

Appendix A. Matching MPGs to Vehicles based on Vehicle Identification Number



MEMORANDUM

TO: Chris Porter
Cambridge Systematics

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Eastern Research Group (ERG)

DATE: October 7, 2019

SUBJECT: Results of Task 1 for NH DOT Road Usage Fee Deployment Project –
Matching of New Hampshire Registration Data to EPA MPG Data

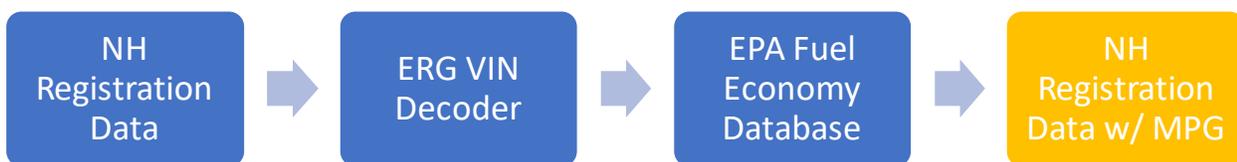
Introduction

This memo serves as a deliverable for Task 1 of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Road Usage Fee Deployment Project (Phase 1). Under this task, ERG was charged performing initial matching of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) fuel economy data with a 2018 calendar year New Hampshire vehicle registration data compiled by the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and provided by NHDOT. ERG evaluated different match approaches and produced a dataset with fuel economy estimates for nearly 90 percent of valid registration records, though with some approximation and caveats as noted in the discussion. We also assessed the sensitivity of fuel economy results to different match approaches, specifically whether engine displacement is included in the match parameters or not; and identified complexities in matching hybrids that will need to be addressed in future work.

Initial evaluation of the NH registration dataset found wide variation in how a given vehicle model name was stored, as they are presumably entered manually by DMV staff. An initial evaluation of model name frequencies in 2007 registration data using SS found ~2000 *pages* of unique vehicle model abbreviations, and ~50,000 *pages* of unique model names – meaning a single vehicle model typically had multiple abbreviations and model names in the database. Because of the significant inconsistencies in how vehicle model names are entered in the NH registration data, the ERG VIN decoder was used as an

intermediate processing step to produce more standard model names, as well as vehicle displacement. Matching between the VIN-decoded records and EPA fuel economy database proceeded based on different permutations of matching to vehicle model name and displacement. A schematic of the matching process is shown below, with each step detailed in the following sections.

Figure 1. Sequence of Matching NH Registration Records to EPA Fuel Economy Data



Preparation of New Hampshire Registration Data

The dataset provided by NHDOT contained 1,634,116 registration records for calendar year 2018. To identify records eligible for matching to EPA fuel economy data, which per the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) program is restricted to cars and light trucks under 8,500 pounds gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR), the dataset was filtered to remove motorcycles and known heavy-duty trucks. The data were filtered to exclude motorcycles (identified from the make: "MC", "MY", "CYCL", "HD", "KAWA", "KAWK", "YAMA"), and vehicles that could readily be identified as heavy-duty (identified from the make: "BLUB", "DEER", "FRHT", "HINO", "INTL", "KUBO", "KUBT", "MACK", "PTRB", "NEWH", "CAT*"). Vehicles with model years older than 1984 were also removed from the dataset, as the EPA Fuel Economy database extends back only as far as model year 1984. This left 1,522,491 records in the dataset. Some VINs were represented more than once in the dataset, so after removing duplicate VIN records the resulting dataset contained 1,266,037 records associated with unique VINs.

Inspection of the remaining records in the New Hampshire registration data found that vehicle model names are not standardized; several permutations of vehicle model name are entered for any given model. To illustrate, some examples of non-standard model



names from the registration database are given in Table 1. This posed a significant concern for matching to MPG data, as matching vehicle model names between datasets is central to assigning the correct MPG values. The permutations of model names in the NH registration data suggest that it will be difficult to develop an automated matching routine between current registration data and EPA’s fuel economy database.

Table 1. Example of Vehicle Model Name Variation in NH Registration Database (Chrysler Town & Country / Dodge Caravan)

Make	Model	Model Year
CHRY	TWNCNT	2014
CHRY	TWNCNTR	2014
CHRY	TWNCNTRY	2014
CHRY	TWNCNTY	2014
CHRY	TWNCO	2014
CHRY	TWNCOU	2014
CHRY	TWNCOUN	2014
CHRY	TWNCNTY	2014
CHRY	TWNCNTRY	2014
CHRY	TWNCNTY	2014
CHRY	TWNCY	2014
CHRY	WAGON	2014
DODG	TOWNC	2014
DODG	TWNCNTY	2014
VOLK	TNC	2014
VOLK	TOWN	2014
CHRY	GRANDCA	2014
DODG	CARAVAN	2014
DODG	GRAND	2014
DODG	GRANDCA	2014
DODG	GRANDCAR	2014
DODG	GRCARAVA	2014
DODG	GRNDCARA	2014

Because of the non-standard model names and the lack of displacement values in the native NH registration database, an intermediate step was inserted to process VINs from the NH data through the ERG VIN decoder. This decoding process obtained



displacement and a more standardized model name, to increase the match rate with EPA fuel economy data.

ERG VIN Decoder

ERG's VIN decoder software program was first developed in the 1990s and has been updated regularly to incorporate new model year information. As of July 2019, the current version decodes VINs for all domestic and foreign cars and light-duty trucks sold in the United States from model years 1972 to 2018. Based on VIN input, the program produces vehicle make, model name, body type, and engine displacement. It is mainly used in support of specific project work, for example in helping decode VINs from vehicles in roadside vehicle remote sensing emission measurements (RSD) to associate RSD measurements with vehicle attributes. Information in the ERG VIN Decoder is drawn primarily from auto manufacturers and the National Insurance Crime Bureau VIN manual. In drawing from these sources, the vehicle model names used are standardized and thus provided a better basis for matching than the raw New Hampshire registration records. The ERG VIN decoder has not previously been matched with the EPA Fuel Economy database, however, and in some cases vehicle model names are not consistent with EPA fuel economy data, which affected Task 1 match results.

The 1,266,037 unique VINs from the 2018 NH registration data were run through the ERG VIN decoder. Of these, the VIN decoder successfully processed 93.5 percent (1,183,963 records). For VINs that didn't properly decode, the model name from the NH registration dataset was retained. Following the VIN decode step, some manual standardization of variable content was performed. For example, the "make" field was cleaned up, to put all makes into the standard 4-character abbreviations (e.g., "GeneralMotors" was changed to "GMC", "Lexus" was changed to "Lexs"). Some model names with obvious formats that would not help the matching process match were also fixed, such as removing "4WD", "AWD", etc. The resulting dataset was the basis for matching to the EPA fuel economy database, which underwent preparation steps as detailed below.



Preparation of Fuel Economy Data

The fuel economy values used for matching were obtained from the fueleconomy.gov website maintained by the U.S. Dept. of Energy.¹ The file “vehicles.csv” accessed from the data download page contains fuel economy data for all car models sold in the U.S. for model years 1984 – 2020 (as of October 2nd 2019). The data includes raw and adjusted fuel economy values (in MPG) for individual test cycles run during emissions certification, and composite values used in the calculation of CAFE compliance (unadjusted), and fuel economy labeling (adjusted), which are different values. For this analysis the adjusted, combined MPG values were used for vehicle fuel economy (field name “COMB08U”). These are used on vehicle fuel economy labels and represent the EPA’s best estimate of overall real-world fuel economy for each vehicle. The label value calculation methodology has evolved considerably over the past decade, with details on this evolution available on fueleconomy.gov. The current dataset includes retroactive adjustments to older model years in an attempt to put all vehicles on a common basis. Adjusted label MPG values for model years prior to 2011 are reported in rounded whole numbers, while values for 2011 and later model years are unrounded.

The fuel economy values in the EPA dataset are reported for every combination of make, model, model year, displacement, transmission, and trim. Trim reflects differences within a vehicle model that often contribute to differences in MPG (e.g. Ford Taurus comes in four trim lines: SE, SEL, Limited, and SHO); and may denote additional sub-model differences which affect fuel economy such as front wheel drive/all wheel drive, sedan/convertible/wagon, and hybrid. Example records from the EPA fuel economy database are shown in Table 2 (select fields only).

¹ <https://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/download.shtml>

Table 2. Example EPA Fuel Economy Database Records (select fields)

Model Year	Make	Model	Disp. (L)	Trans	Adjusted Combined MPG
2017	Toyota	Avalon	3.5	Automatic (S6)	24.0856
2017	Toyota	Avalon Hybrid	2.5	Automatic (AV-S6)	39.6361
2017	Toyota	Camry	3.5	Automatic (S6)	24.3061
2017	Toyota	Camry	2.5	Automatic (S6)	27.2913
2017	Toyota	Camry Hybrid LE	2.5	Automatic (variable gear ratios)	40.0665
2017	Toyota	Camry Hybrid XLE/SE	2.5	Automatic (variable gear ratios)	38.4949
2017	Toyota	Corolla	1.8	Manual 6-spd	30.4173
2017	Toyota	Corolla	1.8	Automatic (variable gear ratios)	31.5246
2017	Toyota	Corolla	1.8	Automatic (AV-S7)	31.0592
2017	Toyota	Corolla iM	1.8	Automatic (AV-S7)	31.2448
2017	Toyota	Corolla iM	1.8	Manual 6-spd	29.7398
2017	Toyota	Corolla LE Eco	1.8	Automatic (variable gear ratios)	34.0354
2017	Toyota	Corolla LE Eco	1.8	Automatic (variable gear ratios)	32.6559
2017	Toyota	Highlander	2.7	Automatic (S6)	21.5538
2017	Toyota	Highlander	3.5	Automatic (S8)	22.8555
2017	Toyota	Highlander AWD	3.5	Automatic (S8)	22.2271
2017	Toyota	Highlander AWD	3.5	Automatic (S8)	22.0931
2017	Toyota	Highlander AWD LE	3.5	Automatic (S8)	22.6871
2017	Toyota	Highlander Hybrid AWD	3.5	Automatic (AV-S6)	28.3914
2017	Toyota	Highlander Hybrid AWD LE Plus	3.5	Automatic (AV-S6)	28.9073
2017	Toyota	Highlander LE/XLE/SE/LTD	3.5	Automatic (S8)	23.2973



In preparation for matching, some of the fuel economy database records were standardized, including changing the makes to the standard 4-character names (e.g., “Toyota” becomes “TOYT”), and shortening some of the model names to remove details that would be difficult to match (such as “LE/XLE/SE/LTD”).

Matching Fuel Economy and Registration Records

Attempts to assign an MPG value from the EPA fuel economy data to the NH registration data proceeded over five rounds, each with a unique match criterion. The basis of each round was matching records by vehicle make, model, model year; displacement was also included in most rounds. Some rounds required exact matches, while some allowed matching within tolerances of displacement and model year. Model name could be matched exactly or as a substring within a longer model name.

Trim and transmission were not included in match criteria for these rounds. This level of detail is too specific for an automated matching routine (given the challenge in just matching model name), so for a first pass different trim level information was not retained from the registration records. The result was that for a given vehicle make/model/model year/displacement combination in the NH registration data, multiple fuel economy records (different trims and transmissions) were often available in the EPA fuel economy database. This many:one matching was the result of an approximate matching approach defined by the scope and objectives of Task 1 – to increase the number of 1:1 matches would take considerably more effort to match at an individual trim and transmission level, including a great deal of manual matching. Short of this, the prevalence of many:one matching required estimation of average fuel economy across multiple matches associated with a single vehicle model. Ideally this would be sales-weighted average, but sales data are not included in the EPA fuel economy database. To reduce the number of multiple matches, the records for manual transmission choices were removed from the dataset, since most vehicles are now sold with automatic transmissions (this was not done for any vehicle models with only manual transmission). When there remained more than one fuel economy match, the harmonic mean of the multiple fuel economy records was used for the matched MPG value.



Several rounds of matching fuel economy and VIN-processed registration records were performed. First, an exact match was attempted, using make, model, model year, and displacement as reported (after having standardized makes and some model names in both datasets). This was “Round 1” and the results are shown in Table 3. There are three rows for Round 1 in the table. In the first, the number of records that matched with the exact model name is given. Next, the number of records where the registration model name was the beginning substring of the fuel economy model name, or vice versa, is given. Third, the number of records where the registration model name is contained as a substring anywhere in the fuel economy model name, or vice versa, is given. This resulted in about 76% of registration records being matched to a fuel economy record.

The next rounds of matching allowed one or more parameters to vary somewhat. In Round 2, a difference in displacement of up to 15% was allowed as a “match”. In Round 3, a difference of up to two years in the model year was allowed as a “match”. In Round 4, both the displacement and the model year were allowed to vary. These additional rounds brought the match rate up to 78% - not a huge improvement over Round 1. Finally, for Round 5, the displacement was excluded as a matching variable, and matches were done on just make, model, and model year. This improved the match rate to nearly 90%.

Table 3. Match Rates Between VIN-Decoded Registration and Fuel Economy Datasets

	Make	Model	Displacement	Model Year	Number matched	Cumulative Number Matched	Cumulative Match Percent
Round 1	Exact	Exact	0	0	583,354	583,354	46.1%
	Exact	Left Substring	0	0	87,432	670,786	53.0%
	Exact	Other Substring	0	0	287,119	957,905	75.7%
Round 2	Exact	Exact	15%	0	8,658	966,563	76.3%
	Exact	Left Substring	15%	0	2,504	969,067	76.5%
	Exact	Other Substring	15%	0	6,581	975,648	77.1%

	Make	Model	Displacement	Model Year	Number matched	Cumulative Number Matched	Cumulative Match Percent
Round 3	Exact	Exact	0%	2	3,781	979,429	77.4%
	Exact	Left Substring	0%	2	2,403	981,832	77.6%
	Exact	Other Substring	0%	2	5,157	986,989	78.0%
Round 4	Exact	Exact	15%	2	1,034	988,023	78.0%
	Exact	Left Substring	15%	2	417	988,440	78.1%
	Exact	Other Substring	15%	2	3,876	992,316	78.4%
Round 5	Exact	Exact	Not used	0	121,175	1,113,491	88.0%
	Exact	Left Substring	Not used	0	5,985	1,119,476	88.4%
	Exact	Other Substring	Not used	0	15,769	1,135,245	89.7%

The vast majority of registration records that remain unmatched to fuel economy records were for heavy-duty vehicles that are not included in the fuel economy dataset because they exceed the CAFE program threshold of 8,500 lb GVWR. The most common unmatched vehicle combinations are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Most Common Unmatched Registration Records

Make	ModelYear	Displacement	Model	Count
CHEV	2015	6	SILVERADO2500	914
FORD	2016	6.2	F250	864
FORD	2017	6.2	F250	848
CHEV	2016	6	SILVERADO2500	744
FORD	2004	5.4	F250	696
FORD	2006	6	F350	659
JEEP	2016	5.7	RENEGADE	653
FORD	2015	6.2	F250	593
FORD	2003	5.4	F250	542
CHEV	2017	6	SILVERADO2500	487
GMC	2015	6	SIERRA2500	483
FORD	2012	6.2	F250	478

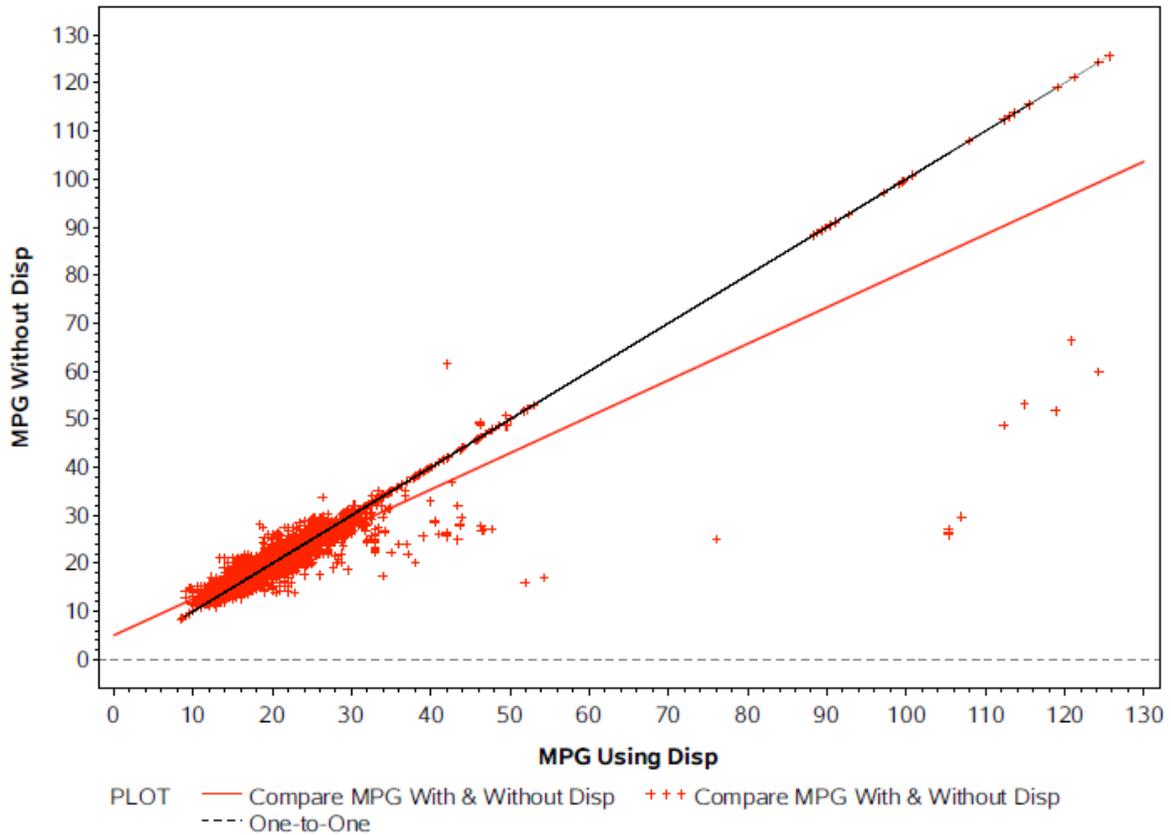


Make	ModelYear	Displacement	Model	Count
FORD	2017	.	F350	478
TOYT	2005	2.4	4DRWAGON	476
HYUN	2016	.	SORENTOSPORTAGE	469
FORD	2016	6.2	F350	466
FORD	2008	5.4	F250	461
FORD	2005	6	F350	459
CHEV	2018	6	SILVERADO2500	451
FORD	2018	6.2	F250	448

Sensitivity Analysis: Comparing Round 4 vs. Round 5

To evaluate the sensitivity of including displacement in the matching logic, a direct comparison was made between Round 4 (with displacement) and Round 5 (without displacement). This is shown in Figure 2, which plots MPG results from Round 5 (Y axis) vs. MPG results from Round 4 (X axis) for each vehicle in the NH registration data. There are three general groups of vehicles. The first group is vehicles with the same result between the two rounds, which would be models with only one displacement that achieved 1:1 match in both rounds. A second group shows variability clustered around the 1:1 line, which is expected scatter when individual displacements within a model are accounted for vs. an average across displacements, but the MPG range across displacement is relatively narrow. A final group shows substantially higher MPGs when displacement is considered. Further investigation of this group suggests these are vehicle models with a larger MPG range across displacements, such as the 2013 Honda Civic with fuel economies ranging from 25 to 43 MPG. Harmonic averaging brings the overall average closer to the low MPG value, so high MPG values stand out in Figure 2 for these models. Figure 2 suggests that there may be some underestimation of the number of higher-MPG vehicles in the current analysis.

Figure 2. MPG Results With and Without Engine Displacement Match



Needed Improvements

Though the elimination of vehicle displacement as a match criterion brought the Round 5 match rate close to 90 percent, the sensitivity analysis suggests that considering displacement would improve the accuracy of results. Match rate and accuracy would also benefit from further refinement in matching to consider distinctions such as trim, transmission and hybrid technology. Regarding the latter, spot checks of individual vehicle models revealed cases where hybrids in the registration data were matched with

non-hybrid MPGs, for both Round 4 and Round 5. This was the result of uneven matching in hybrid model names. While the ERG VIN decoder does identify hybrids, the matching of these to EPA's fuel economy database model names has not been fully developed. Matching hybrid model names would require case-by-case logic - an example for the Ford Fusion illustrates why (Table 5). The EPA fuel economy database model names are shown in the first two columns, while the VIN decoder model names are shown in the middle columns (it should be noted that the raw NH DMV registration data model names, not shown, did not include the word "hybrid"). Our matching focused on exact matches or model names, or substrings. In this case, the VIN decoder hybrid model names didn't match the EPA hybrid model names either in full or as a substring. Because there was only a match on the string "Fusion", the hybrids were matched to the non-hybrid Fusion MPGs. The success of matching hybrids varied by manufacturer; for example, both the VIN decoder and EPA fuel economy have "CAMRYHYBRID", which allowed some matching of hybrid MPGs to Camry hybrids in the EPA data. In future, some logic would need to be developed to isolate "hybrid" in the model name (or "hev", "phev", "plug-in", etc.) in addition to the model name match. The variation in match rate by manufacturer means this would likely require significant manual processing.

Table 5. Challenge of Matching Hybrid Model Names – Ford Fusion Example

FE Database Model Name	VIN Decoder Model	Disp. (Liters)	Database	meanMPG	Count
FUSION		1.5	FE	27.1604	1
FUSION		2.0	FE	23.0775	1
FUSION		2.0	FE	24.5671	1
FUSION		2.5	FE	24.6453	1
FUSION		2.7	FE	20	1
FUSIONENERGIPLUGINHYBRID		2.0	FE	41.9135	1
FUSIONHYBRID		2.0	FE	42	1
	FUSIONS	2.5	REG	.	17
	FUSIONSE	1.5	REG	.	130
	FUSIONSE	2.0	REG	.	35
	FUSIONSE	2.5	REG	.	52
	FUSIONSE	2.5	REG	.	1
	FUSIONSE	1.5	REG	.	1



FE Database Model Name	VIN Decoder Model	Disp. (Liters)	Database	meanMPG	Count
	FUSIONSEHYBRID	2.0	REG	.	17
	FUSIONSEHYBRID	2.0	REG	.	56
	FUSIONSEPHEV	2.0	REG	.	2
	FUSIONSEPHEV	2.0	REG	.	9
	FUSIONSHYBRID	2.0	REG	.	1
	FUSIONSHYBRID	2.0	REG	.	1
	FUSIONSPORT	2.7	REG	.	12
	FUSIONTITANIUM	2	REG	.	34
	FUSIONTITANIUMHEV	2	REG	.	7
	FUSIONTITANIUMHEV	2	REG	.	19
	FUSIONTITANIUMPHEV	2	REG	.	3

Conclusions & Implications for Future Work

Given a database of 1,266,037 vehicles registered in New Hampshire in 2018, ERG was able to assign an MPG value from EPA’s fuel economy database to nearly 90 percent of the records, with the majority of unmatched records belonging to heavy-duty vehicles not initially screened from the database. Achieving this rate of matching required first processing the NH registration data through ERG’s VIN decoder to produce a more standardized vehicle model name for matching purposes. The VIN decoding also produced engine displacement, which was found to improve the accuracy of MPGs matched to the registration data but reduced the match rate. Within the scope of Task 1 more refined matching was not possible to explicitly account for vehicle trim, transmission, or hybrids. In many cases the matched MPG was a harmonic mean of several fuel economy records in the EPA database that reflected variation in these sub-model parameters. These approximations were necessary within the scope of Task 1 but will need to be improved for a more precise estimate of MPG for each vehicle in the NH fleet.

