

HNTB finds Americans pay an average of less than \$25 a month to maintain the roadways and bridges essential to mobility and the nation's vitality

Compared with costs paid for other essential utilities and common conveniences, transportation is shockingly low.

WASHINGTON ([PRWEB](#)) January 13, 2020 -- American families pony up thousands of dollars a year to use critical services such as electricity, water and broadband, but an analysis of available data by HNTB Corporation shows that, on average, families pay far less for the critical transportation network that powers economies, strengthens communities and improves quality of life.

On average, American drivers pay just \$274.69 annually in gas taxes (federal + state taxes) at the pump, the primary source of funding for the upkeep and improvement of U.S. roads and bridges. Compared to other critical public services, the cost for their transportation systems lags far behind. Household expenses for annual average [electric bills in the U.S. ran \\$1,340 in 2017](#) according to the U.S. Energy Administration. Forbes reported that annual [broadband internet service totaled \\$794.04](#) that year and Statista reported that a family of four paid an average annual [water bill of \\$844.68](#) last year. Individually, Americans' mobile phone bills average [nearly \\$100 a month or \\$1,200 per year](#), according to bill pay service Doxo.

“Think of it this way: the bills we pay monthly for critical services like electricity and water largely go to the utility companies and municipalities that provide these services,” said John Barton, senior vice president and national DOT practice leader for HNTB. “That is not so when it comes to transportation. Transportation is a utility and should be viewed as such. Mobility providers—the governments that build and maintain roadways, bridges, paths and transit systems so we can get to work or school, feed our families, supply our homes and enjoy our communities—see only a fraction of what Americans pay on average at the pump to deliver such an essential service. Typically, less than 20% of what we pay at the pump actually goes to fund our transportation system.”

“The low fuel taxes we pay are simply not enough to maintain our systems, let alone build or improve capacity,” explained Barton.

Looking for additional transportation revenue now, dozens of states across the country are raising gas taxes to help fund mounting transportation infrastructure needs and plan for the future. Even with those taxes, annual vehicle registration and other fees, funding continues to fall short as more efficient automobile engines use less gas and electric vehicles, which are quickly increasing in number, use none.

Conversely, the federal government hasn't raised its gas tax since 1993, and the highway trust fund is woefully underfunded.

“Congress needs to think differently, think big and pass a long-term sustainable reauthorization package for surface transportation funding. It can step up communications efforts that educate Americans about the important utility of our roadways and other ways to pay for them,” Barton said. “A higher federal gas tax indexed to inflation can help quickly, but new ideas are needed, too. Mobility is vital to daily life—getting to work, school, recreation, healthcare, the grocery store, grandma's house, the airport, moving the products and services we all consume each day—and it deserves investment levels that recognize that.”



About the Numbers

HNTB reviewed state and federal gas tax data from the American Road and Transportation Builders Association and calculated average gas tax by reviewing most recent (2017) data from the Federal Highway Administration that showed average miles driven in each state, dividing it by the average 2016 miles per gallon for U.S. cars and trucks as reported by the Environmental Protection Agency and multiplying it by the average total state and federal gas tax.

Infographic available here: http://www.hntb.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/GasTax_Infographic.pdf

About HNTB

HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure firm serving public and private owners and contractors. With 105 years of service in the United States, HNTB understands the life cycle of infrastructure and addresses clients' most complex technical, financial and operational challenges. Professionals nationwide deliver a full range of infrastructure-related services, including award-winning planning, design, and program and construction management. For more information, visit www.hntb.com, or follow HNTB on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook or Instagram.



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