
Media Release



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REGIONAL LEADERS PRESS FOR PRESERVATION OF STATE TRANSPORTATION DOLLARS

SCAG, League of Cities, Business and Community Leaders Unite To Show Support For Governor's Decision to Restore Gas Tax Dollars For Transportation

VENTURA, CALIF. – Local leaders from throughout Southern California demonstrated unparalleled unity in expressing strong support for Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's recent decision to restore gasoline tax revenues to fund critical transportation improvements. Representatives from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the League of California Cities, Ventura County Transportation Commission, the Ventura Chamber of Commerce and the Automobile Club of Southern California praised the Governor for restoring \$1.3 billion in state gas tax revenues, while simultaneously urging the State Legislature to preserve those funds as budget negotiations proceed into the summer. The leaders expressed the importance of funding transportation investments as part of the SCAG Regional Council Retreat held today at the Pierpont Inn in Ventura.

In 2002, the voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 42, a measure that mandated all state gasoline sales tax revenues be dedicated to transportation improvements. However, provisions of the measure have allowed the state to divert those funds in times of fiscal crisis. Prior to the Governor's recent decision to restore the funds for transportation in his revised budget, more than \$5 billion in gasoline tax dollars had been diverted away from transportation over the preceding three years.

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“The electorate, which voted overwhelmingly for Proposition 42, expects the sales tax on gasoline to be used for transportation maintenance and improvements, not diverted to other purposes,” stated Port Hueneme Mayor and SCAG President Toni Young. “We thank the Schwarzenegger Administration for recognizing the dire state of our infrastructure and restoring those vital funds that the voters had previously allocated to transportation.”

Many of the regional leaders expressed that the Governor’s action was an important, but preliminary step, which would not be final until the state budget is adopted later this summer.

“We must remain vigilant and insist that the State Legislature preserve these vital funds as the state budget process progresses over the summer,” stated Ventura County Supervisor Judy Mikels. “We must continue letting our state leaders know that our long-term economic viability and quality of life are directly related to our ability to invest in our transportation infrastructure.”

Others expressed support for the Governor’s “Go California” package of legislative measures to streamline the construction of transportation improvements and encourage the development of public-private partnerships to finance various transportation projects.

“Meeting the needs of Southern California’s transportation future will take an unprecedented partnership between federal, state and local governments and the private sector,” stated Glen Becerra, Simi Valley Councilman and SCAG Regional Councilmember. “Transportation is a non-partisan priority that we can all get behind.”

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