With respect to implementation of the RUF program, a primary issue turned up in Task 1 is that the raw NH registration data could not be matched directly to fuel economy data,



due to extreme variation how vehicle model names are entered in the system. Adequate matching required VIN processing using third-party software developed and maintained separately by ERG. For the RUF, attaching the correct MPG value to each vehicle registration record in NH will likely need to proceed in two stages. First, a more detailed effort to match the current fleet is required to address some of the identified approximations of Task 1, with a goal of achieving 1:1 matching between each NH vehicle and a record in the EPA fuel economy database, or short of this, minimizing the error introduced by mismatching and aggregation. Second, for any new registrations in NH, we recommend an approach which requires standardized vehicle model names be used in the registration database. Use of lookup tables or a user interface with pre-defined selections of vehicle model name, aligned with model names used in the EPA fuel economy database, would allow a direct match of NH registration records and EPA fuel economy records moving forward. ERG will elaborate these options as part of Task 6.

Appendix B. Granite State Poll Report



University of New Hampshire

The Survey Center

A large, multi-story red brick building with a prominent central tower and a clock face, surrounded by trees with yellow autumn foliage. The building is the Granite State Building at the University of New Hampshire.

Granite State Poll Report New Hampshire Department of Transportation

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The Survey Center
University of New Hampshire
October, 2019

The University of New Hampshire
Survey Center

The UNH Survey Center is an independent, non-partisan academic survey research organization and division of the UNH College of Liberal Arts.

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Our senior staff have over 50 years experience in designing and conducting custom research on a broad range of political, social, health care, and other public policy issues.

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Executive Summary

The University of New Hampshire Survey Center included eleven questions on its Fall 2019 Granite State Poll for the New Hampshire Department of Transportation to understand New Hampshire residents' opinions on transportation funding in the state. Five hundred seven (507) randomly selected New Hampshire adults were interviewed in English by landline and cellular telephone between October 4 and October 17, 2019. The margin of sampling error for the survey is +/- 4.4 percent.

The following figures display survey results, detailed tabular results may be found in Appendix A, and Appendix B contains the survey instrument. Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%.

Key Findings

Efficacy of Transportation Components

The vast majority of New Hampshire residents say the state's roads and highways meet their needs very or somewhat well. Six in ten say the same about the state's bicycle and pedestrian facilities. However, less than half say buses and rail meet their needs very or somewhat well and a third say they don't meet their needs well at all.

Current State Gasoline Tax

New Hampshire residents on average estimate the state gas tax is 35 cents per gallon, higher than the actual rate of approximately 24 cents per gallon. Just over a third estimate the gas tax is less than 25 cents, just under a quarter think the tax is between 25 and 49 cents per gallon, and about the same number think it is 50 cents or more.

More than four in five New Hampshire residents believe the gas tax can be used on roads and bridges, half believe it can be used for buses, three in eight believe it can be used for passenger rail, and about three in ten believe it can be used for bicycle and pedestrian facilities or airports.

Overall State Investment in Transportation System

Four in ten New Hampshire residents would like the state to invest more in transportation and the same percentage would like the state to maintain its current level of funding. Very few would like the state to decrease its transportation funding. Democrats and self-described liberals tend to support higher funding in transportation while Republicans and self-described conservatives are more likely to oppose higher transportation funding.

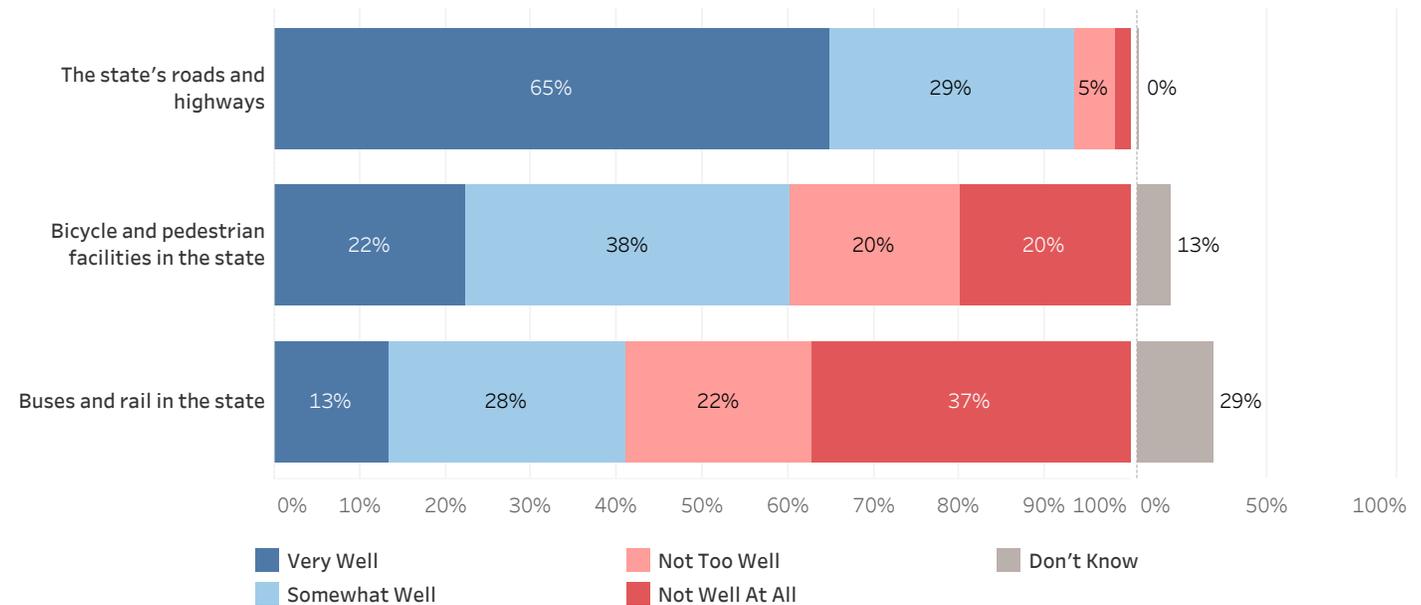
Feelings on Potential Funding Sources

While a large majority of residents want the state to maintain or increase its investment in transportation, no potential funding source garners support from a majority. Residents are divided on increasing tolls on highways, about half oppose instituting a Road User Fee or increasing the gasoline tax, and larger majorities oppose a user fee based on the number of miles a person drives in a year or increasing vehicle registration fees. Self-identified liberals tend to be more in favor of these new funding sources while conservative radio listeners are less likely than others to support them.

Efficacy of Transportation Components

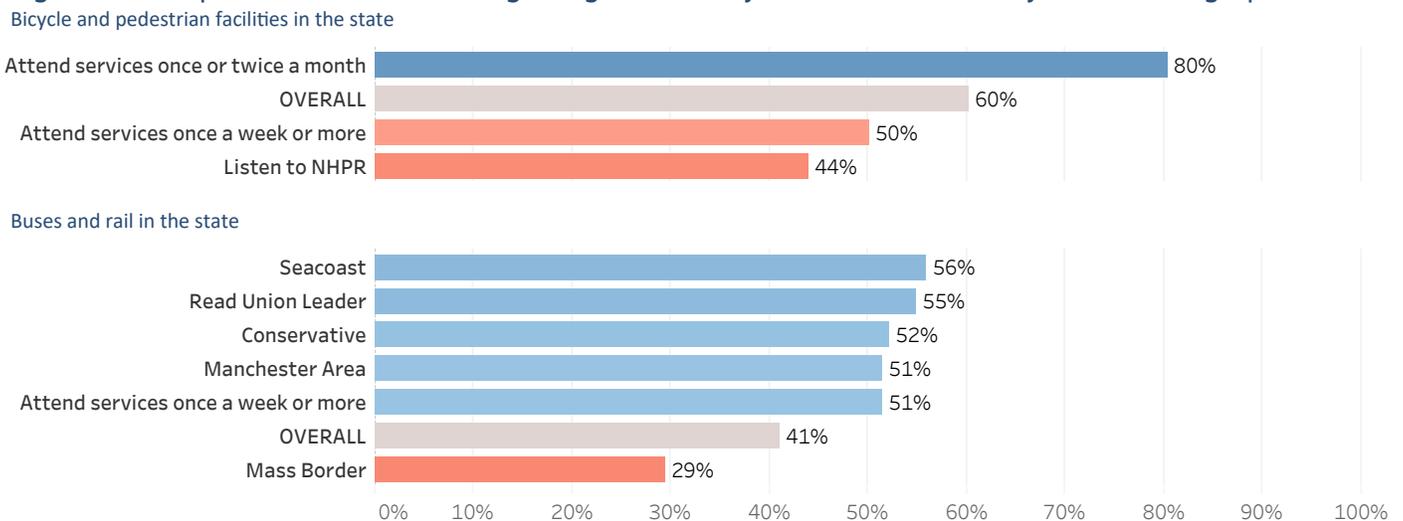
The vast majority of New Hampshire residents (93%) say they the state's roads and highways meet their needs of getting around very (64%) or somewhat (29%) well. Six in ten (60%) say the same about the bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the state, but only 44% say that buses and rail in the state meet their needs very (18%) or somewhat (25%) well, while nearly a third (32%) say they do not meet their needs well at all. Fourteen percent of respondents don't know how about bicycle and pedestrian facilities while 29% don't know about buses and rail in the state (Figure 1a).

Figure 1a: New Hampshire's transportation system includes many different components. How well do each of the following components meet your needs for getting around?



- Residents who attend religious services once or twice a month are more likely than others to say that bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the state meet their needs for getting around very or somewhat well. NHPR listeners and those who attend services once a week or more often are less likely to say so.
- Seacoast and Manchester area residents, *Union Leader* readers, self-described conservatives, and those who attend religious service once a week or more often are more likely than others to say that buses and rail in the state meet their needs for getting around very or somewhat well. Massachusetts Border residents are less likely to say so (Figure 1b).

Figure 1b: Components meet needs for getting around very or somewhat well - by Select Demographics

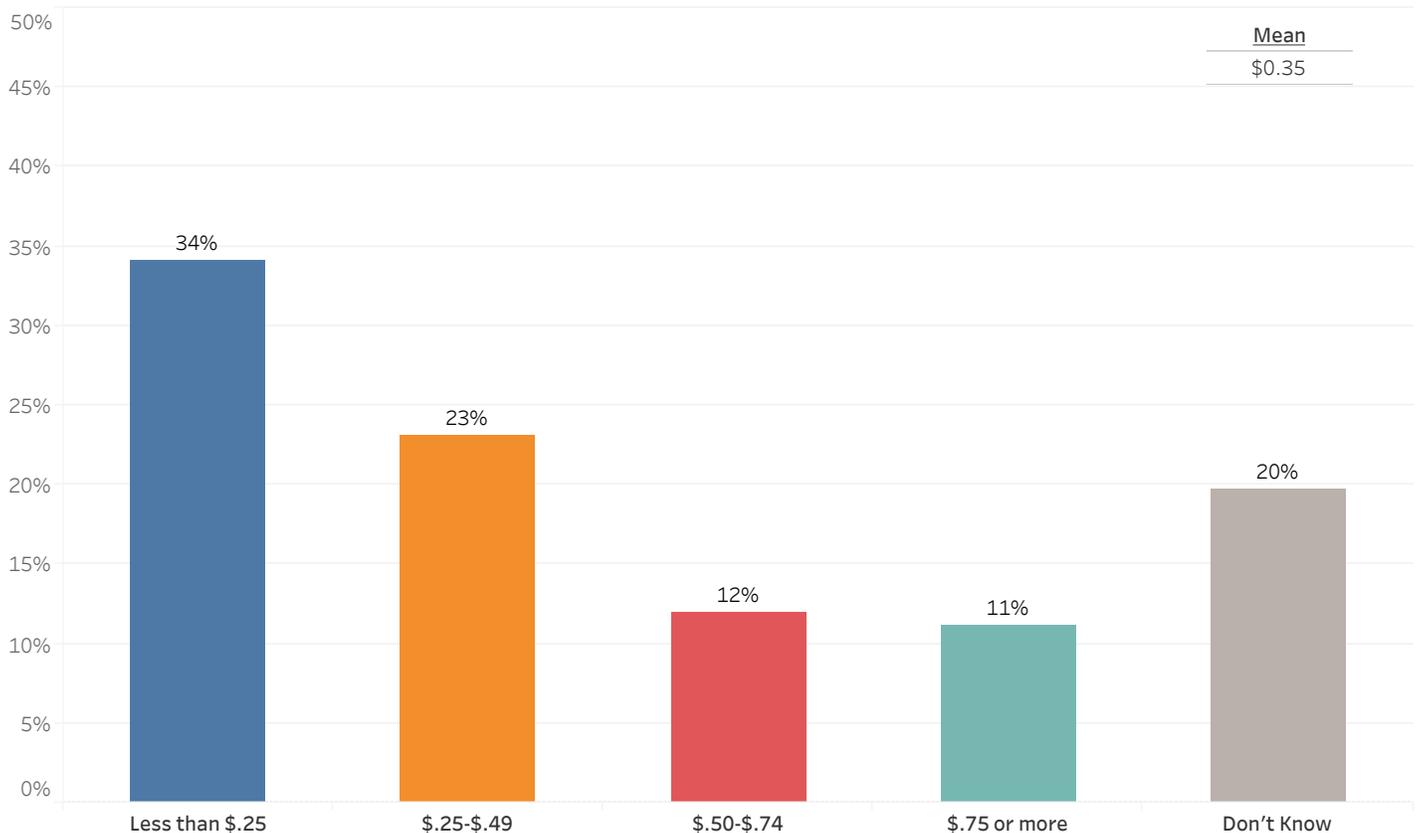


Current State Gasoline Tax

The state of New Hampshire currently has a gas tax of approximately \$.24 per gallon of gasoline.

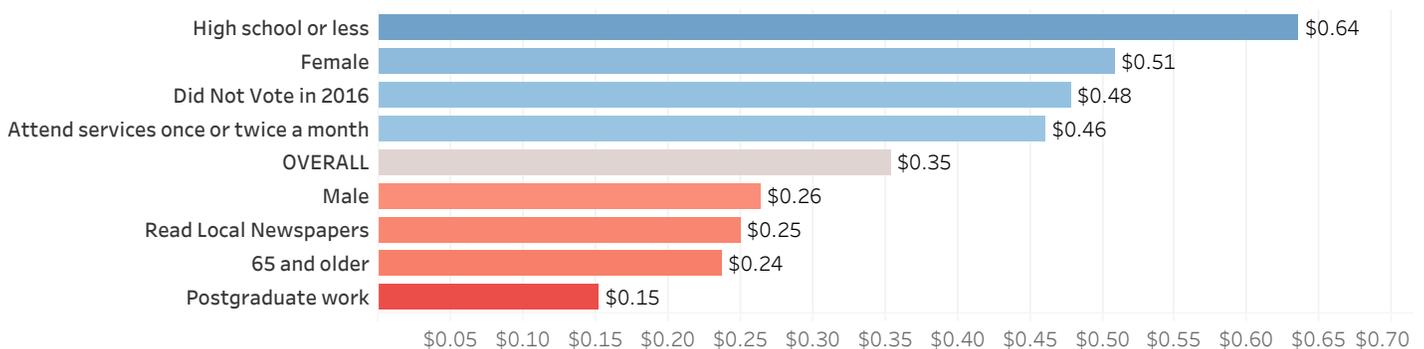
Just over-one third of New Hampshire residents (34%) estimate that the state gas tax accounts for less than \$.25 cents per gallon of gasoline, 23% think the state tax is between \$.25 and \$.49, 12% think it is between \$.50 and \$.74, 11% think it is \$.75 or higher, and 20% don't know or are unsure. The mean estimate is \$.35 per gallon (Figure 2a).

Figure 2a: There is a tax on each gallon of gasoline sold to help fund transportation. If a regular gallon of gas costs \$2.50 at the pump, how much of that cost do you think is the state gas tax?



- Residents with a high school education or less, women, those who did not vote in 2016, and those who attend religious service once or twice a month believe that a larger proportion of the total cost of a gallon of gasoline is due to the state gas tax than others. Those who have completed postgraduate work, those aged 65 and older, local newspaper readers, and men believe the state gas tax accounts for less of the total cost of a gallon of gasoline (Figure 2b).

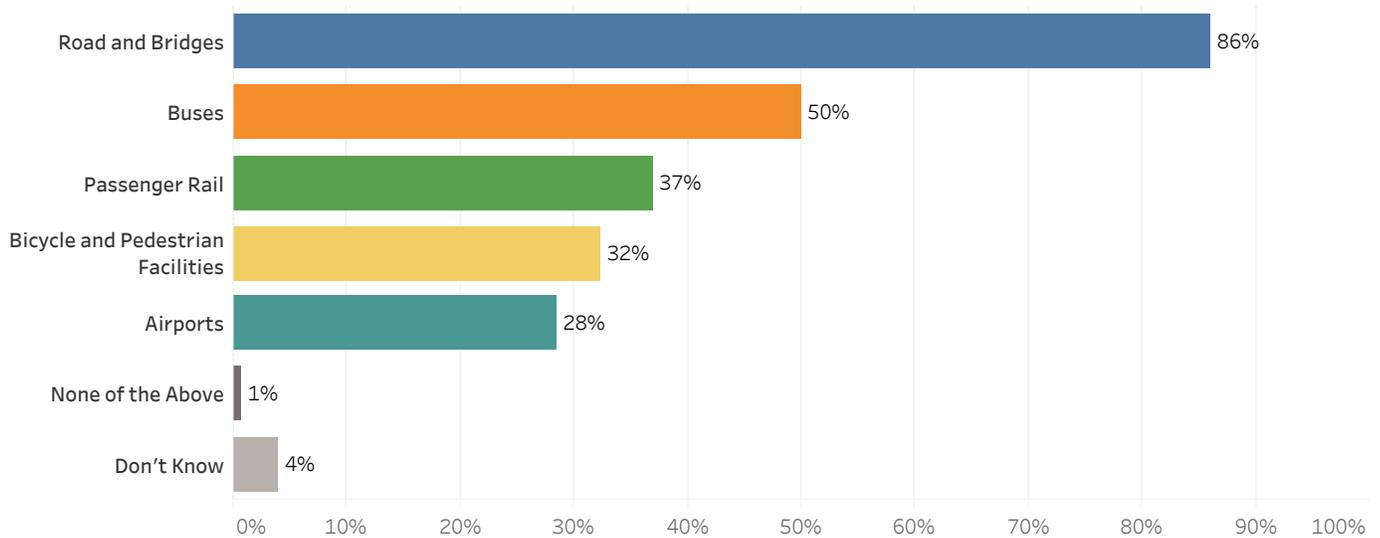
Figure 2b: How much of \$2.50 gallon of gas is state gas tax? - Mean by Select Demographics



There are a number of laws and rules that limit the parts of the transportation system that the gas tax can be used for.

Eighty-six percent of New Hampshire residents believe that the gas tax can be used for roads and bridges, 50% believe it can be used for buses, 37% believe it can be used for passenger rail, 32% believe it can be used for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and 28% believe it can be used for airports. One percent of residents believe the gas tax cannot be used for any of these components while 4% don't know or are unsure (Figure 3a).

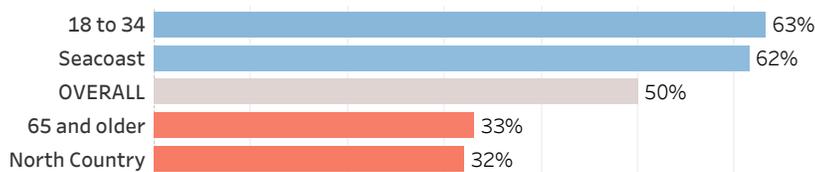
Figure 3a: Which components of transportation do you think the state gas tax can be used on? (Select all that apply)



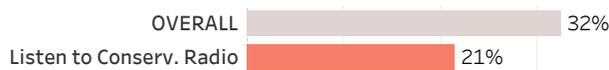
- Residents aged 18 to 34 and Seacoast residents are more likely than others to say that they think the state gas tax can be used on buses. North Country residents and those aged 65 and older are less likely to say so.
- Conservative radio listeners are less likely than others to say that they think the state gas tax can be used on bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Self-described liberals are less likely than others to say that they think the state gas tax can be used on airports (Figure 3b).

