the state. Republican candidate Bill Schuette has proposed a complete review of how the Michigan Department of Transportation allocates funding, getting guarantees and warranties on road construction projects, making roads a priority within the existing state budget and seeking additional federal funding for transportation projects, according to MLIVE.com [47].

- **Minnesota**, where Democratic nominee Tim Walz has said he’s open to a 10-cent gas tax increase while his Republican opponent has taken a no-new-tax pledge and promised to reduce spending,
Pioneer Press reported [48].

- **New Mexico**, where Republican candidate Steve Pearce has proposed using an expected $2 billion budget surplus to pay for major infrastructure improvements including broadband, water and roads. His opponent, Democrat Michelle Lujan Grisham, wants to use the money to hire 10,000 new teachers, KOB-TV reported [49].

- **Ohio**, where Democratic nominee Richard Cordray has touted a $1.8 billion infrastructure bond plan as Republican candidate Mike DeWine has suggested the state needs to prioritize maintaining and improving current infrastructure, according to the Statehouse News Bureau. [50]

- **Rhode Island**, where Gov. Gina Raimondo, chief proponent of the state’s RhodeWorks bridge and road repair program and its truck-only tolls, is up for re-election against Republican Allan Fung, who has promised to cancel the tolls, Transport Topics reported [51].

- **Wisconsin**, where Gov. Scott Walker’s opposition to a gas tax increase has become a sticking point with Democratic challenger Tony Evers, who has hammered Walker over the condition of the state’s roads. Evers has said “everything is on the table” when it comes to new sources of revenue for roads, including increasing the gas tax and establishing toll roads, according to Urban Milwaukee [52].

Further Reading on Gubernatorial Races & Transportation:


Further Reading on 2018 Election

- “Transportation at the Ballot Box 2018” [56] (ballot measure database), Eno Center for Transportation.

By:

Thursday, October 25, 2018 at 11:26 AM

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