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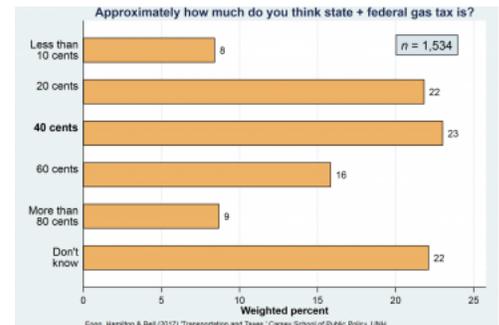
UNH Research Finds N.H. Residents Support Gas Tax Increase for Highways and Bridges

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2017/10/24/UNH-RESEARCH-FINDS-NH-RESIDENTS-SUPPORT-GAS-TAX-INCREASE-HIGHWAYS-AND-BRIDGES)

DURHAM, N.H. – More than 60 percent of New Hampshire residents would support a 10-cent increase to the state gas tax if needed to maintain the state’s highways and bridges, according to new research released by the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire. However, most people have no idea what the gas tax presently is and only 36 percent of those polled are aware of the worsening conditions of the Granite State’s transportation infrastructure.

Both awareness of infrastructure conditions and willingness to support gas tax increases to maintain the state’s highways and bridges vary by party. Independents are more likely to support gas tax increases up to 20 cents per gallon and Democrats up to 30 cents. A majority of Republicans would support an increase up to five cents. Tea Party supporters do not approve of any tax increase.



“Although most New Hampshire residents depend on the state’s transportation infrastructure, only a minority have noticed it is challenged by aging structures, increasing demand, a changing vehicle mix and rising stormwater threats,” the researchers said. “The money coming in is insufficient to support current infrastructure or to update and keep ahead of anticipated changes. There needs to be greater public discussion that raises awareness of the problems and the need for solutions.”

The researchers also found that 51 percent support increased spending on public transportation and 42 percent support more spending on highway maintenance and environmental protection. Disaster preparation and stormwater management were lower priorities for those polled, with many people admitting they do not know about these topics.

The research was conducted by Linda Fogg, sociology graduate student; Lawrence Hamilton, professor of sociology and a senior fellow at the Carsey School; and Erin Bell, associate professor of civil and environmental engineering. Their full report can be found here: <https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/transportation-tax> (<https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/transportation-tax>).

The Carsey School of Public Policy conducts research, leadership development, and engaged scholarship relevant to public policy. They address pressing challenges, striving for innovative, responsive, and equitable solutions at all levels of government and in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors.

The University of New Hampshire is a flagship research university that inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. UNH's research portfolio includes partnerships with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, receiving more than \$100 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

Editor's Notes:

IMAGE FOR DOWNLOAD: https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/sites/default/files/media/carsey_gas_chart.png
(//www.unh.edu/unhtoday/sites/default/files/media/carsey_gas_chart.png)

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The stories are written by the staff of UNH Communications and Public Affairs. (https://www.unh.edu/cpa)

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