Figure 3b: Components state gas tax can be used on - by Select Demographics

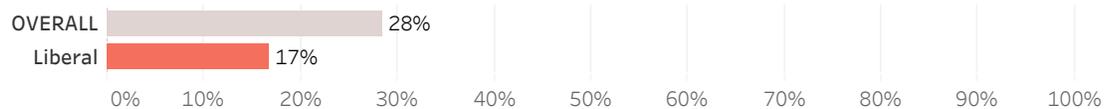
Buses



Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities



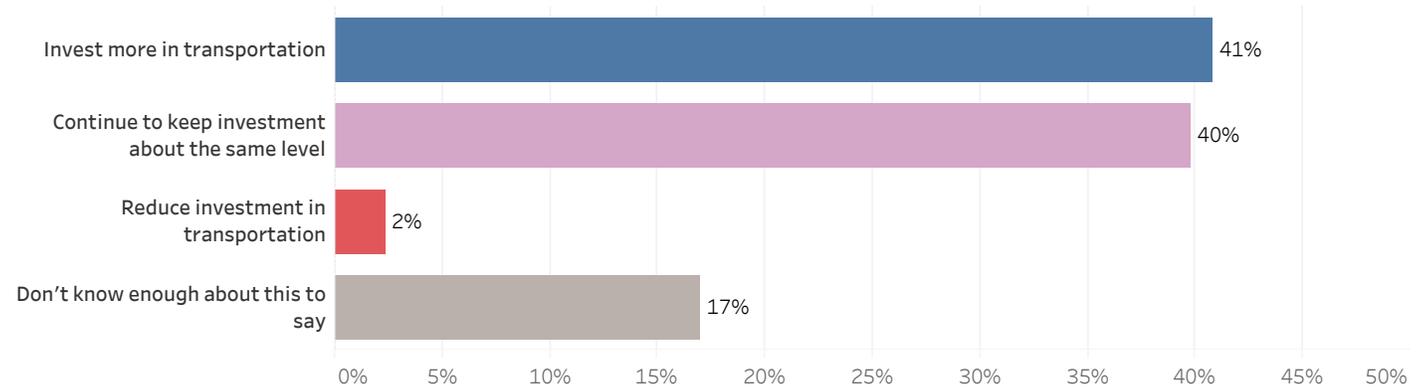
Airports



Overall State Investment in Transportation System

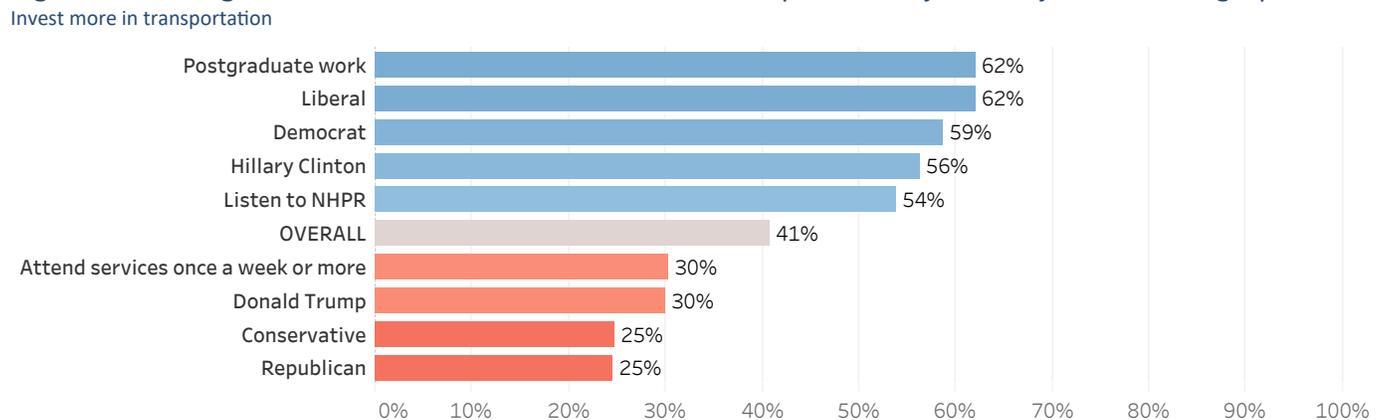
Forty-one percent of New Hampshire residents feel the state should invest more in transportation, 40% would like the state to continue to keep investment at about the same level, 2% want the state to reduce its investment in transportation, and 17% don't know or are unsure (Figure 4a).

Figure 4a: The state invests money to maintain today's roads, bridges, and to expand and improve transportation where needed. How do you feel about the state's current level of investment in its transportation system?



- Those who have completed postgraduate work, self-described liberals, self-identified Democrats, those who voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016 and NHPR listeners are more likely than others to feel that the state should invest more in transportation. Self-identified Republicans, self-described conservatives, those who voted for Donald Trump in 2016, and those who attend religious services once a week or more often are less likely to feel this way (Figure 4b).

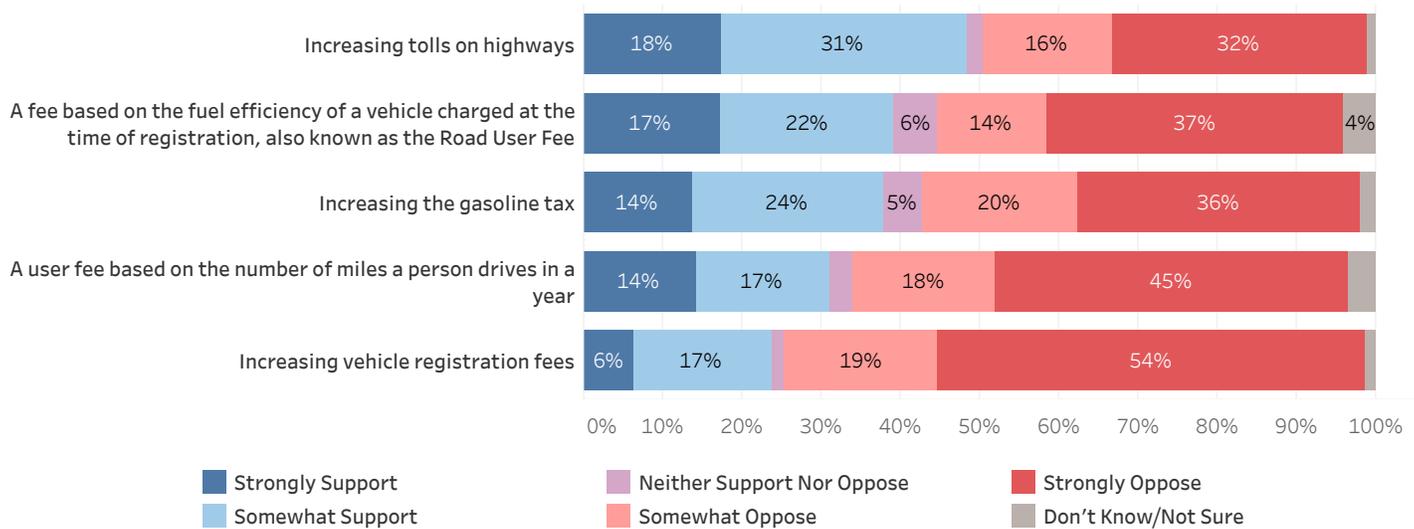
Figure 4b: Feelings about state's current investment in transportation system - by Select Demographics



Feelings on Potential Funding Sources

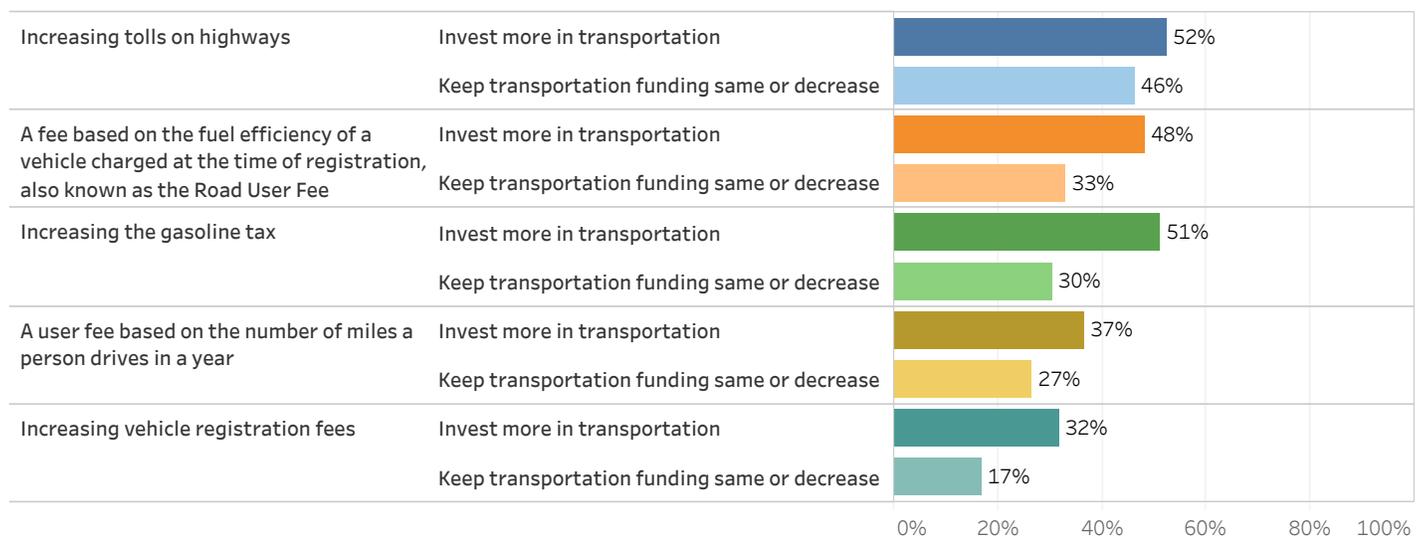
While nearly all New Hampshire residents want the state to keep transportation funding at about the same level or want to increase it, no individual potential funding source is supported by a majority of residents in the state. Residents are closely divided on increasing tolls on highways, with 48% strongly (18%) or somewhat (31%) in favor and 49% strongly (32%) or somewhat (16%) opposed. A slight majority are opposed to instituting a fee based on the fuel efficiency of a vehicle, also known as a Road User Fee (51%) or increasing the gasoline tax (55%), while larger majorities are opposed to a user fee based on the number of miles a person drives in a year (63%) or increasing vehicle registration fees (73%) (Figure 5a).

Figure 5a: The gas tax has traditionally been viewed as a user fee - the more you drive the more you pay. With increasing fuel efficiency and a shift to electric vehicles, gas tax revenue is projected to decline, and some people believe that the traditional view of the gas tax as a user fee is no longer a good fit for funding transportation. If the state were to keep transportation funding level over time, please indicate if you support or oppose the following sources to do this



Residents who want to see the transportation budget increased and those who do not largely agree on the increasing tolls on highways, instituting a user fee based on the number of miles a person drives in a year, or instituting a Road User Fee. Those who want to see the budget increase are more likely than those who do not to support increasing the gasoline tax or increasing vehicle registration fees (Figure 5b).

Figure 5b: Support for sources of transportation funding - By overall feelings on state's investment in transportation system



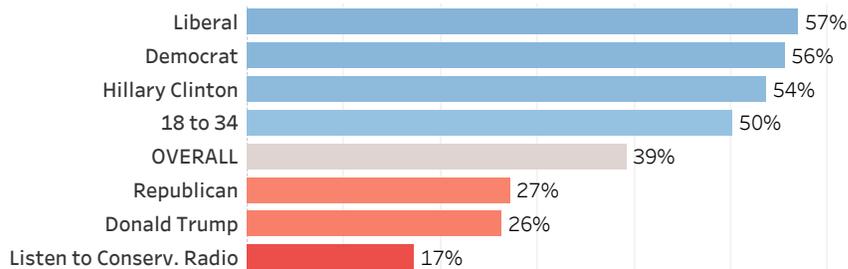
- North Country residents and those who attend religious services once or twice a month are more likely than others to support increasing tolls on highways in order to fund the transportation system. Manchester Area residents are less likely to support this.
- Self-described liberals, self-identified Democrats, those who voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016, and residents aged 18 to 34 are more likely than others to support a fee based on the fuel efficiency of a vehicle charged at the time of registration, also known as the Road User Fee to fund the transportation system. Conservative radio listeners, those who voted for Donald Trump in 2016, and self-identified Republicans are less likely to support this.
- Self-described liberals, those who have completed postgraduate work, those who voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016, NHPR listeners, self-identified Democrats, and Seacoast residents are more likely than others to support increasing the gasoline tax to fund the transportation system. Conservative radio listeners, self-described conservatives, Manchester Area residents, and those with a high school education or less are less likely to support this (Figure 5c).

Figure 5c: Support source of transportation funding - by Select Demographics

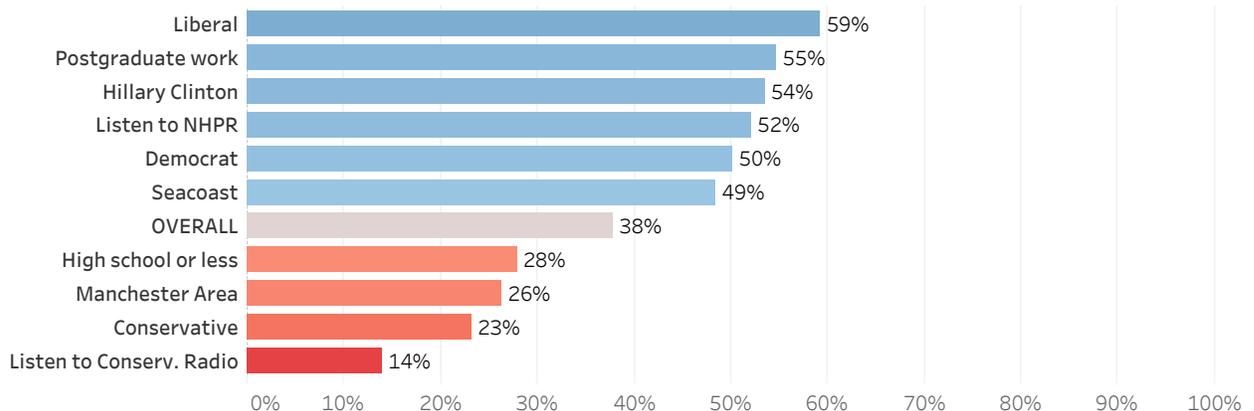
Increasing tolls on highways



A fee based on the fuel efficiency of a vehicle charged at the time of registration, also known as the Road User Fee



Increasing the gasoline tax



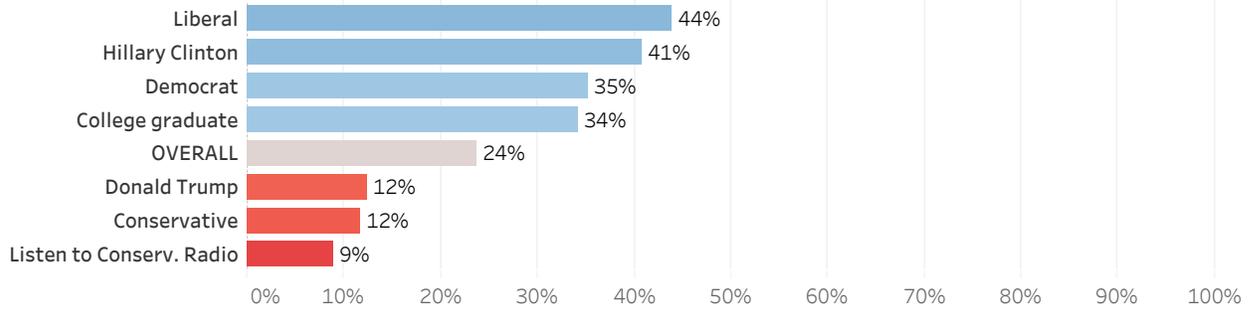
- Conservative radio listeners are less likely than others to support a user fee based on the number of miles a person drives in a year.
- Self-identified liberals, those who voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016, self-identified Democrats, and college graduates are more likely than others to support increasing vehicle registration fees. Conservative radio listeners, self-identified conservatives, and those who voted for Donald Trump in 2016 are less likely to support this (Figure 5d).

Figure 5d: Support source of transportation funding - by Select Demographics

A user fee based on the number of miles a person drives in a year



Increasing vehicle registration fees



Technical Report

How the Sample Was Selected

The Fall 2019 Granite State Poll was a telephone survey of randomly selected adults in the state of New Hampshire. This survey was conducted using a procedure called Random Digit Dialing (RDD), of both landline and cellular telephone.

A sample of households in the area was selected by a procedure known as random digit dialing. The way this works is as follows. First, with the aid of a computer, one of the three digit telephone exchanges that are currently used in the state (e.g., 772) is randomly selected. The computer then randomly selects one of the "working blocks"--the first two of the last four numbers in a telephone number (e.g., 64)--and attaches it to the randomly selected exchange. Finally, the computer program then generates a two digit random number between 00 and 99 (e.g., 57) which is attached to the previously selected prefix (772), and the previously selected working block (64) resulting in a complete telephone number, i.e., 772 6457. This procedure is then repeated numerous times by the computer to generate more random numbers, so that we have a sufficient quantity to conduct the survey. The end result is that each household in the area in which there is a telephone has an equally likely chance of being selected into the sample. This procedure is done for both land line and cellular exchanges.

The random sample used in the Granite State Poll was purchased from Scientific Telephone Samples (STS), Rancho Santa Margarita, CA. STS screens each selected telephone number to eliminate non-working numbers, disconnected numbers, and business numbers to improve the efficiency of the sample, reducing the amount of time interviewers spend calling non-usable numbers.

Each of these randomly generated telephone numbers is called by one of our interviewers from a centrally supervised facility at the UNH Survey Center. If the number called is found not to be a residential one, it is discarded and another random number is called. If it is a residential number, the interviewer then randomly selects a member of the household by asking to speak with the adult currently living in the household who has had the most recent birthday. This selection process ensures that every adult (18 years of age or older) in the household has an equally likely chance of being included in the survey. No substitutions are allowed. If, for example, the randomly selected adult is not at home when the household is first contacted, the interviewer cannot substitute by selecting someone else who just happens to be there at the time. Instead, he or she must make an appointment to call back when the randomly selected adult is at home. In this way, respondent selection bias is minimized.

When the Interviewing Was Done

New Hampshire adults in the Granite State Poll were interviewed between October 4 and October 17, 2019. Each selected respondent was called by a professional UNH Survey Center interviewer from a centrally supervised facility at the UNH Survey Center. Telephone calls during the field period were made between 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM.

Response Rates

Interviews were completed with 507 randomly selected adults in New Hampshire from a sample of 17209 randomly selected telephone numbers. Using American Association for Public Opinion (AAPOR) Response Rate 4, the response rate for the Fall 2019 Granite State Poll was 15% percent. The formula to calculate standard AAPOR response rate is:

$$\frac{(I + P)}{(I + P) + (R + NC + O) + e(UH + UO)}$$

I=Complete Interviews, P=Partial Interviews, R=Refusal and break off, NC=Non-Contact, O=Other, e=estimated portion of cases of unknown eligibility that are eligible, UH=Unknown household, UO=Unknown other.

Weighting of Data

The data have been weighted to adjust for numbers of adults and telephone lines within households, respondent sex, age, level of education and region of the state. In addition to potential sampling error, all surveys have other potential sources of non-sampling error including question order effects, question wording effects, and non-response. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100%. The number of respondents in each demographic below may not equal the number reported in cross-tabulation tables as some respondents choose not to answer some questions.

Sampling Error

The Granite State Poll, like all surveys, is subject to sampling error due to the fact that all residents in the area were not interviewed. For those questions asked of five hundred (500) or so respondents, the error is +/-4.4%. For those questions where fewer than 500 persons responded, the sampling error can be calculated as follows:

$$Sampling\ Error = \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{P(1 - P)}{N}}$$

Where P is the percentage of responses in the answer category being evaluated and N is the total number of persons answering the particular question.

For example, suppose you had the following distribution of answers to the question, "Should the state spend more money on road repair even if that means higher taxes?" Assume 1,000 respondents answered the question as follows:

YES	47%
NO	48%
DON'T KNOW	5%

The sampling error for the "YES" percentage of 47% would be

$$\pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{47(53)}{1000}} = \pm 3.1\%$$

for the "NO" percentage of 48% it would be

$$\pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{48(52)}{1000}} = \pm 3.1\%$$

and for the "DON'T KNOW" percentage of 5% it would be

$$\pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{5(95)}{1000}} = \pm 1.4\%$$

In this case we would expect the true population figures to be within the following ranges:

YES	43.9% - 50.1% (i.e., 47% \pm 3.1%)
NO	44.9% - 51.1% (i.e., 48% \pm 3.1%)
DON'T KNOW	3.6% - 6.4% (i.e., 5% \pm 1.4%)

The margin of sampling error for the Fall 2019 Granite State Poll is +/- 4.4 percent.

Design Effect

These MSE's have not been adjusted for design effect. The design effect for the survey is 1.2%. For more information about the methodology used in the Granite State Poll, contact Dr. Andrew Smith at (603) 862-2226 or by email at andrew.smith@unh.edu.

Appendix A

RUF1: How well do the state's roads and highways meet your needs for getting around?

		<u>Very Well</u>	<u>Somewhat Well</u>	<u>Not Too Well</u>	<u>Not Well At All</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>N</u>
STATEWIDE	October 2019	65%	28%	5%	2%	0%	505
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	57%	34%	8%	1%	1%	114
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	65%	28%	5%	2%	0%	261
	Reg. Republican	73%	24%	1%	2%		123
Party ID	Democrat	57%	34%	6%	2%	0%	201
	Independent	69%	24%	5%	0%	1%	91
	Republican	72%	24%	2%	2%		188
Ideology	Liberal	58%	34%	5%	3%		115
	Moderate	62%	29%	5%	2%	1%	204
	Conservative	73%	25%	1%	1%		151
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	58%	37%	4%	2%		131
	35 to 49	63%	28%	7%	1%		122
	50 to 64	72%	24%	3%	1%		136
	65 and older	66%	24%	5%	3%	2%	94
Gender of Respondent	Female	67%	25%	5%	3%	0%	256
	Male	63%	32%	4%	1%	0%	249
Level of Education	High school or less	64%	27%	7%	1%	1%	147
	Technical school/Some college	59%	34%	4%	3%	0%	188
	College graduate	73%	22%	4%	1%		114
	Postgraduate work	67%	27%	4%	1%		48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	73%	27%				58
	Listen to NHPR	68%	24%	5%	2%	1%	139
	Read Local Newspapers	60%	31%	6%	2%	1%	149
	Read Union Leader	70%	24%	5%		1%	97
	Watch WMUR	65%	29%	3%	2%	0%	218
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	71%	25%	3%	1%		174
	Hillary Clinton	66%	26%	5%	3%	0%	168
	Voted for Other	54%	40%	7%			56
	Did Not Vote	58%	32%	6%	3%	1%	93
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	74%	22%	4%	0%		89
	Once or twice a month	68%	27%		4%		50
	Few times a year	62%	26%	8%	2%	2%	117
	Never	62%	33%	4%	1%		239
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	67%	26%	5%	2%	0%	208
	Not Gun Owner	62%	32%	4%	2%	0%	266
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	64%	29%	3%	2%	1%	86
	Connecticut Valley	57%	35%	2%	6%		71
	Manchester Area	70%	28%	1%	0%	1%	81
	Mass Border	66%	26%	6%	2%		127
	North Country	58%	31%	10%	0%		49
	Seacoast	69%	25%	6%			92
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	57%	36%	5%	2%		205
	Continue at same level	74%	22%	3%		0%	200
	Reduce investment	64%	19%		17%		12

RUF2: How well do buses and rail in the state meet your needs for getting around?

		<u>Very Well</u>	<u>Somewhat Well</u>	<u>Not Too Well</u>	<u>Not Well At All</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>N</u>
STATEWIDE	October 2019	9%	20%	15%	26%	29%	470
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	4%	21%	19%	29%	28%	111
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	13%	19%	12%	28%	28%	238
	Reg. Republican	9%	19%	16%	21%	35%	112
Party ID	Democrat	8%	19%	16%	30%	27%	192
	Independent	12%	23%	12%	24%	29%	85
	Republican	10%	19%	13%	23%	34%	170
Ideology	Liberal	9%	16%	17%	34%	23%	105
	Moderate	10%	19%	16%	25%	30%	192
	Conservative	10%	24%	10%	22%	33%	138
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	11%	22%	15%	25%	27%	125
	35 to 49	11%	16%	7%	27%	38%	106
	50 to 64	9%	19%	21%	26%	24%	125
	65 and older	8%	21%	16%	24%	31%	94
Gender of Respondent	Female	10%	23%	13%	25%	29%	230
	Male	9%	16%	17%	28%	29%	240
Level of Education	High school or less	8%	22%	17%	21%	33%	135
	Technical school/Some college	12%	19%	9%	26%	33%	172
	College graduate	7%	19%	21%	30%	23%	109
	Postgraduate work	12%	17%	19%	33%	18%	46
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	6%	26%	14%	27%	26%	53
	Listen to NHPR	11%	16%	16%	31%	26%	134
	Read Local Newspapers	10%	20%	18%	23%	28%	136
	Read Union Leader	13%	27%	17%	16%	27%	85
	Watch WMUR	9%	18%	16%	24%	33%	198
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	9%	21%	14%	23%	33%	152
	Hillary Clinton	9%	14%	19%	30%	27%	161
	Voted for Other	6%	29%	14%	27%	24%	51
	Did Not Vote	15%	21%	11%	25%	28%	92
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	14%	26%	15%	23%	22%	82
	Once or twice a month	6%	17%	20%	25%	32%	42
	Few times a year	9%	26%	14%	25%	26%	110
	Never	9%	15%	14%	29%	33%	224
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	9%	17%	14%	28%	32%	189
	Not Gun Owner	11%	20%	16%	26%	28%	251
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	8%	19%	13%	33%	27%	81
	Connecticut Valley	9%	17%	16%	30%	28%	63
	Manchester Area	4%	34%	18%	18%	26%	81
	Mass Border	8%	11%	18%	27%	36%	113
	North Country	14%	10%	11%	38%	28%	42
	Seacoast	16%	25%	14%	18%	27%	89
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	7%	20%	22%	34%	18%	184
	Continue at same level	13%	19%	9%	20%	39%	191
	Reduce investment	21%	15%	22%	17%	26%	12

RUF3: How well do bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the state meet your needs for getting around?

		<u>Very Well</u>	<u>Somewhat Well</u>	<u>Not Too Well</u>	<u>Not Well At All</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>N</u>
STATEWIDE	October 2019	20%	33%	17%	17%	13%	489
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	14%	36%	20%	22%	8%	112
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	23%	28%	18%	18%	13%	251
	Reg. Republican	18%	41%	11%	14%	17%	120
Party ID	Democrat	18%	35%	22%	19%	7%	195
	Independent	18%	26%	19%	17%	19%	89
	Republican	21%	35%	10%	18%	16%	183
Ideology	Liberal	16%	38%	20%	16%	9%	112
	Moderate	24%	32%	15%	19%	10%	198
	Conservative	19%	30%	16%	15%	19%	146
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	20%	35%	12%	18%	14%	130
	35 to 49	27%	30%	22%	14%	7%	114
	50 to 64	17%	36%	16%	21%	10%	130
	65 and older	15%	29%	16%	18%	22%	94
Gender of Respondent	Female	20%	35%	17%	17%	12%	248
	Male	19%	31%	18%	18%	14%	242
Level of Education	High school or less	25%	27%	20%	18%	11%	142
	Technical school/Some college	14%	38%	16%	18%	14%	182
	College graduate	22%	35%	14%	18%	11%	113
	Postgraduate work	19%	31%	21%	16%	14%	46
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	18%	35%	15%	20%	12%	56
	Listen to NHPR	12%	30%	24%	29%	5%	137
	Read Local Newspapers	18%	36%	18%	19%	8%	144
	Read Union Leader	24%	36%	17%	14%	10%	94
	Watch WMUR	21%	31%	18%	15%	14%	207
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	17%	34%	15%	16%	18%	167
	Hillary Clinton	19%	38%	17%	20%	6%	165
	Voted for Other	13%	37%	24%	16%	10%	52
	Did Not Vote	29%	21%	17%	17%	16%	92
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	14%	29%	22%	20%	14%	87
	Once or twice a month	20%	48%	9%	8%	15%	48
	Few times a year	17%	38%	15%	19%	10%	115
	Never	22%	29%	17%	18%	13%	229
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	21%	33%	14%	20%	13%	202
	Not Gun Owner	17%	36%	18%	15%	13%	258
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	16%	33%	21%	18%	11%	81
	Connecticut Valley	16%	39%	13%	21%	11%	69
	Manchester Area	13%	34%	27%	12%	14%	80
	Mass Border	25%	33%	10%	18%	14%	124
	North Country	15%	31%	15%	25%	15%	45
	Seacoast	26%	28%	19%	15%	13%	90
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	18%	32%	20%	21%	9%	196
	Continue at same level	23%	35%	16%	12%	14%	196
	Reduce investment		40%	18%	17%	26%	12

RUF4: There is a tax on each gallon of gasoline sold to help fund transportation. If a regular gallon of gas costs \$2.50 at the pump, how much of that cost do you think is the state gas tax?

		<u>Less than \$.25</u>	<u>\$.25-\$.49</u>	<u>\$.50-\$.74</u>	<u>\$.75 or more</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>N</u>
STATEWIDE	October 2019	34%	23%	12%	11%	20%	\$0.35	494
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	32%	26%	12%	12%	17%	\$0.35	113
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	34%	22%	13%	13%	19%	\$0.38	257
	Reg. Republican	38%	23%	11%	6%	22%	\$0.31	116
Party ID	Democrat	38%	21%	11%	14%	16%	\$0.35	200
	Independent	27%	30%	15%	11%	17%	\$0.40	87
	Republican	35%	24%	13%	8%	21%	\$0.34	182
Ideology	Liberal	38%	24%	10%	13%	16%	\$0.36	110
	Moderate	32%	26%	12%	11%	19%	\$0.33	201
	Conservative	37%	23%	14%	9%	17%	\$0.38	147
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	36%	17%	10%	9%	28%	\$0.43	131
	35 to 49	36%	32%	5%	15%	12%	\$0.41	116
	50 to 64	35%	22%	18%	10%	15%	\$0.35	132
	65 and older	32%	24%	11%	9%	24%	\$0.24	94
Gender of Respondent	Female	28%	22%	10%	14%	26%	\$0.51	246
	Male	41%	24%	14%	8%	13%	\$0.26	248
Level of Education	High school or less	40%	11%	12%	15%	22%	\$0.64	147
	Technical school/Some college	35%	25%	12%	6%	23%	\$0.42	178
	College graduate	21%	37%	12%	15%	14%	\$0.27	113
	Postgraduate work	47%	23%	14%	5%	11%	\$0.15	48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	33%	22%	17%	7%	21%	\$0.30	54
	Listen to NHPR	38%	24%	10%	12%	17%	\$0.31	137
	Read Local Newspapers	38%	24%	16%	5%	17%	\$0.25	143
	Read Union Leader	32%	27%	12%	6%	24%	\$0.31	92
	Watch WMUR	36%	23%	15%	10%	16%	\$0.33	214
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	31%	26%	13%	9%	20%	\$0.36	166
	Hillary Clinton	34%	26%	12%	12%	17%	\$0.32	166
	Voted for Other	36%	20%	12%	14%	19%	\$0.35	55
	Did Not Vote	39%	14%	10%	10%	27%	\$0.48	93
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	22%	30%	14%	2%	32%	\$0.27	86
	Once or twice a month	32%	24%	4%	22%	17%	\$0.46	46
	Few times a year	36%	24%	11%	11%	18%	\$0.32	115
	Never	38%	20%	13%	12%	17%	\$0.38	236
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	34%	22%	14%	11%	20%	\$0.33	201
	Not Gun Owner	36%	23%	12%	11%	19%	\$0.36	261
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	42%	16%	14%	14%	14%	\$0.33	85
	Connecticut Valley	41%	25%	14%	7%	13%	\$0.30	70
	Manchester Area	22%	26%	13%	11%	28%	\$0.43	83
	Mass Border	39%	20%	11%	11%	19%	\$0.38	119
	North Country	24%	28%	13%	8%	27%	\$0.29	46
	Seacoast	32%	26%	9%	13%	20%	\$0.37	92
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	43%	23%	11%	9%	14%	\$0.27	196
	Continue at same level	32%	23%	14%	11%	20%	\$0.37	199
	Reduce investment	45%	36%			19%	\$0.24	12

RUF5: There are a number of laws and rules that limit the parts of the transportation system that the gas tax can be used. Which components of transportation do you think the state gas tax can be used on?

		<u>Airports</u>	<u>Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities</u>	<u>Buses</u>	<u>Passenger Rail</u>	<u>Road and Bridges</u>	<u>None of the Above</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	N
STATEWIDE	October 2019	28%	32%	50%	37%	86%	1%	4%	507
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	22%	30%	47%	44%	88%	2%	5%	114
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	31%	35%	52%	37%	84%	1%	4%	261
	Reg. Republican	30%	28%	49%	30%	91%		2%	123
Party ID	Democrat	28%	38%	56%	45%	89%	1%	4%	201
	Independent	29%	28%	48%	40%	80%	1%	4%	91
	Republican	27%	26%	45%	31%	86%	1%	4%	188
Ideology	Liberal	17%	26%	53%	36%	88%		2%	115
	Moderate	29%	34%	45%	34%	86%	2%	5%	204
	Conservative	36%	36%	56%	43%	87%		3%	151
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	37%	37%	63%	45%	85%		1%	131
	35 to 49	21%	28%	52%	37%	77%	2%	8%	122
	50 to 64	27%	33%	48%	36%	90%		4%	136
	65 and older	26%	28%	33%	29%	90%	2%	3%	96
Gender of Respondent	Female	31%	32%	52%	39%	85%	0%	4%	258
	Male	26%	33%	48%	35%	87%	1%	4%	249
Level of Education	High school or less	35%	31%	57%	44%	89%	2%	4%	147
	Technical school/Some college	23%	32%	45%	32%	82%		4%	190
	College graduate	32%	33%	54%	38%	86%		4%	114
	Postgraduate work	20%	33%	42%	34%	91%	2%	3%	48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	29%	21%	49%	34%	94%		1%	58
	Listen to NHPR	22%	36%	52%	42%	92%	0%	2%	139
	Read Local Newspapers	24%	34%	45%	37%	85%	2%	2%	149
	Read Union Leader	37%	36%	58%	45%	86%	2%	1%	98
	Watch WMUR	27%	34%	46%	35%	86%	1%	4%	218
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	31%	27%	48%	32%	86%		3%	174
	Hillary Clinton	22%	32%	53%	43%	89%	1%	3%	168
	Voted for Other	31%	49%	52%	45%	82%	2%	6%	56
	Did Not Vote	34%	33%	51%	31%	83%	1%	6%	94
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	23%	29%	48%	37%	82%	1%	2%	90
	Once or twice a month	32%	25%	43%	31%	88%		3%	50
	Few times a year	27%	31%	45%	38%	90%	1%	4%	117
	Never	29%	35%	55%	38%	86%	1%	4%	239
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	30%	28%	49%	33%	84%	1%	4%	208
	Not Gun Owner	28%	34%	49%	42%	89%	1%	4%	267
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	25%	28%	45%	35%	84%	1%	5%	86
	Connecticut Valley	23%	30%	46%	31%	92%	1%	5%	71
	Manchester Area	30%	32%	54%	35%	89%	1%	4%	83
	Mass Border	32%	28%	51%	45%	82%		6%	127
	North Country	24%	41%	32%	35%	83%	3%	1%	49
	Seacoast	33%	40%	62%	37%	89%		2%	92
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	30%	31%	51%	37%	86%	1%	4%	205
	Continue at same level	28%	37%	48%	39%	83%	0%	5%	200
	Reduce investment	4%	19%	30%	4%	93%		7%	12

RUF6: The state invests money to maintain today's roads, bridges, and to expand and improve transportation where needed. How do you feel about the state's current level of investment in its transportation system?

		<u>Invest more in transportation</u>	<u>Reduce investment in transportation</u>	<u>Continue to keep investment about the same level</u>	<u>Don't know enough about this to say</u>	N
STATEWIDE	October 2019	41%	2%	40%	17%	503
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	57%	1%	23%	19%	111
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	37%	3%	41%	19%	260
	Reg. Republican	32%	3%	54%	11%	122
Party ID	Democrat	59%	0%	25%	16%	199
	Independent	38%	5%	42%	14%	91
	Republican	25%	3%	54%	18%	186
Ideology	Liberal	62%	4%	20%	15%	112
	Moderate	43%	1%	40%	16%	203
	Conservative	25%	2%	55%	18%	151
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	40%	4%	36%	20%	131
	35 to 49	42%	1%	41%	16%	118
	50 to 64	35%	1%	49%	15%	136
	65 and older	47%	3%	29%	20%	95
Gender of Respondent	Female	40%	2%	35%	22%	256
	Male	41%	3%	44%	12%	247
Level of Education	High school or less	35%	3%	41%	20%	143
	Technical school/Some college	39%	3%	43%	15%	190
	College graduate	42%	2%	37%	19%	114
	Postgraduate work	62%		25%	13%	48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	37%	2%	46%	15%	58
	Listen to NHPR	54%	2%	31%	13%	136
	Read Local Newspapers	51%	3%	33%	13%	148
	Read Union Leader	47%	2%	38%	13%	98
	Watch WMUR	43%	2%	39%	16%	217
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	30%	3%	53%	15%	171
	Hillary Clinton	56%		26%	17%	166
	Voted for Other	40%	2%	48%	10%	56
	Did Not Vote	35%	6%	34%	25%	94
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	30%	2%	45%	23%	90
	Once or twice a month	34%		49%	17%	50
	Few times a year	42%	5%	40%	13%	115
	Never	46%	2%	36%	17%	236
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	36%	4%	44%	16%	207
	Not Gun Owner	47%	1%	36%	16%	265
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	40%	2%	38%	19%	85
	Connecticut Valley	35%	7%	38%	20%	71
	Manchester Area	33%	2%	46%	19%	83
	Mass Border	47%	2%	39%	12%	124
	North Country	40%		43%	17%	49
	Seacoast	46%		37%	17%	90
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	100%				205
	Continue at same level			100%		200
	Reduce investment		100%			12

RUF7: If the state were to keep transportation funding level over time, please indicate if you would support or oppose the following sources to do this - Increasing the gasoline tax

		<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Somewhat Support</u>	<u>Neither Support Nor Oppose</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>Don't Know/Not Sure</u>	N
STATEWIDE	October 2019	14%	24%	5%	20%	36%	2%	504
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	22%	26%	2%	18%	30%	2%	114
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	14%	25%	5%	18%	36%	2%	259
	Reg. Republican	6%	21%	6%	26%	39%	1%	122
Party ID	Democrat	20%	30%	5%	18%	26%	2%	201
	Independent	20%	16%	3%	20%	37%	4%	91
	Republican	6%	23%	6%	19%	44%	1%	187
Ideology	Liberal	22%	37%	2%	17%	19%	3%	115
	Moderate	15%	23%	6%	24%	31%	1%	204
	Conservative	6%	18%	4%	20%	50%	2%	149
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	11%	31%	5%	29%	23%	1%	129
	35 to 49	15%	26%	2%	16%	41%	0%	120
	50 to 64	12%	19%	7%	17%	43%	3%	136
	65 and older	20%	22%	5%	16%	32%	5%	96
Gender of Respondent	Female	13%	24%	6%	17%	37%	3%	256
	Male	15%	24%	3%	22%	34%	2%	247
Level of Education	High school or less	9%	19%	4%	25%	39%	4%	147
	Technical school/Some college	14%	24%	4%	19%	38%	2%	187
	College graduate	16%	29%	7%	16%	31%	1%	114
	Postgraduate work	23%	32%	4%	17%	24%		48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	6%	8%	3%	27%	56%		56
	Listen to NHPR	19%	33%	6%	18%	21%	3%	138
	Read Local Newspapers	16%	28%	5%	20%	30%	0%	149
	Read Union Leader	17%	19%	4%	26%	33%	1%	98
	Watch WMUR	14%	25%	5%	21%	34%	2%	218
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	9%	20%	5%	21%	44%	1%	172
	Hillary Clinton	24%	30%	3%	20%	22%	2%	168
	Voted for Other	9%	26%	10%	12%	43%		56
	Did Not Vote	10%	22%	2%	20%	39%	6%	93
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	20%	20%	7%	14%	38%		87
	Once or twice a month	7%	24%		35%	31%	3%	50
	Few times a year	10%	23%	8%	17%	42%		117
	Never	15%	26%	3%	20%	32%	4%	239
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	11%	24%	5%	20%	39%	1%	205
	Not Gun Owner	15%	26%	5%	19%	33%	3%	267
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	13%	24%	4%	19%	40%		86
	Connecticut Valley	12%	26%	9%	23%	24%	6%	69
	Manchester Area	9%	17%	7%	15%	48%	4%	83
	Mass Border	12%	27%	3%	22%	36%	0%	127
	North Country	11%	24%	2%	23%	39%		47
	Seacoast	24%	25%	4%	17%	28%	2%	92
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	23%	29%	5%	18%	26%	1%	205
	Continue at same level	10%	21%	6%	21%	41%	2%	199
	Reduce investment		28%		15%	42%	15%	12

RUF8: If the state were to keep transportation funding level over time, please indicate if you would support or oppose the following sources to do this - Increasing tolls on highways

		<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Somewhat Support</u>	<u>Neither Support Nor Oppose</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>Don't Know/Not Sure</u>	N
STATEWIDE	October 2019	18%	31%	2%	16%	32%	1%	505
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	16%	34%	1%	16%	31%	1%	114
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	18%	30%	2%	17%	31%	2%	259
	Reg. Republican	18%	30%	2%	15%	35%		123
Party ID	Democrat	16%	34%	2%	18%	30%	1%	201
	Independent	26%	22%	2%	18%	29%	3%	91
	Republican	16%	33%	3%	13%	35%	1%	188
Ideology	Liberal	14%	37%	1%	24%	22%	2%	115
	Moderate	24%	31%	2%	14%	28%		204
	Conservative	13%	31%	2%	11%	42%	1%	151
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	16%	29%	1%	22%	33%	1%	131
	35 to 49	24%	23%	2%	13%	38%		120
	50 to 64	14%	39%	1%	15%	29%	3%	136
	65 and older	16%	30%	4%	19%	30%	2%	96
Gender of Respondent	Female	18%	34%	2%	15%	30%	1%	256
	Male	17%	27%	2%	18%	35%	1%	249
Level of Education	High school or less	12%	30%	2%	17%	38%	2%	147
	Technical school/Some college	20%	33%	1%	14%	32%	1%	188
	College graduate	22%	26%	3%	21%	27%	1%	114
	Postgraduate work	14%	39%	4%	19%	22%	1%	48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	20%	24%	3%	20%	33%		58
	Listen to NHPR	21%	31%	3%	17%	27%	3%	139
	Read Local Newspapers	17%	41%	2%	11%	29%	0%	149
	Read Union Leader	19%	24%	5%	13%	39%		98
	Watch WMUR	18%	34%	2%	16%	29%	1%	218
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	21%	31%	2%	14%	32%		174
	Hillary Clinton	17%	36%	2%	20%	25%	1%	168
	Voted for Other	16%	25%	2%	13%	44%	1%	56
	Did Not Vote	13%	26%	1%	20%	35%	5%	93
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	22%	34%	1%	13%	29%		89
	Once or twice a month	14%	46%	1%	16%	23%		50
	Few times a year	17%	27%	2%	11%	42%	1%	117
	Never	17%	28%	2%	20%	30%	2%	239
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	21%	29%	2%	14%	34%	0%	206
	Not Gun Owner	14%	34%	2%	19%	30%	2%	267
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	21%	26%	1%	19%	32%	0%	86
	Connecticut Valley	17%	34%	1%	17%	29%	2%	71
	Manchester Area	16%	21%	4%	16%	39%	3%	83
	Mass Border	8%	36%	1%	15%	40%		127
	North Country	30%	34%	3%	3%	30%		47
	Seacoast	23%	33%	3%	22%	18%	2%	92
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	22%	31%	3%	17%	28%	0%	205
	Continue at same level	17%	31%	1%	16%	35%	1%	200
	Reduce investment	18%	7%	4%	19%	52%		12

RUF9: If the state were to keep transportation funding level over time, please indicate if you would support or oppose the following sources to do this - Increasing vehicle registration fees

		<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Somewhat Support</u>	<u>Neither Support Nor Oppose</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>Don't Know/Not Sure</u>	N
STATEWIDE	October 2019	6%	17%	1%	19%	54%	1%	505
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	8%	30%	2%	19%	40%	2%	114
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	8%	15%	1%	22%	52%	2%	259
	Reg. Republican	2%	10%	2%	16%	70%		123
Party ID	Democrat	6%	29%	1%	26%	37%	1%	201
	Independent	13%	11%	2%	15%	56%	3%	91
	Republican	4%	10%	2%	14%	69%	1%	188
Ideology	Liberal	7%	37%		21%	33%	2%	115
	Moderate	9%	15%	2%	21%	53%	1%	204
	Conservative	3%	8%	1%	17%	68%	1%	151
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	7%	19%	1%	27%	46%	1%	131
	35 to 49	7%	19%	1%	9%	64%	1%	120
	50 to 64	5%	16%	1%	20%	56%	3%	136
	65 and older	8%	15%	4%	23%	48%	2%	96
Gender of Respondent	Female	7%	19%	1%	17%	54%	1%	256
	Male	5%	16%	2%	22%	54%	1%	249
Level of Education	High school or less	6%	10%	1%	23%	59%	2%	147
	Technical school/Some college	7%	17%	2%	14%	60%	1%	188
	College graduate	7%	27%	1%	23%	40%	2%	114
	Postgraduate work	6%	22%	3%	25%	43%	1%	48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	4%	5%	3%	22%	67%		58
	Listen to NHPR	11%	22%	1%	19%	43%	4%	139
	Read Local Newspapers	7%	25%	0%	15%	52%	1%	149
	Read Union Leader	7%	16%		24%	53%		98
	Watch WMUR	8%	19%	2%	17%	53%	1%	218
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	4%	9%	1%	16%	71%		174
	Hillary Clinton	10%	31%	1%	20%	37%	1%	168
	Voted for Other	5%	12%	1%	23%	57%	1%	56
	Did Not Vote	7%	10%	4%	24%	51%	5%	93
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	6%	12%	1%	19%	62%		89
	Once or twice a month	4%	21%		17%	58%		50
	Few times a year	4%	19%	2%	21%	53%		117
	Never	8%	18%	2%	20%	50%	3%	239
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	6%	17%	1%	13%	62%	0%	206
	Not Gun Owner	7%	19%	2%	25%	46%	2%	267
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	5%	22%	2%	14%	57%		86
	Connecticut Valley	7%	22%		20%	49%	2%	71
	Manchester Area	0%	18%	2%	20%	58%	2%	83
	Mass Border	4%	16%	0%	22%	57%	0%	127
	North Country	15%	16%		13%	57%		47
	Seacoast	11%	11%	4%	24%	46%	4%	92
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	10%	22%	1%	24%	42%	1%	205
	Continue at same level	5%	13%	2%	16%	63%	2%	200
	Reduce investment		7%			93%		12

RUF10: If the state were to keep transportation funding level over time, please indicate if you would support or oppose the following sources to do this - A user fee based on the number of miles a person drives a year

		<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Somewhat Support</u>	<u>Neither Support Nor Oppose</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>Don't Know/Not Sure</u>	N
STATEWIDE	October 2019	14%	17%	3%	18%	45%	3%	503
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	17%	18%	3%	24%	36%	2%	111
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	14%	17%	2%	17%	45%	4%	259
	Reg. Republican	12%	14%	3%	12%	53%	5%	123
Party ID	Democrat	15%	21%	4%	25%	33%	3%	199
	Independent	16%	12%	1%	12%	55%	4%	91
	Republican	13%	15%	3%	11%	54%	4%	188
Ideology	Liberal	13%	21%	2%	27%	36%	1%	112
	Moderate	14%	19%	2%	19%	43%	3%	204
	Conservative	13%	13%	4%	10%	55%	5%	151
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	13%	23%	5%	16%	41%	3%	131
	35 to 49	10%	13%	3%	18%	56%		118
	50 to 64	12%	17%	3%	20%	43%	6%	136
	65 and older	24%	10%	2%	18%	40%	6%	96
Gender of Respondent	Female	11%	18%	2%	20%	45%	5%	254
	Male	18%	16%	4%	16%	44%	2%	249
Level of Education	High school or less	13%	16%	2%	22%	42%	5%	145
	Technical school/Some college	17%	15%	4%	13%	47%	3%	188
	College graduate	13%	19%	3%	19%	43%	3%	114
	Postgraduate work	12%	24%	3%	17%	44%	1%	48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	3%	10%	2%	16%	65%	4%	58
	Listen to NHPR	18%	20%	1%	15%	41%	4%	137
	Read Local Newspapers	20%	17%	2%	19%	39%	3%	149
	Read Union Leader	19%	10%	4%	16%	48%	3%	98
	Watch WMUR	16%	12%	2%	20%	47%	4%	218
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	11%	13%	2%	13%	58%	4%	174
	Hillary Clinton	16%	23%	3%	25%	32%	1%	166
	Voted for Other	11%	13%	6%	18%	47%	6%	56
	Did Not Vote	17%	18%	4%	14%	41%	4%	93
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	17%	12%	3%	15%	50%	3%	89
	Once or twice a month	11%	11%	1%	28%	48%		50
	Few times a year	13%	18%	2%	17%	43%	7%	117
	Never	14%	19%	4%	17%	43%	3%	236
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	17%	13%	4%	12%	51%	2%	206
	Not Gun Owner	13%	21%	3%	20%	39%	4%	265
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	11%	15%		17%	54%	3%	86
	Connecticut Valley	5%	21%	7%	25%	39%	4%	71
	Manchester Area	14%	15%	7%	17%	40%	6%	83
	Mass Border	15%	24%	2%	14%	42%	3%	124
	North Country	16%	10%		18%	56%		47
	Seacoast	22%	11%	2%	19%	42%	3%	92
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	16%	21%	2%	19%	41%	1%	205
	Continue at same level	12%	14%	3%	14%	52%	4%	200
	Reduce investment	14%	11%		19%	56%		12

RUF11: A fee based on the fuel efficiency of a vehicle charged at the time of registration, also known as the Road User Fee?

		<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Somewhat Support</u>	<u>Neither Support Nor Oppose</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>Don't Know/Not Sure</u>	N
STATEWIDE	October 2019	17%	22%	6%	14%	37%	4%	503
Registered to Vote	Reg. Democrat	30%	22%	5%	14%	27%	3%	111
	Reg. Undeclared/Not Reg.	16%	23%	7%	14%	36%	4%	259
	Reg. Republican	8%	22%	4%	14%	48%	5%	123
Party ID	Democrat	27%	29%	7%	14%	21%	2%	199
	Independent	15%	20%	5%	11%	45%	5%	91
	Republican	9%	18%	4%	13%	50%	6%	188
Ideology	Liberal	27%	30%	3%	15%	21%	3%	112
	Moderate	16%	21%	6%	16%	37%	4%	204
	Conservative	11%	20%	5%	10%	49%	4%	151
Age of Respondent	18 to 34	26%	24%	7%	17%	25%	1%	131
	35 to 49	13%	25%	5%	7%	49%	1%	118
	50 to 64	16%	18%	5%	17%	38%	5%	136
	65 and older	12%	24%	6%	10%	37%	11%	96
Gender of Respondent	Female	14%	24%	7%	11%	39%	6%	254
	Male	21%	20%	4%	17%	36%	3%	249
Level of Education	High school or less	18%	18%	8%	11%	38%	5%	145
	Technical school/Some college	13%	25%	3%	17%	39%	3%	188
	College graduate	20%	26%	6%	11%	35%	2%	114
	Postgraduate work	23%	17%	7%	14%	30%	9%	48
Media Usage	Listen to Conserv. Radio	5%	12%	6%	13%	60%	3%	58
	Listen to NHPR	24%	23%	2%	14%	31%	6%	137
	Read Local Newspapers	23%	19%	3%	13%	39%	3%	149
	Read Union Leader	22%	18%	3%	11%	42%	4%	98
	Watch WMUR	18%	23%	4%	14%	37%	4%	218
2016 Presidential Vote	Donald Trump	6%	20%	4%	11%	54%	4%	174
	Hillary Clinton	28%	26%	6%	16%	22%	2%	166
	Voted for Other	18%	20%	9%	13%	39%	1%	56
	Did Not Vote	20%	20%	5%	15%	32%	8%	93
Frequency Attending Relig. Services	Once a week or more	14%	17%	3%	18%	45%	3%	89
	Once or twice a month	15%	23%	8%	11%	43%		50
	Few times a year	12%	24%	8%	9%	41%	5%	117
	Never	21%	23%	4%	16%	31%	5%	236
Gun Owner in Household	Gun Owner	17%	19%	5%	14%	45%	1%	206
	Not Gun Owner	19%	27%	5%	14%	29%	6%	265
Region of State	Central/Lakes Region	14%	26%	3%	13%	39%	5%	86
	Connecticut Valley	8%	23%	9%	22%	34%	5%	71
	Manchester Area	20%	15%	10%	13%	34%	8%	83
	Mass Border	20%	24%	4%	13%	37%	2%	124
	North Country	21%	21%	1%	11%	45%	0%	47
	Seacoast	19%	21%	6%	11%	38%	5%	92
Feelings Trans. Investment	Invest more	19%	29%	3%	13%	34%	2%	205
	Continue at same level	15%	19%	6%	14%	40%	6%	200
	Reduce investment	11%	7%		26%	56%		12

Appendix B

Granite State Poll #75 The University of New Hampshire Fall, 2019

INTRO:

"Good afternoon / evening. My name is _____ and I'm calling for the Granite State Poll from the University of New Hampshire Survey Center. This month, the University is conducting a study of politics and public opinion in New Hampshire and we'd really appreciate your help and cooperation."

"Before we begin, do you live in New Hampshire all year round or are you on vacation?"

- 1 LIVE IN NH YEAR ROUND
- 2 SEASONAL, JUST VACATIONING → "Thank you very much, we are only interviewing year round residents."
- 3 NOT A NH RESIDENT → "Thank you very much, we are only interviewing New Hampshire residents."
- 4 APPOINTMENT
- * 99 REFUSED → TERMINATE

CELL1

"First, to confirm, have I reached you on your cell phone or a land line?"

- 1 CELL PHONE → SKIPTO CELL2
- 2 LAND LINE → SKIPTO BIR1
- 99 REFUSED → TERMINATE

CELL2

"Are you doing any activity that requires your full attention, such as driving a car?"

IF YES: "Would you like to continue with the survey now or would you like me to call back at a better time?"

- 1 CONTINUE WITH SURVEY → SKIPTO AGE18
- 2 SET APPOINTMENT TO CALL BACK → TERMINATE
- 99 NA / REFUSED → TERMINATE

AGE18

"And are you 18 years old or older?"

- 1 YES → SKIP TO SEX
- 2 NO → "Thank you very much, we are only interviewing adults 18 years old or older."
- * 99 REFUSAL → "Thank you very much, we are only interviewing adults 18 years old or older."

BIR1

"In order to determine who to interview, could you tell me, of the adults aged 18 or older who currently live in your household -- including yourself -- who had the most recent birthday? I don't mean who is the youngest, but rather, who had the most recent birthday?"

- 1 INFORMANT → SKIP TO SEX
- 2 SOMEONE ELSE : _____ → SKIP TO INT2
- 3 DON'T KNOW ALL BIRTHDAYS, ONLY SOME → CONTINUE WITH BIR2 BELOW
- 4 DON'T KNOW ANY BIRTHDAYS OTHER THAN OWN → SKIP TO SEX
- * 99 REFUSED -- ENTER NON-RESPONSE INFORMATION

BIR2

“Of the ones that you do know, who had the most recent birthday?”

- 1 INFORMANT _____ → SKIP TO SEX
- 2 SOMEONE ELSE (SPECIFY): _____ → GO TO INT2
- 3 PERSON NOT AVAILABLE → MAKE APPOINTMENT
- * 99 REFUSED - TERMINATE

INT2

ASK TO SPEAK TO THAT PERSON

“Hello, this is _____ calling for the Granite State Poll from the University of New Hampshire. This month, the University is conducting a study of politics and public opinion in New Hampshire, and we'd really appreciate your help and cooperation. You have been identified as the adult in your household who had the most recent birthday. Is this correct?”

- 1 YES → SKIPTO SEX
- 2 APPOINTMENT
- * 99 REFUSAL → TERMINATE

SEX

“Thank you very much for helping us with this important study. Your telephone number was randomly selected from all families in New Hampshire. This call may be monitored for quality assurance.”

“Participation is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may decline to answer any question or end the interview at any time.”

IF ASKED: “This survey will take about 20 minutes to complete.”

RECORD SEX OF RESPONDENT

- 1 MALE
- 2 FEMALE
- 3 REFUSES TO DO SURVEY
- * 99 NA

TOWN

“First, in what town do you live?” ENTER NUMBER OF TOWN FROM SHEET.

- 997 OTHER – ASK FOR THE NH TOWN CLOSEST TO THEM
- 998 DK - DO NOT PROBE
- * 999 NA / REFUSED

PRESAPP

“Let's start with a question about the President.”

“GENERALLY SPEAKING, do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?”

(IF APPROVE): “Would you say that you STRONGLY approve of the way he is handling his job as president, or that you approve only SOMEWHAT?”

(IF DISAPPROVE): “Would you say that you STRONGLY disapprove of the way he is handling his job as president, or that you disapprove only SOMEWHAT?”

(IF NEITHER, NOT SURE, DK): “Would you say that you lean a little more toward APPROVING or DISAPPROVING of the way he is handling his job as president?”

- 1 STRONGLY APPROVE
- 2 APPROVE SOMEWHAT
- 3 LEAN TOWARD APPROVING
- 4 NEITHER, NOT SURE, DK
- 5 LEAN TOWARD DISAPPROVING
- 6 DISAPPROVE SOMEWHAT
- 7 STRONGLY DISAPPROVE

* 99 NA/REFUSED

CCON1

“On another topic, we are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that you and your family living there are BETTER OFF or WORSE OFF financially than you were a year ago?”

- 1 BETTER OFF
- 2 ABOUT THE SAME (VOLUNTEERED)
- 3 WORSE OFF

98 DON'T KNOW / NOT SURE

* 99 NA / REFUSED

CCON2

“Now, looking ahead -- do you think that a year from now you and your family will be better off financially ... or worse off ... or just about the same?”

- 1 BETTER OFF FINANCIALLY
- 2 WORSE OFF
- 3 JUST ABOUT THE SAME

98 DK (PROBE: REPEAT QUESTION)

* 99 NA/REFUSED

CCON3NH

“What about business conditions in New Hampshire as a whole -- do you think that during the next twelve months we'll have good times financially, or bad times, or what?”

- 1 GOOD TIMES
- 2 GOOD, WITH QUALIFICATIONS
- 3 PRO-CON, SOME GOOD - SOME BAD

- 4 BAD, WITH QUALIFICATIONS
- 5 BAD TIMES

98 DK, UNCERTAIN (PROBE: REPEAT QUESTION)

* 99 NA/REFUSED

CCON3US

“Now turning to business conditions in the country as a whole -- do you think that during the next twelve months we'll have good times financially, or bad times, or what?”

- 1 GOOD TIMES
- 2 GOOD, WITH QUALIFICATIONS
- 3 PRO-CON, SOME GOOD - SOME BAD

- 4 BAD, WITH QUALIFICATIONS
- 5 BAD TIMES

- 98 DK, UNCERTAIN (PROBE: REPEAT QUESTION)
- * 99 NA/REFUSED

CCON4

“Looking ahead, which would you say is more likely – that in the country as a whole we will have continuous GOOD TIMES during the next FIVE YEARS or so, or that we will have periods of WIDESPREAD UNEMPLOYMENT or DEPRESSION, or what?”

- 1 CONTINUOUS GOOD TIMES
- 2 MIXED
- 3 WIDESPREAD UNEMPLOYMENT/DEPRESSION

- 98 DK/UNCERTAIN
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

CCON5

“Now thinking about the big things people buy for their home -- such as furniture, a refrigerator, a stove, televisions and things like that. Generally speaking, do you think now is a GOOD or BAD time for people to buy MAJOR HOUSEHOLD ITEMS?”

- 1 GOOD TIME
- 2 PRO-CON
- 3 BAD TIME

- 98 DK (PROBE: REPEAT QUESTION)
- * 99 NA/REFUSED

WARMUND

“Let’s switch topics... How much do you feel you understand about global warming or climate change ... would you say a great deal, a moderate amount, only a little, or nothing at all?”

- 1 A GREAT DEAL
- 2 A MODERATE AMOUNT
- 3 ONLY A LITTLE
- 4 NOTHING AT ALL

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

WARMOP

“Which of the following three statements do you think is more accurate?” READ AND ROTATE RESPONSES

- 1 Climate change is happening now, caused mainly by human activities.
- 2 Climate change is happening now, but caused mainly by natural forces.
- 3 Climate change is NOT happening now.

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

LYME1

“Next we would like to ask you some questions about Lyme disease.”

“What best describes your own personal risk of becoming infected with Lyme disease? ... Do you think you are at a high risk... a moderate risk... a low risk... or at no risk at all?”

- 1 HIGH RISK
- 2 MODERATE RISK
- 3 LOW RISK
- 4 NO RISK AT ALL
- 5 RESPONDENT HAS LYME DISEASE -- VOLUNTEERED

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

LYME2

“Thinking back to the last time you found a tick on your body, what method did you use to remove the tick?”

DO NOT READ RESPONSES

- 1 REMOVED THE TICK WITH FINGERS
- 2 BURNED THE TICK WITH MATCHES OR A LIGHTER
- 3 TWISTED THE TICK OUT WITH TWEEZERS
- 4 PULLED TICK STRAIGHT OUT WITH TWEEZERS
- 5 USED A TICK SPOON/SCOOPER DEVICE
- 6 APPLIED VASELINE OR ANOTHER SUBSTANCE
- 7 OTHER – SPECIFY _____
- 8 HAVE NEVER FOUND A TICK ON MY BODY
- 9 DON'T REMEMBER
- 10 NA/REFUSED

LYME3

“During the past year, when in wooded, grassy or brushy areas, how often did you check your body for ticks?... always... sometimes... or never?”

- 1 ALWAYS
- 2 SOMETIMES
- 3 NEVER
- 4 DIDN'T SPEND TIME IN WOODED, GRASSY OR BRUSHY AREAS → SKIP TO LYME6

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

LYME4

“During the past year, before going into wooded, grassy or brushy areas, how often did you apply insect repellent on your body or your clothes?... always... sometimes... or never?”

- 1 ALWAYS
- 2 SOMETIMES
- 3 NEVER
- 4 DIDN'T SPEND TIME IN WOODED, GRASSY OR BRUSHY AREAS → SKIP TO LYME6

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

LYME5

“During the past year, before going into wooded, grassy or brushy areas, how often did you wear protective clothing such as long pants tucked into socks, sneakers, a long sleeve shirt, or light colored clothing? ... always... sometimes... or never?”

- 1 ALWAYS
- 2 SOMETIMES
- 3 NEVER
- 4 DIDN'T SPEND TIME IN WOODED, GRASSY OR BRUSHY AREAS

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

LYME6

“Have you ever heard of Tick Free NH?”

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

LYME7

“During the past 6 months, where have you seen Lyme disease prevention messaging?”

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY, DO NOT READ RESPONSES

- 1 TELEVISION
 - 2 RADIO
 - 3 WEBSITE
 - 4 SOCIAL MEDIA (E.G., FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, YOUTUBE)
 - 5 NEWSPAPER
 - 6 FLYER
 - 7 OTHER – SPECIFY _____
 - 8 I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY LYME DISEASE PREVENTION MESSAGING IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS
- SKIP TO LYME9
- 9 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE → SKIP TO LYME9
 - 10 NA/REFUSED → SKIP TO LYME9

LYME8

“After seeing Lyme disease prevention messaging, what steps did you take to protect yourself? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY, DO NOT READ RESPONSES

- 1 USED INSECT REPELLENT
- 2 WORE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING
- 3 CHECKED MYSELF FOR TICKS
- 4 AVOIDED TICK HABITATS
- 5 OTHER – SPECIFY _____
- 6 I DID NOT TAKE ANY STEPS TO PROTECT MYSELF

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

LYME9

“Which of the following information would you find most useful in preventing tick bites in the future?” READ RESPONSES, SELECT ONE

- 1 How to properly remove ticks
- 2 Safety and appropriate use of insect repellents, or
- 3 How to decrease ticks in your yard.”
- 4 NONE OF THE ABOVE - VOLUNTEERED

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

RUFINT “New Hampshire’s transportation system includes many different components. How well do each of the following components meet your needs for getting around... Very well... somewhat well... not too well... or not well at all?”

RUF1 “The state’s roads and highways?”

IF NECESSARY: “How well does this meet your needs for getting around... very well... somewhat well.. not very well... or not well at all?”

- 1 VERY WELL
- 2 SOMEWHAT WELL
- 3 NOT TOO WELL
- 4 NOT WELL AT ALL

- 98 DON’T KNOW
- 99 NA/REFUSED

RUF2

“Buses and rail in the state?”

RUF3

“Bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the state?”

RUF4 “There is a tax on each gallon of gasoline sold to help fund transportation. If a regular gallon of gas costs \$2.50 at the pump, how much of that cost do you think is the state gas tax?”

ENTER AMOUNT _____

- 98 DON’T KNOW – PROBE: “If you had to guess...”
- 99 NA/REFUSED

RUF5

“There are a number of laws and rules that limit the parts of the transportation system that the gas tax can be used. Which components of transportation do you think the state gas tax can be used on?” READ RESPONSES, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 Roads and bridges
- 2 Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- 3 Buses
- 4 Passenger rail
- 5 Airports

- 97 NONE OF THE ABOVE
- 98 DON’T KNOW
- 99 NA/REFUSED

RUF6

“The state invests money to maintain today’s roads, bridges, and to expand and improve transportation where needed. How do you feel about the state’s current level of investment in its transportation system? Do you think the state should:” READ RESPONSES

- 1 Invest more in transportation
- 2 Reduce investment in transportation
- 3 Continue to keep investment about the same level, or
- 98 Do you not know enough about this to say?”

- 99 NA/REFUSED

RUFINT2

“The gas tax has traditionally been viewed as a user fee – the more you drive the more you pay. With increasing fuel efficiency and a shift to electric vehicles, gas tax revenue is projected to decline, and some people believe that traditional view of the gas tax as a user fee is no longer a good fit for funding transportation. If the state were to keep transportation funding level over time, please indicate if you would support or oppose the following sources to do this.” ROTATE RUF7-RUF11

RUF7

“Increasing the gasoline tax?”

IF SUPPORT OR OPPOSE: “Is that strongly or just somewhat?”

- 1 STRONGLY SUPPORT
- 2 SOMEWHAT SUPPORT
- 3 NEITHER SUPPORT NOR OPPOSE
- 4 SOMEWHAT OPPOSE
- 5 STRONGLY OPPOSE

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

RUF8

“Increasing tolls on highways?”

RUF9

“Increasing vehicle registration fees?”

RUF10

“A user fee based on the number of miles a person drives in a year?”

RUF11

“A fee based on the fuel efficiency of a vehicle charged at the time of registration, also known as the Road User Fee?”

COMM1

“Let’s switch topics...”

“When you were in elementary or secondary school, did you receive any education about civics, such as how government works and how laws are enacted?”

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

COMM2

“Now I’d like to ask you a few questions about the local community where you live...”

“Do you agree or disagree that you feel like you matter to other people in your community?”

IF AGREE OR DISAGREE: “Is that strongly or just somewhat?”

- 1 STRONGLY AGREE
- 2 SOMEWHAT AGREE
- 3 NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE
- 4 SOMEWHAT DISAGREE
- 5 STRONGLY DISAGREE

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

COMM3

“How much impact do you think people like you can have in making your community a better place to live? Would you say: a big impact, a moderate impact, a small impact, or no impact at all?”

- 1 A BIG IMPACT
- 2 A MODERATE IMPACT
- 3 A SMALL IMPACT
- 4 NO IMPACT AT ALL

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

COMM4

“How many years have you lived in your community?” IF NECESSARY, PROMPT WITH CATEGORIES

- 1 LESS THAN ONE YEAR
- 2 ONE TO FIVE YEARS
- 3 SIX TO TEN YEARS
- 4 ELEVEN TO TWENTY YEARS
- 5 MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS
- 6 ALL MY LIFE

- 98 DON’T KNOW
- 99 REFUSED

COMM5

“Do you agree or disagree with the following statement - I know how to become involved and participate in problem solving in my community.”

IF AGREE OR DISAGREE: “Is that strongly or just somewhat?”

- 1 STRONGLY AGREE
- 2 SOMEWHAT AGREE
- 3 NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE
- 4 SOMEWHAT DISAGREE
- 5 STRONGLY DISAGREE

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

COMM6

"Think about people in your neighborhood. Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?"

- 1 TRUST THEM A LOT
- 2 TRUST THEM SOME
- 3 TRUST THEM ONLY A LITTLE
- 4 TRUST THEM NOT AT ALL
- 5 DOES NOT APPLY – VOLUNTEERED

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 REFUSED

COMM7

"How about the local news media?"

IF NECESSARY: "Would you say that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?"

- 1 TRUST THEM A LOT
- 2 TRUST THEM SOME
- 3 TRUST THEM ONLY A LITTLE
- 4 TRUST THEM NOT AT ALL
- 5 DOES NOT APPLY – VOLUNTEERED

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 REFUSED

COMM8

"How much of the time do you think you can trust the NATIONAL government to do what is right?... just about always... most of the time... some of the time... or hardly ever?"

- 1 JUST ABOUT ALWAYS
- 2 MOST OF THE TIME
- 3 SOME OF THE TIME
- 4 HARDLY EVER

- 98 DON'T KNOW
- 99 NA/REFUSED

COMM9

"How about your LOCAL government? How much of the time do you think you can trust the LOCAL government to do what is right?"

- 1 JUST ABOUT ALWAYS
- 2 MOST OF THE TIME
- 3 SOME OF THE TIME
- 4 HARDLY EVER

- 98 DON'T KNOW
- 99 NA/REFUSED

COMM10

“Many obstacles keep people from becoming as involved with their community as they would like. Thinking about your own life, are there any obstacles or barriers that make it difficult for you to be as involved with your community as you would like, or not?”

- 1 YES
- 2 NO →SKIPTO ENV1

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED →SKIPTO ENV1

COMMINT

“I’d like you to tell me whether each of the following is a very important obstacle, somewhat important, or not at all important.”
ROTATE COMM11-COMM15

COMM11

“An inflexible or demanding work schedule or inadequate childcare.”

IF NECESSARY “Is this a very important obstacle... a somewhat important obstacle... or not at all important.”

- 1 VERY IMPORTANT OBSTACLE
- 2 SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT OBSTACLE
- 3 NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT OBSTACLE
- 4 NOT APPLICABLE

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 REFUSED

COMM12

“Inadequate transportation.”

COMM13

“Feeling unwelcome.”

COMM14

“Lack of information or not knowing how to begin.”

COMM15

“Feeling that you can’t make a difference.”

ENV1

“Moving on to a different topic...”

“Do you favor or oppose moving to 100% clean energy, such as solar and wind energy, by 2050?”

IF FAVOR OR OPPOSE “Is that strongly or just somewhat?”

- 1 STRONGLY FAVOR
- 2 SOMEWHAT FAVOR
- 3 NEUTRAL – NEITHER FAVOR NOR OPPOSE
- 4 SOMEWHAT OPPOSE
- 5 STRONGLY OPPOSE

- 98 DON’T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

ENV2

"Do you think the Democratic candidates for President are talking about climate change in the presidential campaign too much, about the right amount or not enough?"

- 1 TOO MUCH
- 2 ABOUT THE RIGHT AMOUNT
- 3 NOT ENOUGH

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

WARMGRE

"Which of the following three statements do you think is more accurate: Scientists use the term greenhouse effect to describe..."
READ AND ROTATE RESPONSES

- 1 A hole in the earth's ozone layer, which allows more sunlight to get through,
- 2 The heat-trapping properties of certain gases, such as carbon dioxide or CO2, or
- 3 The warming effect of pavement and cities."

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

SEALEVEL

"Which of the following possible changes would, if it happened, do the most to raise sea levels?" READ AND ROTATE RESPONSES

- 1 Melting of sea ice on the Arctic Ocean,
- 2 Melting of land ice in Greenland and the Antarctic, or
- 3 Melting of glaciers in the Himalayas and Alaska."

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

ARCWEATH

"Reports about conditions in the north and south polar regions sometimes make the news, so we'd like to hear what you think. If the Arctic region becomes warmer in the future, do you think that will have no effects, minor effects, or major effects on the weather where you live?"

- 1 NO EFFECTS
- 2 MINOR EFFECTS
- 3 MAJOR EFFECTS

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

WARMICE

"Which of the following three statements do you think is more accurate? Over the past few years, the ice on the Arctic Ocean in late summer... READ AND ROTATE RESPONSES

- 1 Covers less area than it did 30 years ago,
- 2 Declined but then recovered to about the same area it had 30 years ago, or
- 3 Covers more area than it did 30 years ago. "

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

NPOLE

"Which of these best describes the North Pole?" READ AND ROTATE RESPONSES

- 1 Ice a few feet or yards thick, floating over a deep ocean
- 2 Ice more than a mile thick, over land, or
- 3 A mainly rocky, mountainous landscape."

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

SPOLE

"Which of these best describes the South Pole?" READ AND ROTATE RESPONSES

- 1 Ice a few feet or yards thick, floating over a deep ocean,
- 2 Ice more than a mile thick, over land, or
- 3 A mainly rocky, mountainous landscape."

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

CIRCLE

"Which of the following countries has territory with thousands of people living north of the Arctic Circle?" READ AND ROTATE RESPONSES

- 1 United States,
- 2 China,
- 3 Estonia, or
- 4 Great Britain, or
- 5 None of these."

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

MANAIR1

"Next, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your travel habits."

"Do you primarily travel for business or for leisure?"

- 1 BUSINESS
- 2 LEISURE
- 3 ABOUT EQUAL AMOUNT (VOLUNTEERED)
- 4 DON'T TRAVEL (VOLUNTEERED)

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

MANAIR2

"In the past 2 years, approximately how many times have you used Manchester-Boston Regional Airport for travel?...never...1 or 2 times...3 or 4 times...or five or more times?"

- 1 NEVER
- 2 1 OR 2 TIMES
- 3 3 OR 4 TIMES
- 4 5 OR MORE TIMES

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

MANAIR3

“And approximately how many times have you used Boston-Logan International Airport in the past 2 years?”

(READ IF NECESSARY)

- 1 NEVER
- 2 1 OR 2 TIMES
- 3 3 OR 4 TIMES
- 4 5 OR MORE TIMES

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

MANAIR4

“If you had a choice, would you prefer to fly out of Manchester-Boston Regional Airport or Boston-Logan International Airport?”

- 1 MANCHESTER-BOSTON REGIONAL AIRPORT
- 2 BOSTON-LOGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT →SKIP TO MANAIR5B
- 3 DEPENDS (VOLUNTEERED) → SKIP TO MANAIR5B
- 4 ANOTHER AIRPORT (VOLUNTEERED) → SKIP TO MANAIR5B
- 5 DON'T TRAVEL (VOLUNTEERED) → SKIP TO MANAIR6

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE → SKIP TO MANAIR5B
- 99 NA/REFUSED → SKIP TO MANAIR5B

MANAIR5A

“In your opinion, what are some things that Manchester-Boston Regional Airport could do to continue to earn your business as your airport of choice?”

SKIPTO MANAIR6

MANAIR5B

“In your opinion, what are some things that Manchester-Boston Regional Airport could do to earn your business as your airport of choice?”

MANAIR6

“On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is “definitely not” and 10 is “definitely would,” how likely are you to refer Manchester-Boston Regional Airport to a friend or family member in the future?”

- 0 DEFINITELY NOT
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 DEFINITELY WOULD

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

UNH1A

“I'd like to change the subject and ask a few questions about the University of New Hampshire. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the University of New Hampshire?”

RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE FOR SPECIFIC RESPONSE

UNH1

“Would you rate the quality of education provided at the University of New Hampshire as very good... good ... just fair ... poor ... very poor ... or do you know too little about it to say?”

- 1 VERY GOOD
- 2 GOOD
- 3 JUST FAIR
- 4 POOR
- 5 VERY POOR

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- * 99 NA/REFUSED

UNH2

“If you were asked, would you advise a child who was considering attending college to go to UNH?”

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- * 99 NA/REFUSED

UNH3

“As a land-grant University, part of UNH’s mission is to engage with local communities in the state. How much do you feel UNH engages with your local community... a great deal... a moderate amount... only a little... or not at all?”

- 1 A GREAT DEAL
- 2 A MODERATE AMOUNT
- 3 ONLY A LITTLE
- 4 NOT AT ALL

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

UNH4

“UNH is a major research university that dedicates a significant amount of time and resources to research. Does knowing this give you a more favorable opinion of UNH... a less favorable opinion... or does it not impact your opinion of UNH?”

- 1 MORE FAVORABLE
- 2 LESS FAVORABLE
- 3 DOES NOT IMPACT OPINION

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

UNH5

“From which of the following sources do you get information about UNH?”

READ RESPONSES, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 TELEVISION
- 2 NEWSPAPER
- 3 RADIO
- 4 FACEBOOK
- 5 TWITTER
- 6 LINKEDIN
- 7 YOUTUBE
- 8 INSTAGRAM
- 9 PINTEREST
- 10 UNH WEBSITE
- 11 OTHER WEBSITES – SPECIFY _____
- 12 UNH MAGAZINE
- 13 FAMILY/FRIENDS
- 14 OTHER – SPECIFY _____
- 15 NONE OF THE ABOVE
- 16 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- * 17 NA / REFUSED

UNH6

“Have you or any member of your household worked at, attended, or graduated from the University of New Hampshire?”

IF YES: “Who in your household is or was a UNH student or employee?” CLICK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 RESPONDENT ATTENDED
- 2 RESPONDENT'S SPOUSE ATTENDED
- 3 RESPONDENT'S CHILD ATTENDED
- 4 OTHER ATTENDED → SPECIFY
- 5 RESPONDENT WORKED THERE
- 6 RESPONDENT'S SPOUSE WORKED THERE
- 7 RESPONDENT'S CHILD WORKED THERE
- 8 OTHER WORKED THERE → SPECIFY
- 9 NO UNH GRADUATE OR EMPLOYEE
- 10 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 11 NA/REFUSED

D1

“Now, a few final questions ...”

“Are you currently married, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?”

- 1 MARRIED (INCLUDE COMMON LAW MARRIAGE & SPOUSE AWAY IN MILITARY)
- 2 WIDOWED
- 3 DIVORCED
- 4 SEPARATED
- 5 NEVER MARRIED (INCLUDING ANNULMENTS)
- 6 LIVING TOGETHER NOT MARRIED (VOLUNTEERED)
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

REGVOTE

"Are you registered to vote at your current address?"

IF YES: "Are you registered as a Democrat, Independent, Republican, or something else?"

- 1 REGISTERED DEMOCRAT
- 2 REGISTERED INDEPENDENT / UNAFFILIATED / UNDECLARED
- 3 REGISTERED REPUBLICAN
- 4 REGISTERED - OTHER

- 98 NOT REGISTERED / DK (DO NOT PROBE)
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

VET

"Are you or any person in your household a member or veteran of the armed forces?"

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 98 DK (DO NOT PROBE)
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

GUNOWN

"Do you or does anyone in your house own a gun?"

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

- 98 DK (DO NOT PROBE)
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

D3

"What is the highest grade in school or level of education that you've completed and got credit for ..." [READ RESPONSES]

- 1 "Eighth grade or less,
- 2 Some high school,
- 3 High school graduate (INCLUDES G.E.D.),
- 4 Technical school,
- 5 Some college,
- 6 College graduate,
- 7 Or postgraduate work?"

- 98 DK (DO NOT PROBE)
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

NEWS2

"Do you subscribe to or regularly read ..."

(READ LIST AND CHECK ALL SAY YES TO)

- 1 The Union Leader or the New Hampshire Sunday News,
- 2 The Boston Globe,
- 3 A local daily newspaper, such as the Concord Monitor or the Nashua Telegraph?"
- 4 NONE OF THE ABOVE

NEWS3

"How often, if ever, do you watch WMUR, Channel 9 News? Would you say everyday ... several times a week ... occasionally ... or never?"

- 1 EVERYDAY
- 2 SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK
- 3 OCCASIONALLY
- 4 NEVER

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

NEWS4

"How often, if ever, do you listen to New Hampshire Public Radio? Would you say ... everyday ... several times a week ... occasionally ... or never?"

- 1 EVERYDAY
- 2 SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK
- 3 OCCASIONALLY
- 4 NEVER

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

NEWS5

"How often, if ever, do you listen to conservative talk radio, like Rush Limbaugh or Sean Hannity? Would you say ... everyday ... several times a week ... occasionally ... or never?"

- 1 EVERYDAY
- 2 SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK
- 3 OCCASIONALLY
- 4 NEVER

- 98 DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE
- 99 NA/REFUSED

D4

"GENERALLY SPEAKING, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent or what?"

(IF REPUBLICAN): "Would you call yourself a STRONG Republican or a NOT VERY STRONG Republican?"

(IF DEMOCRAT): "Would you call yourself a STRONG Democrat or a NOT VERY STRONG Democrat?"

(IF INDEPENDENT, NO PREFERENCE, OR OTHER): "Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or to the Democratic party?"

- 1 STRONG DEMOCRAT
- 2 NOT VERY STRONG DEMOCRAT
- 3 INDEPENDENT, BUT CLOSER TO DEMOCRATS
- 4 INDEPENDENT--CLOSER TO NEITHER
- 5 INDEPENDENT, BUT CLOSER TO REPUBLICANS
- 6 NOT VERY STRONG REPUBLICAN
- 7 STRONG REPUBLICAN
- 8 OTHER PARTY

- * 99 DK / NA / REFUSED

TPARTY

"Overall would you say you support the political movement known as the Tea Party, you oppose the Tea Party, or that you neither support nor oppose it?"

IF NEITHER / DK: "Would you say you lean towards supporting or opposing the Tea Party movement?"

- 1 SUPPORT TEA PARTY
- 2 LEAN - SUPPORT
- 3 NEITHER SUPPORT OR OPPOSE
- 4 LEAN - OPPOSE
- 5 OPPOSE TEA PARTY

98 DK / NOT SURE

* 99 NA / REFUSED

D5

"We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. What about yourself--that is, in politics, do you generally think of yourself as a liberal, a moderate, or a conservative?"

(IF LIBERAL): "Would you say you are EXTREMELY liberal, FAIRLY liberal, or just SOMEWHAT liberal?"

(IF CONSERVATIVE): "Would you say you are EXTREMELY conservative, FAIRLY conservative, or just SOMEWHAT conservative?"

(IF MODERATE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD): "Would you say that you LEAN a little more toward the LIBERAL side or the CONSERVATIVE side?"

- 1 EXTREMELY LIBERAL
- 2 FAIRLY LIBERAL
- 3 SOMEWHAT LIBERAL
- 4 MODERATE--LEANS LIBERAL
- 5 MODERATE--LEANS NEITHER
- 6 MODERATE--LEANS CONSERVATIVE
- 7 SOMEWHAT CONSERVATIVE
- 8 FAIRLY CONSERVATIVE
- 9 EXTREMELY CONSERVATIVE

98 DK (PROBE: "In general . . .")

* 99 NA / REFUSED

VOTE16

"Think back to the election for President in 2016. Did you vote for Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, Gary Johnson, Jill Stein, someone else, or did you skip that election?"

- 1 DONALD TRUMP - REPUBLICAN
- 2 HILLARY CLINTON - DEMOCRAT
- 3 GARY JOHNSON - LIBERTARIAN
- 4 JILL STEIN - GREEN
- 5 OTHER

97 DID NOT VOTE

98 DK / NOT SURE

* 99 NA / REFUSED

D7
"How often do you attend religious services apart from occasional weddings, baptisms, or funerals ... more than once a week ... once week ... once or twice a month ... a few times a year ... or never?"

- 1 MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK
- 2 ONCE A WEEK
- 3 ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
- 4 A FEW TIMES A YEAR
- 5 NEVER

- 98 DK (DO NOT PROBE)
- * 99 NA

D8
"And what is your current age?"

____ : ____ : ____ : RECORD EXACT NUMBER OF YEARS OLD -- E.G., 45
: ____ : ____ :

- 96 NINETY-SIX YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER
- 98 DK
- * 99 NA

MOVENH
"Which of the following best describes you, were you..." READ RESPONSES

- 1 Born in New Hampshire and have always lived in the state, → SKIPTO D10
- 2 Born in New Hampshire, moved away, and then returned,
- 3 Not born in New Hampshire, but after moving here I've stayed,
- 4 Not born in New Hampshire, moved to New Hampshire, then moved away, and then returned."

- 99 NA/REFUSED

D9
"How many years have you lived in the State of New Hampshire?"

RECORD EXACT NUMBER OF YEARS OF RESIDENCE

- 1 ONE YEAR OR LESS

- 96 96 YEARS OF MORE
- 98 DK
- * 99 NA

MVFROM
"What state did you move here from?"

- ENTER STATE NUMBER

- 95 ALWAYS LIVED IN NH → SKIPTO D10
- 96 CANADA
- 97 OTHER COUNTRY

- 98 DON'T KNOW
- * 99 REFUSED

MVTONH1

"What year did you move to New Hampshire?"

ENTER FOUR DIGITS OF YEAR

EXAMPLE: 1965 ENTER "1965"

EXAMPLE: 2004 ENTER "2004"

9998 DON'T KNOW
* 9999 NA/REFUSED

IF MVTONH1 < 1999 → SKIPTO STAYNH1A

MVTONH2A

"People move from one state to another for a variety of reasons. Could you please tell me the MOST important reason why you moved to New Hampshire?"

RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE

MVTONH2B

"What would you say is the NEXT most important reason why you moved to New Hampshire?"

RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE

MVTONH2C

"What would you say is the THIRD most important reason why you moved to New Hampshire?"

RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE

STAYNH1A

"People decide to stay in one state rather than moving to another for a variety of reasons. Could you please tell me the MOST important reason why you live in New Hampshire rather than moving to another state?"

RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE

STAYNH1B

"What would you say is the NEXT most important reason why you live in New Hampshire?"

RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE

STAYNH1C

"What would you say is the THIRD most important reason why you live in New Hampshire?"

RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE

STAYNH2

"How likely is it that you will still be living in New Hampshire two years from now? Would you say it is ... very likely ... somewhat likely ... not very likely ... or not likely at all?"

1 VERY LIKELY
2 SOMEWHAT LIKELY
3 NOT VERY LIKELY
4 NOT LIKELY AT ALL

98 DON'T KNOW
* 99 NA/REFUSED

D10

"How many of the persons who CURRENTLY live in your household are under 18 years of age, including babies and small children?"

- 0 NONE
- 1 ONE
- 2 TWO
- 3 THREE
- 4 FOUR
- 5 FIVE
- 6 SIX
- 7 SEVEN OR MORE

- 98 DK/NOT SURE
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

D11

"Including yourself, how many adults CURRENTLY live in your household?"

- 1 ONE
- 2 TWO
- 3 THREE
- 4 FOUR
- 5 FIVE
- 6 SIX
- 7 SEVEN OR MORE

- 98 DK/NOT SURE
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

EMPLOY

"Which of the following best describes your current employment status ... Are you currently ...

READ RESPONSES. IF R GIVES 2 RESPONSES, ENTER LOWER NUMBER

- 1 Employed full-time,
- 2 Employed part-time,
- 3 Self-employed,
- 4 Retired and not working,
- 5 Unemployed and looking for work,
- 6 Homemaker,
- 7 Disabled, or a
- 8 Student?"

- 98 DK / NOT SURE (DO NOT PROBE)
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

D14

“Not counting business lines, extension phones, or cellular phones -- on how many different telephone NUMBERS can your household be reached?”

- 0 NO LANDLINE
- 1 ONE
- 2 TWO
- 3 THREE
- 4 FOUR
- 5 FIVE
- 6 SIX
- 7 SEVEN OR MORE

- 98 DK
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

D15

“And on how many different cellphone NUMBERS can your household be reached?”

- 0 NO CELL PHONE
- 1 ONE
- 2 TWO
- 3 THREE
- 4 FOUR
- 5 FIVE
- 6 SIX
- 7 SEVEN OR MORE

- 98 DK
- * 99 NA / REFUSED

D16

“How much TOTAL income did you and your family receive in 2018, not just from wages or salaries but from ALL sources -- that is, before taxes and other deductions were made? Was it ... (READ CATEGORIES)

- | | ANNUAL | MONTHLY EQUIVALENT |
|------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Less than \$15,000, | LESS THAN \$1,250 |
| 2 | \$15,000 - \$29,999, | \$1,250 - \$2,499 |
| 3 | \$30,000 - \$44,999, | \$2,500 - \$3,749 |
| 4 | \$45,000 - \$59,999, | \$3,750 - \$4,999 |
| 5 | \$60,000 - \$74,999, | \$5,000 - \$6,249 |
| 6 | \$75,000 - \$99,999, or | \$6,250 - \$8,333 |
| 7 | \$100,000 and over?” | \$8,334 AND OVER |
| 98 | DK | |
| * 99 | NA | |

D17

“Finally, we are looking for survey participants who are willing to be contacted again in the future for other surveys as your opinions are of great value to our researchers and provide guidance to policy makers.”

"Would you be willing to be contacted for a future interview?"

- 1 YES
- 2 NO/DK

- 99 NA/REFUSED

IF (ANSWER = 2)SKIPTO END

D170 "Great what is your first and last name?"

PHONECHK

"And is this the best number to reach you?"

- 1 YES - BEST NUMBER/CORRECT
- 2 NO - COLLECT BEST NUMBER

- 99 NA/REFUSED → SKIPTO END

WEBPANEL

"The UNH Survey Center sometimes works with other colleges and universities to conduct academic surveys and polls on a variety of topics. We're working to gather a group of people who might participate in some of this research by occasionally completing surveys online."

"If you are willing to help with this kind of study, we will ask for your email address. We would only use this email to contact you about academic projects and we would not share your email with anyone other than our partner universities. Of course, you are not obligated to participate in any study that you don't want to and we will remove your email from our list upon request. Your contact information will not be linked with any of your survey responses."

"Are you willing to receive email invitations to participate in future projects?"

"There may be incentives offered for participation in some of these studies."

- 1 YES – "What is your email address?" – READ BACK TO RESPONDENT FOR CONFIRMATION
- 2 NO

- 99 REFUSED

END

"Thank you for your time and participation. Your input has been very valuable. Goodbye."

Appendix C. NH Transportation Funding/RUF Focus Group Report

NH Transportation Funding / RUF Focus Groups

Prepared by:

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The Survey Center

University of New Hampshire

November, 2019

The University of New Hampshire

Survey Center

The UNH Survey Center is an independent, non-partisan academic survey research organization and a division of the UNH College of Liberal Arts.

The Survey Center conducts telephone, mail, e-mail, Internet, and intercept surveys, as well as focus groups and other qualitative research for university researchers, government agencies, public non-profit organizations, private businesses, and media clients.

Our senior staff have over 70 years experience in designing and conducting custom research on a broad range of political, social, health care, and other public policy issues.

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Introduction

Four focus groups were held in October 2019 consisting of adults living in four regions of New Hampshire. A Seacoast group was held at the McConnell Center in Dover on October 14, a central New Hampshire group was held at Manchester Community College on October 15, a western New Hampshire group was held at the Claremont Savings Bank Community Center in Claremont on October 24, and a northern New Hampshire group was held at the Plymouth Town Hall on October 29. The goal of these groups was to assess New Hampshire residents' knowledge of the current funding structure for state highway maintenance and construction, perceptions of funding equity and sustainability, and reaction to a proposed road user fee funding structure. All groups were moderated by Andrew Smith of the University of New Hampshire Survey Center and lasted approximately ninety minutes each.

Participants

Participants were recruited from a list of adults recruited from across the state as part of the Granite State Poll, a quarterly survey conducted by the UNH Survey Center. Potential respondents were recruited based on their town of residence, their age, their level of education, and their gender in order to get a demographics mix of respondents. The Seacoast group consisted of 10 people (5 women and 5 men), the Manchester group had 11 people (5 women and 6 men), the Claremont group had 8 attendees (5 female and 3 male), and the Plymouth group had 12 attendees (5 women and 7 men). Most participants were long-time New Hampshire residents who had lived in the area for several decades. All participants owned cars or trucks, with most owning 2 or more.

Major Conclusions

Knowledge of Current Transportation Funding is Very Limited

Participants' knowledge of how highway construction and maintenance in New Hampshire is currently funded is modest. There is a good understanding of the sources of funding, but little awareness of the contribution made by those sources. There is also almost no knowledge of what the current state gasoline tax is.

Q: Does anybody know what the state gasoline tax rate is per gallon of gas? How much you pay when you buy a gallon of gas, how much of that goes to gasoline tax?

A: About forty cents.

A: 9 cents per gallon.

A: Eighteen percent?

A: No, it's like twenty one cents or something.

A: I thought it was like 47 cents per gallon. But I'm not a hundred percent sure.

A: I have no idea.

Gasoline Tax Seen As Fair – the more you drive, the more you pay

The current system of funding is perceived to be “fair” as it is based on users – the more you use the roads, the more gas you buy, and the more taxes you pay. That said, when participants discussed this issue longer, they came to the conclusion that electric cars and high mileage cars are not paying as much as others.

Q: Based on what we discussed, do you think this is a fair way to fund transportation in the state?

A: I guess that people who use it the most ... like you were saying the truckers. The people that are on the highway the most. Because they're using gases, uh ... gas, fuels, and the tolls and so forth. They seem to ... I'm assuming they pay the most.

A: I tend to think that fuel taxes are a more fair way in general, not completely but a more fair way in general of paying for roads because typically the vehicles that are going to do the most damage to the roads are the heavier vehicles. Those are the ones that are going to be using more fuel than the lighter, more efficient vehicles. The other problem that I'm seeing with fuel taxes is that it is a fixed number per gallon that's being charged for taxes which means that the more fuel that's being used the higher the prices, people are going to use less fuel. There's going to be less revenue to the state. And I always thought that it would be more efficient if it was a percentage of the fuel rather than a fixed number per gallon. So, things would fluctuate a little bit more and maybe kind of even out the state's revenue when things were changing.

A: I think it lends a little bit of fairness because it's based on use.

A: I think for me a fuel tax gives more of an incentive for uh, for people who either drive less, drive more economically on the highway ... use less fuel or have more economic cars. Have a just better fuel mileage on their car. It's an incentive to maybe buy a hybrid. Increasing [the] fuel tax will make somebody think maybe instead of the Escalade I'll get a Prius.

A: So, I mean that's the definition of flat tax. The more you drive the more you pay. So if you're driving more, you're paying more, you're helping to repair the roads more because you're driving on them more. So, yeah, I mean the flat tax can be pretty fair.

A: So, assuming all things are equal there's nobody that's worse off. There's just people that are better off. So people that are better off are the people that can now afford to buy a hybrid vehicle, they don't have to pay the gas tax. That's if nothing else changes. But then it begs the question is that tax structure is outdated, it's archaic. So it's not raising enough money to support whatever road needs there are. So something will have to change there. So then it can become unfair for the people that can't afford a hybrid car if you increase the gas tax. But if you can find a creative way to tax hybrid charging stations or registrations or something then sure.

Electric Cars

A: Well, I believe the current outcry is with the rise in electric vehicles.

(Discussion in one group)

A1: And I've heard that before too but I don't think that's fair if you spend the extra money to save gas and improve the environment, why should you pay a penalty in addition to that, you know? We should be encouraging people to drive vehicles that get better gas mileage and in a sense we're penalizing people if they do that, if we add some sort of extra tax for their vehicle.

A2: But it's not really extra. Because if a gallon a gas is say, two bucks and ten cents of that is transportation per road maintenance, then the electric car driver gets away without having ... they get to use the road but they're not paying ...

A3: There's going to have to be some sort of a new mechanism to, in the future ... because going forward there's going to be more and more electric vehicles on the road. Or vehicles using renewable energy but they're still using the roads.

A1: I understand where you're coming from but then a result of that would be once there's a critical mass of electric cars there will be a shortage of funding.

PowerPoint of Current Funding Structure

Participants were then shown a PowerPoint presentation that showed where funding for state highways comes from, how much comes from the federal government and various state sources, historic and projected gasoline tax revenues, projections for road usage, and projections for fuel mileage and the impact it will have on gasoline tax revenues. After seeing this information, the discussion immediately became more focused on the lack of sustainability and the lack of fairness of the current system. In particular, the issue of the lack of contribution to the gasoline tax by electric vehicles was thought to be unfair. While a Road User Fee was not specifically mentioned, the concept of a road user fee came up as a potential solution.

Q: Do you think now that you've seen some of this, is it fair to all drivers?

A: I think it's really too bad that we depend on gasoline so much. To keep our roads going. So that's a problem.

A: We have to find a way to tie funding to energy as a whole ... consumption of what energy we use.

A: Oh, I'm thinking about the electric cars. I think they ought to be doing something to make an impact.

A: I think one of the chief things we could do is just say it simply, we are not currently paying for the miles that we're driving. We're not meeting ... you know, we're paying for this and we're driving for this.

A: Even if we did find a way to save money out of that budget, it doesn't solve the long term issue of how do you equitably move that tax around. Cause you could say we do save that, that's kind of a long time thing. And now you still have to say okay, if we're only taxing gasoline the electric cars are not paying their fair share.

A: But if you resorted just that mechanism of funding. But if you came up with a way to spread that cost to include electric vehicles and charge, and tax the kilowatt hours, like you said, or/and have some sort of consumption of miles driven mechanism as well it could be ... it seems to me it's going to have to be multiple funding mechanisms to spread it out and to meet the..

A: Well, one fear that this might bring to me is, unfortunately, the people who will least be able to afford an electric car are the people who are of lower income. Which now starts feeling like it's not going to be so much of a flat tax anymore if the wealthier families or people in the state can afford to have electric vehicles and therefore now skip out on the tax altogether. Now all of a sudden the tax jumps to thirty percent because the state says I got to find that money somewhere and the people who are paying that are the people who are having to rely on a vehicle that, that has gas ... because they're so much cheaper than the electrical, electric vehicles.

A: People that can afford the electric car. Honestly, they'll still be able to use that road but they may pay, you know, their registration fees and they'd have to do all of that but they wouldn't be paying that tax that anyone that had to use gas would pay. They'd get away with not having to pay any tax, that end of the tax.

A: So here's my issue with the potential of charging ... because I'm thinking about people on both ends. The people who are driving electric cars who are doing something to help the environment. And the reason why they have so many incentives for these people right now is because we really are trying to find alternative ways of doing things so that we can help the environment. So in a way I feel like I kind of cringe inside when I think about almost not penalizing, cause it isn't penalizing but de-incentivizing, going back to the incentive ... de-incentivizing using cheaper, more economic ... cause they're not cheaper, they're expensive cars. Cheaper fuel with fuel. Just they use less fuel or use no fuel at all. So the people that are trying to get those cars, the incentive that the government has is you get like tax incentives and you don't get charged for the stations. So I'm thinking there's got to be a third thing out there somewhere where it's neither a gas tax nor an electric tax. Something that hits everybody the same but it should have to be a flat tax as well.

A: Or the tax isn't being spent. So the tax revenue that the state generates through gas tax isn't being used for environmental things, right? It's being used for road maintenance. So it's not ... like I, there should be no ... even if you're driving an electric vehicle you're doing something for the environment in the sense that you're not using fuel but you're still putting wear and tear on a road. I think some of the tax incentives that they offer now for electric vehicles is because there's not the same convenience factor for those people. So there is some deterrent. Because the infrastructure doesn't exist. I mean we live in the Seacoast and we're fortunate in the sense that there are stations. Like Durham has a station downtown.

Mileage Based Tax

There was also support expressed in all groups for a mileage based system of funding similar to how over-the-road trucks are taxed. This came up in early discussions as well as after participants had been presented with information about a proposed road user fee.

A: Yeah, but I meant you know, instead of paying all this excess fees, but charge you for how many miles you drive.

A: I think that we already have something in place, as S was saying, that would enable us to figure out how much each person drives, that each vehicle is driven once a year. And then when you pay your registration that would be part of the fee.

A: If they just took your mileage when you got your car inspected...and you had to report it, just like when you sell your car you have to put the mileage down. People would have to provide...if they charge just a small amount for the mileage so it wasn't increasing, you know ... it wasn't a huge amount. I mean people could take a small amount of taxes, a small amount of tolls, a small amount of mileage. I mean they're going to have to use a combination.

A: I was going to say I mentioned earlier, instead of a, I mean either in addition to a gas tax or just have a gas tax, you basically have it when you go to register your car every year, the way the taxing formula is, it does take in, take in consideration the miles you drive. Basically they just have ... they check your mileage when you register your car. It would obviously involve some extra work ... your tax clerk would have to go outside and look at your odometer. But that's definitely something that could be done where you could lower the gas tax for everybody and then you could basically or just when you pay to register your car that's taken into effect, the miles you drive

A: So the problem with charging for miles driven is that people are going to get hit twice. Unless you're driving all of those miles in this state you're also subsidizing ... you're paying more for the miles that you drove in another state that might have different mechanism.

Support for Proposed R.U.F.

Participants were next shown a PowerPoint presentation that illustrates a proposed Road User Fee (RUF) and how it would impact drivers of varying kinds of cars. There was grudging support for the concept of a RUF which is seen as being fairer than the current system, but also seen as a new or additional tax. After hearing how a RUF would work, participants understood the concept, although this was challenging for some. Most supported the central idea of making funding for roads more balanced by increasing the amount that high mileage and electric vehicles would pay and to increase funds available for maintenance and construction.

Q: "What are your initial thoughts about a Road User Fee?"

Comments Supportive of RUF

A: Basically what you're saying is the average driver is paying let's say a hundred dollars a year in fuel taxes. So the electric car owner is going to pay that hundred dollar fuel tax at registration, in the RUF.

A: It's based on usage. A flat fee is going to be fair or it is unfair to some. Someone else is going ... if a guy that puts a hundred thousand miles on an electric car is going to get heck of a deal. Versus the ten thousand he spends that ... so maybe this ... in my opinion, would be much more fair.

A: Fifteen hundred in gas. And now I have an electric car so I'm paying nothing in gas. So we're talking a flat, like a hundred dollar fee on an electric car? They're already saving fifteen hundred? I don't see a big issue with that. That's not a penalty. I wouldn't see that as a penalty for trying to get an electric car. Now if they wanted to charge me a thousand bucks then I feel like I was getting penalized.

A: So, it seems like ... if the goal is to remove the gas tax then, fine. This, this will do it. You go back to the other slide that you were just on a second ago, the cars that get less than twenty miles per gallon are slowly coming off the road. People aren't driving those anymore. And that's, the further we get into the future, those cars are going away. And so eventually we're going to get to ... like there are federal regulations that say if you are an automaker you have to, your cars have to be this fuel efficient. Now and going forward. That's only increasing. And so all of those old cars are going to go away and now all that's going to be left are these high mile per gallon cars that aren't going to paying a lot in gas tax anymore. They're only going to be paying this. So, then you're back to square one again where you're not generating enough revenue if this doesn't cover it.

A: And that was my immediate reaction as well until I ... you know, looking at the numbers on the graph, that's such a small fraction compared to what they're actually already doing from the gas tax. It's relatively small comparatively. But I wouldn't want to do anything to disincentivize people from using electric.

A: So my next thought then was I would almost want to ... if you take it to a complete crazy extreme, remove the gas tax and completely do all of it through a road usage fee. And charge everyone that way.

A: It makes sense to me. Having an extra tax based on something other than a commodity that is no longer standardized between all people. Mileage, miles per gallon doesn't make the most sense to me. It makes more sense to do more miles driven, maybe plus miles per gallon? I'm not sure about that but. But for electric vehicles, that extra...because they're paying so much more doesn't account for the, the electricity that they're paying for to charge their actual, their vehicles.

A: One of the things that might make the RUF a little more palatable is if it was a monthly charge. Because, again if somebody said break it into two payments. But say you're paying a thousand dollars. Five hundred is still a big chunk for a lot of people. But instead of that, if you took it as...twelve hundred dollars, you're paying a hundred dollars a month.

A: So here's the issue in New Hampshire is there's still a big libertarian population. And that fear, maybe not fear ... mistrust of the government adding one more thing that can be easily, be used all of a sudden no, like you were pointing out, that they're not getting rid of the gas tax. So the gas tax is still there to get more money and then you've got this other fee now that you're paying ... just, I like this idea, I actually think it's the one that makes most sense so far. I think it's going to be a tough sell in this state because people mistrust another thing you have to pay.

Non-Supportive Comments

A: I am [supportive of RUF], except I think that there needs to be a way to account for the people who are using our roads that are not paying that, which are the people coming in. Which is why I almost feel like I'd rather see a tax on the electric charging stations that was discussed earlier, kind of a metered system. I think ultimately that might be, I think, a better way to close the gap.

A: We already know, as you said, that New Hampshire registration fees are quite high. But we don't have excise taxes as other states may.

A: I think the problem that a lot of people are alluding to is no matter what the state calls it a lot of citizens are going to say here they are taxing us again.

A: I know for me the reason I don't necessarily love a road user fee, at least in that way, is there are some people who drive their car very little. And I don't know if they ... if somebody has a car that they're only putting a few thousand miles a year on, uh, be it an extra car or let's say my neighbor who is elderly, who literally just drives her car to go to the post office. Other than that, she has people who bring her stuff. She probably only puts a thousand miles a year on it, if that. She should not have to pay. I don't think she should have to pay because she has a small, little ... her kids got her a small, little sedan because she wanted to have the car. She shouldn't have to pay that a hundred dollar a year fee for driving a thousand miles compared to somebody who might drive ... I mean I drive my car thirty thousand miles a year. I shouldn't have to. I should have to pay more than she does. I don't think it's fair.

A: So, two thoughts. The first one is I think the biggest way to sell this is to educate people really well, like similar to this. There are a lot of misinformed or uninformed or indifferent, ambivalent people that may choose not to listen. But those also are probably the people that aren't going to care. Because people that care will educate themselves on what they care about. That being said, my concern is I haven't seen anything here as to how this is going to address the people who travel in and out of our state who are using hybrid cars, who are not going to be using gas and are not going to be paying anything other than tolls and tolls don't affect people on 125, people on Route 4...all these other roads that aren't going to be travelled on. So that would be, as a resident, my number one hard sell on this. That you're basically rewarding the travelers and punishing the residents.

A: Per... not per miles per gallon but per miles traveled. And don't forget, what everyone's saying it's just a minimal fee. You said it right. The taxes never go down. It's an entry level. Next year, oh we need more, we need more, we need more. So those poor people that are driving those electric cars, we need more ... not from you, but we need more from you, more because you're not paying your fair share. Where does it end?

Messaging Issues

Q: "How would you explain this problem to a friend or neighbor?"

A: Because when you look at that it looks like you're ... first of all it looks like you're being charged more for having an electric vehicle, when it really isn't. So, you know, people can't ... I don't think the average person can really take a difficult definition. That's why you have politicians have their, what do you call it, their sound bites. If you try to explain the best thing in the world to people, half of them just tune right out. So how do we sell anything?

A: So New Hampshire's known for fee-ing us to death. We don't have an income or a sales tax but we have fees for everything. I think the town clerk is going to be hard pressed to collect another hundred and twenty five dollars in fees or whatever it might be from folks.

A: And it would be hard to explain to the average person. It would be so easy for somebody ... you know how Facebook stuff goes ... is to say oh, now I have an electric car and I'm getting screwed. I think that's how they will perceive it.

A: I just think in terms of educating the public, like if this is something that moves forward because it's talking about raising fees or placing some of the cost on the users, which I understand, I think people will have a difficult time understanding why we're, like, things are continuing to increase costs when in some cases they may not have to. I mean cost is going to increase over time just because of inflation and

things like that. But there are ways, I think, in the future that we could start to try to reduce potentially some loss.

A: I think that's smart [website] ... have it where people, instead of just being like a pamphlet with the numbers, like a white paper, make it more interactive. Be it a website or an ad where people are explaining I drive this car, this is what I'm going to, this is the difference. Make it more real life. I think in a way you just need more of a creative marketing campaign. Like a good, strong radio, TV ads. Splash WMUR, Splash Celtics and Red Sox games and do it where people are able to actually see it, more than just being like, reading like let's say a letter to the editor or something. I mean, or just like an article where it's just straight numbers where ninety five percent of the people won't get that.

A: I like the calculator idea on the website. I still think the advertising person in me think like, the problem is the people who are going to bother doing that are the people who are either completely going to be against it regardless or completely who are going to be for it, more or less regardless. You've got the people in the middle who are going to be really hard to reach because those are generally the indifferent people and those are the people who are easily swayed by somebody saying to them. For example for me, my sticking point is what about the trucks? Why aren't they paying? So that might be a sticking point for a lot of people I know.

Appendix A: Moderators Guide

NH RUF ATTITUDES FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR'S GUIDE FINAL

INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

“Before we get started. There is a consent form we need you to read before we begin. Please read it carefully and I will answer any questions you may have. This is your copy to keep.”

Introduce moderator: “Good evening, my name is Andy Smith and I’m Director of the UNH Survey Center. I want to thank you all for coming tonight to what I think will be an interesting discussion.”

Review purpose of focus group discussion: “The purpose of this discussion is to talk about your knowledge and preferences for how construction and maintenance of state roads and bridges are funded in New Hampshire.”

“We’re only going to use first names during our discussions tonight, and you can be assured that no names will be used in the report. There are no right or wrong answers—your honest feedback is what we’re looking for. Occasionally, as your moderator, I will need to move the discussion along, so that we can end on time, and sometimes, I might ask if you agree with what is being said—or if you disagree.”

Introduce note taker: “XXXX will be assisting me today in taking notes and helping with some of the logistics of the session. We are also audio-taping this meeting because neither of us can remember everything said by everyone, and we need all of your input for our report. To help with that, please voice your opinions one at a time.”

Participant introductions: “I’d like you to introduce yourselves to the rest of the group by stating just your first name, what town you live in, how long you’ve lived in New Hampshire, and how many cars or trucks you own.”

1. Knowledge of How Transportation is Funded (10 MINUTES)

“I’d like to begin about getting an idea of your understanding of how the State of New Hampshire funds transportation. How do you think this is funded?”

PROBES:

“Who pays for it?”

“What other sources of funding are there?”

IF GAS TAX MENTIONED: “Do you know what the current gas tax rate per gallon is?”

“Do you think a state gas tax is a fair way to fund transportation?” “Why / Why not?”

“Who isn’t paying?”

“Who pays the most?”

2. PRESENTATION OF FUNDING POWERPOINT (5 MINUTES)

3. Presentation Discussion (20 MINUTES)

“After seeing this, what are your thoughts about the way transportation in NH is funded?”

“Do you think the current system is fair to all drivers? Who benefits? Who pays too much?”

“What about electric vehicles? They don’t pay any gas tax?”

“What about heavy trucks? Are they paying a fair share?”

“Projections for revenues from the state gasoline tax are projected to decline from 145 million dollars in 2018 to under 100 million dollars by 2040. Do you think relying on the gasoline tax to fund highway construction and maintenance is sustainable??

“How would you explain this problem to a friend or neighbor?”

4. PRESENTATION OF RUF POWERPOINT (5 MINUTES)

5. RUF Proposal discussion (20 MINUTES)

“What are your initial thoughts about a Road User Fee?”

“Would you support or oppose this?”

“Do you think the RUF is fair?”

“Many other states, like Michigan and Georgia, have additional flat fees for electric and hybrid vehicles. What do you think about that approach?”

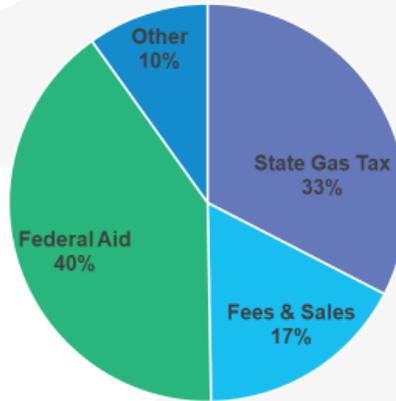
6. WRAPUP (10 MINUTES)

What other thoughts or ideas do you have about how roads should be funded?

Appendix B: PowerPoint Slides

New Hampshire's Transportation Funding

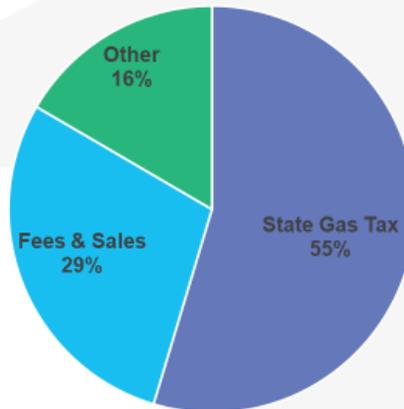
Highway Fund Revenue by Source (FY 2018):
All State and Federal Funds



1

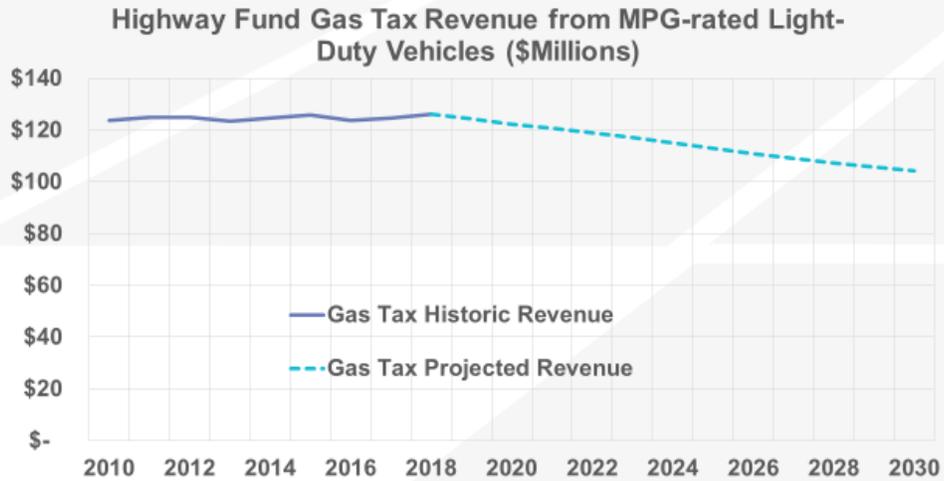
New Hampshire's Transportation Funding

Highway Fund Revenue by Source (FY 2018):
State Funds Only



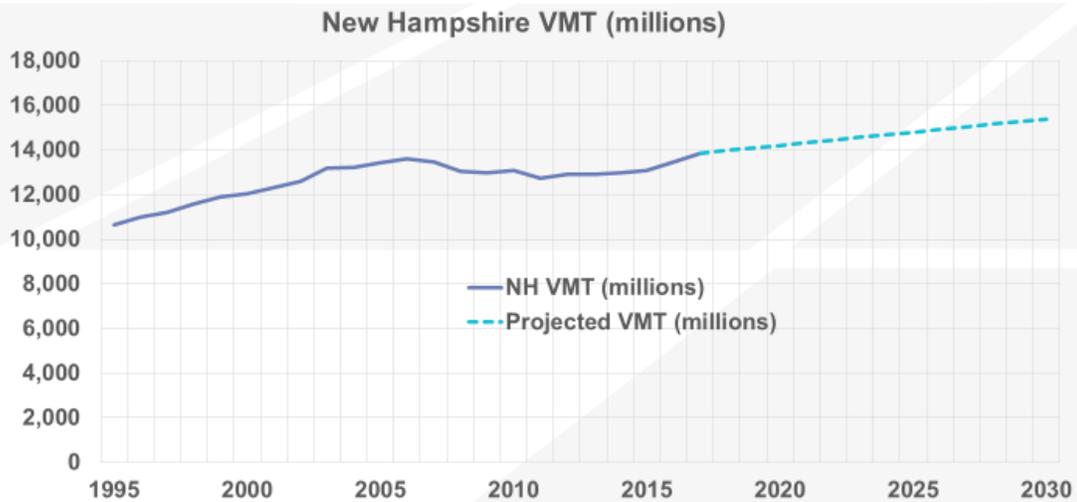
2

Funding Trends and Projections



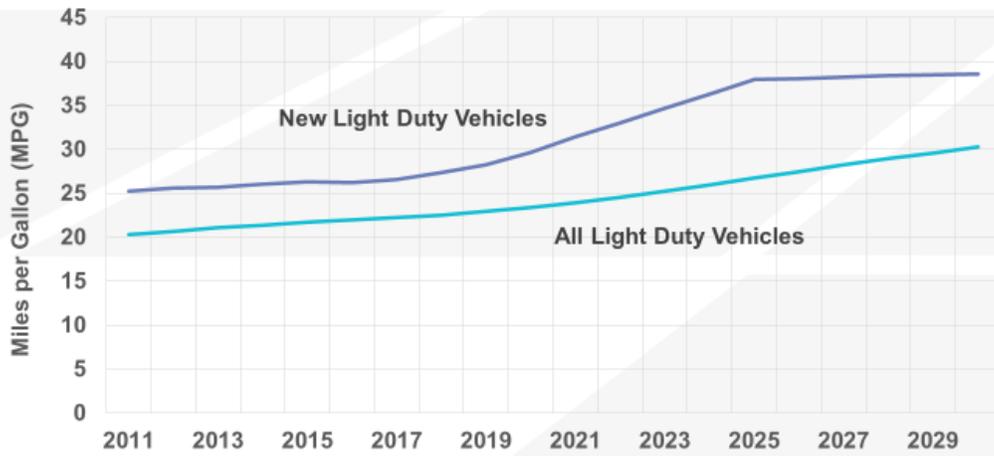
3

Drivers of Funding: Vehicle-Miles of Travel (VMT)



4

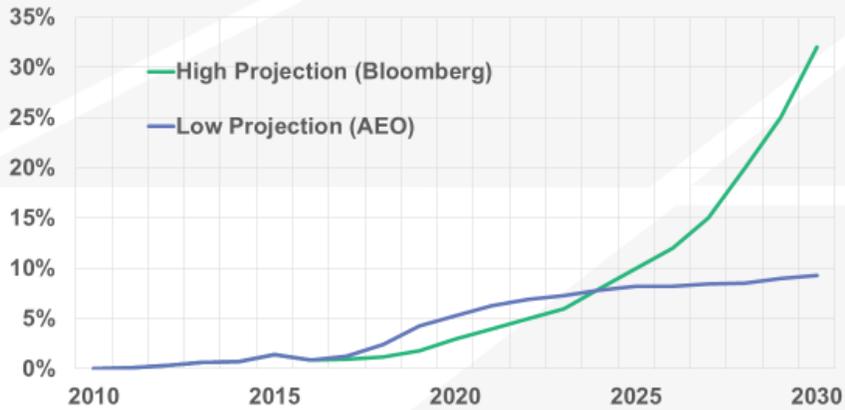
Drivers of Funding: MPG



5

Drivers of Funding: Electric Vehicles

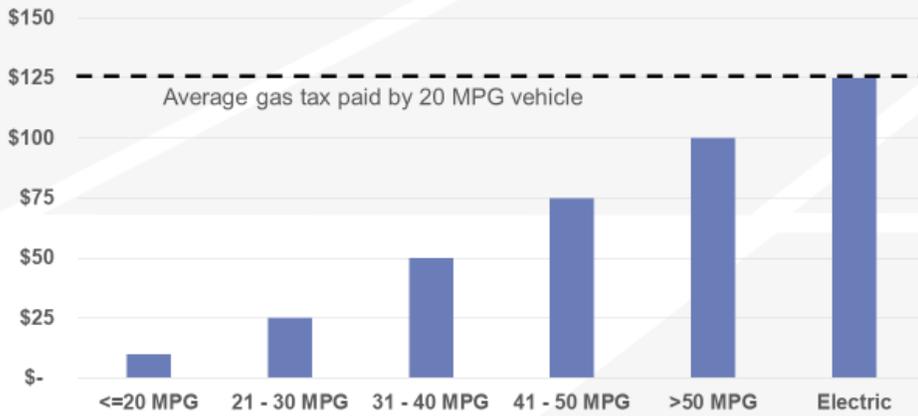
Plug-in Electric Vehicle Forecast % of U.S. Light-Duty Vehicle Sales, 2010 - 2030



6

Proposed Road User Fee

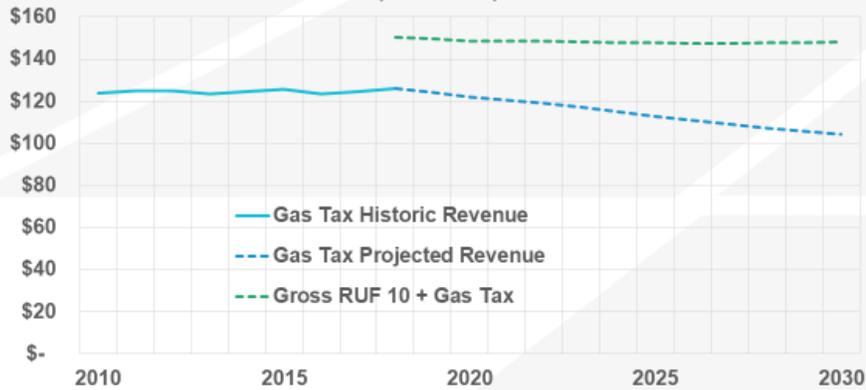
Proposed Annual Road User Fee by Vehicle MPG



7

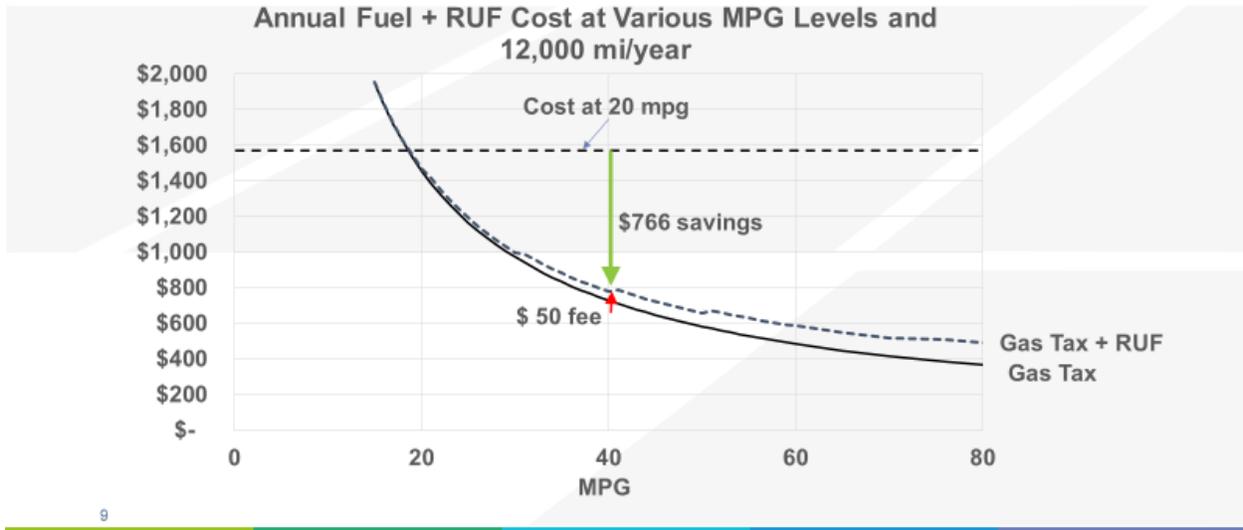
Goal of RUF is to Fill the Funding Shortfall

Highway Fund Revenue from MPG-rated Light-Duty Vehicles (\$Millions)

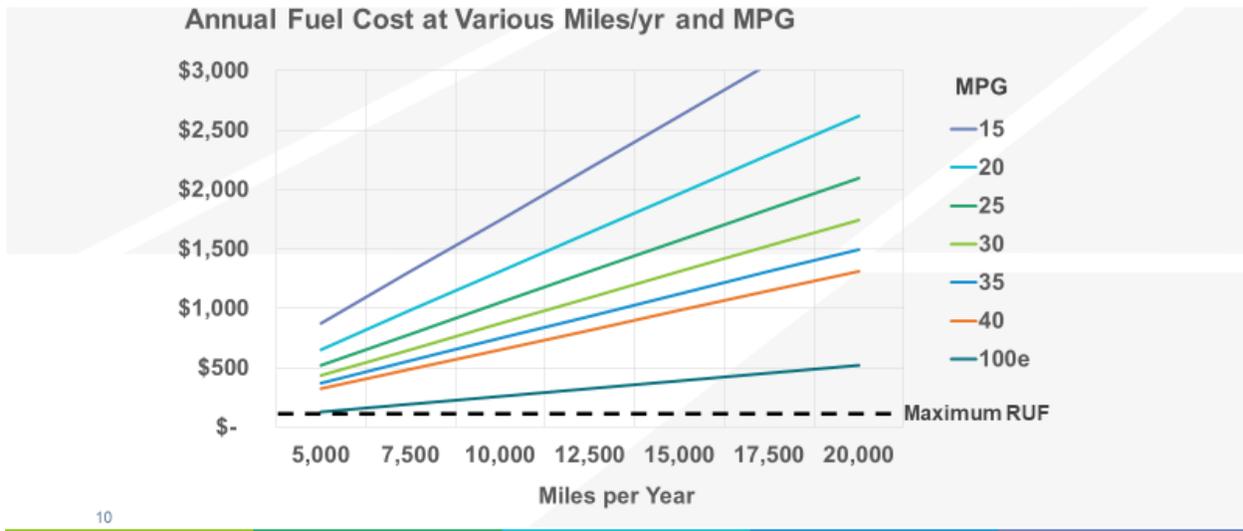


8

Annual Cost by Vehicle MPG



RUF vs. Fuel Cost by MPG and Miles/Year



Appendix C: Focus Group Transcripts

Dover

AS:

Oh, you know all about this then. So this is ...the one thing that I don't think everybody got is this consent form. I do have to have everybody just take a look at this, read through it and keep it. It's basically a confidential. Say that we're going to keep all of your responses, everything that you say, everything that happens here today confidential. No names will be used in the report or anything like that. So it's, that's the purpose of that. So my name's Andy Smith. I'm the Director of the University of New Hampshire Survey Center and I'm a Political science professor over at UNH. And I want to thank you, first of all for coming tonight, taking some time out of your day to talk about your knowledge and preferences for how construction and maintenance of the roads in the state of New Hampshire are funded by the state. So...what you know about who pays for things, how things get paid for, where the money goes, what it's going for, those sorts of things. That's the discussion we want to talk with you about today. We're only going to use first names. No names are going to be in the report. There are no right or wrong answers. Anything that you feel is important, don't feel shy about saying something. We really want honest feedback.

As the moderator, I might have to end a discussion on a particular topic just because I want to make sure that we cover all of the questions that we have to cover tonight. I may ask you some other questions, or I may stop and say how many of you agree with this statement that somebody has said. So there may need to be sometimes where I'm going to be like the teacher trying to encourage people to talk, try to get other people to chime in and if they agree with somebody or not. Nick's assisting me today. He's taking notes. He'll help with some of the logistics of the session. We're audiotaping it, as you can see, here on the table, because neither of us can remember everything that we say. It's hard to write things down and keep all the notes accurately. So one thing I would ask people to do is try to talk one at a time. The reason for that is so there's not a lot of crosstalk and so when we transcribe the tapes we can hear who's saying what. Try not to have conversations with people next to you for the same sort of reason. It's just so we can accurately hear what's going on and keep people focused. So I'd like to introduce the rest of the people in the room. So if you could just say what your first name is, what town you live in, about how long you've lived in New Hampshire and if you own cars or trucks how many of them you have? So, Andy Smith. I live in Durham. I've been here twenty years. And I've got three cars now because I've got two boys, one twenty one and one nineteen and you can't get around with just a...what happened was that when my younger son was driving I became the person who had to walk and get ferried around everywhere. So...that's me.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm M (female). I live right in Dover. I've lived here almost twenty years and I have two cars. One's mine and one's my daughter's.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm A (female). I live here in Dover. I've lived in New Hampshire for fourteen years. We have two cars and I don't know if it counts but we also have three motorcycles.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is M (female). I live in Newington. I've lived in New Hampshire my whole life. And I own a car.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm E (male). I live in Dover as well. I've been in New Hampshire my whole life, Dover for about seven or eight years. And I just have one car.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm N (male). I've been in New Hampshire forty one years. And I have two cars.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm E (male). I've been in New Hampshire fifty five years. And do I count my kid's cars?

AS:

Sure if they're in your household.

PARTICIPANT:

Four.

AS:

What town do you live in?

PARTICIPANT:

Durham.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm D (female). I've lived in New Hampshire for fifty nine years. One car and one bicycle.

AS:

Where do you live, what town?

PARTICIPANT:

Dover.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is E (female). I live in Rochester. I've been in New Hampshire for oh, gosh, twenty one years...doing the math.. I moved here in 1998. We used to live in Somersworth and we lived in Barrington, now we live in Rochester. And we have three cars. One for me, one for my husband and the shared car for the kids who drive.

PARTICIPANT:

My name's J (male). I live in Rye. I've lived in New Hampshire my whole life, which is twenty seven years. And I have one car.

PARTICIPANT:

My name's B (female). I have been in New Hampshire for six years. I'm from Atlanta, Georgia. And my family owns four cars.

AS:

We have whole fleets here. Great. So now we got a sense of where people are and what's up. So what I'd like to start off with is to get an idea of your understanding of about how the State of New Hampshire funds roads in the state, funds transportation in the state. So, in general, how do you think the roads in general, transportation in general, is funded in New Hampshire? Anybody can jump in. Yes.

PARTICIPANT:

Taxes.

AS:

Taxes? What kind of taxes.

PARTICIPANT:

Uh, well, like toll booth.

AS:

Tolls.

PARTICIPANT:

All the tolls.

AS:

Anybody else?

PARTICIPANT:

Registration fees?

AS:

Registration?

PARTICIPANT:

Which we call registration fees and other people call them excise tax, same thing.

PARTICIPANT:

In part from the federal government, part from fuel taxes.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, tax.

PARTICIPANT:

() tax.

PARTICIPANT:

Tickets.

AS:

Tickets, yeah. If you think about those taxes, um, who's paying for those various different sources of funding here? We've talked about tolls. So it would be the people that are driving on the highway, obviously. Um, how about registration fees?

PARTICIPANT:

Again, it's the individuals.

AS:

The individual owner of the car?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

And that would be residents of the state. Whereas the tolls are anybody who comes to the state so that falls directly on the residents.

PARTICIPANT:

It could be the same. Like a gas tax, passing through.

PARTICIPANT:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

Tickets.

AS:

So several of you mentioned gas tax or fuel tax. What do you think that current gas tax rate per gallon is? How much are you paying per gallon in taxes?

PARTICIPANT:

Isn't it .9

AS:

.9 cents per gallon?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

Okay.

PARTICIPANT:

That's part of it. That's a small part...I forget. I used to at some point know this and now I forget what it is.

AS:

How many of you would say you have an idea about what the state gas tax is?

PARTICIPANT:

I thought it was like 47 cents per gallon. But I'm not a hundred percent sure.

PARTICIPANT:

I don't know.

PARTICIPANT:

I know it's more than that, I just don't remember.

AS:

How many of you think it's more than ten cents a gallon?

PARTICIPANT:

Geez..

AS:

How about more than twenty cents a gallon?

PARTICIPANT:

Oh my gosh, now you're scaring me.

PARTICIPANT:

I think ... I just remember it's quite a bit because at one point years ago I was talking to someone who owned a gas station. And I just knew that that was the limiting factor in how low they could actually go to attract customers. So it's a significant portion of the total. I know that they rarely meet. I mean it's difficult to break even owning a gas station between the cost of the fuel and the taxes.

AS:

So before today how many of you really ever thought about it, considered what the gas tax is in the state?

PARTICIPANT:

What is the gas tax?

PARTICIPANT:

I have a question. And this is completely out of ignorance and I'm so embarrassed that I don't even know these, this information cause I'd like to think of myself as pretty informed. Is, when you talk about the gas tax are you talking specifically about the tax that's added at the pump, kind of like, or is it the tax that it costs to.. so this is just the tax that we are paying on the gas?

AS:

Right ... for the discussion tonight it's really what you're paying at the pump.

PARTICIPANT:

I know it's ... I remember in, I remember this specifically in 2014. I don't remember if it's a state or federal tax but I know the tax, the gas tax in New Hampshire went up ten cents a gallon. But I do remember that at the same time it was right when the oil was right around \$3.50. Nobody really ever saw the increase,..the oil was dropping. I just remember, I remember that clearly, right in July 2014.

AS:

Does anybody else remember the gas tax increase?

PARTICIPANT:

I remember the gas tax increase. I thought it was more recent.

PARTICIPANT:

I know in 2014 there was a ten cent..

AS:

Yeah, about that...

PARTICIPANT:

Because I remember at the exact same time the gas price cratered like over a dollar a gallon in a few month's span.

AS:

N, you've lived here all your life. Have you really thought about what the gas tax is?

PARTICIPANT:

So, you kind of teed us up at the beginning saying there's no wrong answers. I don't know, but for some reason I thought nine cents or...

PARTICIPANT:

That's what I thought too.

PARTICIPANT:

I used to work at a gas station for a really long time. I knew, I know, same thing ... it's a very thin margin business where gas stations will normally make money on () or repair shop or whatever. Gas isn't normally the moving part of business. So know that the margins are thin. But I don't know how much of that tax gets passed along to drivers or how much is part of just my cost at the pump. Nine cents sounds reasonable.

AS:

So I think this is interesting. I think this is probably fairly common. Most people really don't know. Would you think...have you ever really thought about it before, before today? You said, well, gas tax is this...I'm going to shop around or I'm going to go to another state because gas tax is higher or lower?

PARTICIPANT:

I do when I travel. When we travel we always look at the states that have a higher gas tax and we try to avoid those when we go through and try to gas up as much as.. Well, my son goes to college in Connecticut and so we try to get gas before we go to Connecticut because it's very expensive there. But the reality is I only think about the gas tax when the legislatures are toying with raising it. And then I get fired up and then I forget all about it.

AS:

So a few of you also mention that you remembered, you said, 2014...the state raised the gas tax. Do any of you, else, remember that incident when it happened? When legislation was passed?

PARTICIPANT:

I think I did. I just thought it was more recent but that's probably the same.

AS:

I think that's just life.

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

All of a sudden it's 2019.

AS:

So if you think about that do you think that the gas tax is a fair way to fund most of the cost of transportation in the state?

PARTICIPANT:

It..I was just going to say it depends probably on the type of roads. So thinking about 95 and the short distance through New Hampshire. I would imagine a lot of that road gets traffic from people going up into Maine or vice versa, coming down. And so unless...I don't know what the portion of the gas tax is paying for road maintenance versus things like the tolls, where that might be a larger contributor in that certain section. So..

AS:

The tolls are actually, that's a separate pool of money that funds the turnpikes that have the tolls. So, when you go through the tollbooth you're going to be paying for the..helping pay for the maintenance on 95 or the Everett Turnpike which would not be the case if you were on one of the other roads, say you're driving on 101 to Route 4, something like that. It's not one of the interstates.

PARTICIPANT:

I tend to think that fuel taxes are a more fair way in general, not () completely but a more fair way in general of paying for roads because typically the vehicles that are going to do the most damage to the roads are the heavier vehicles. Those are the ones that are going to be using more fuel than the lighter, more efficient () vehicles. The other problem that I'm seeing with fuel taxes..is that it is a fixed number per gallon that's being charged for taxes which means that the more fuel that's being used or..for the higher the prices, people are going to use less fuel. There's going to be less revenue to the state. And I always thought that it would be more efficient if it was a percentage of the fuel rather than a fixed number per gallon. So, things would fluctuate a little bit more and maybe kind of even out the state's revenue when things were changing.

PARTICIPANT:

I think for me a fuel tax gives more of an incentive for a, for people who either drive less, drive more economically on the highway ..use less fuel or have a more economic..have a just better fuel mileage on their car. It's an incentive to maybe buy a hybrid, I think if somebody's going to..increase fuel tax will make somebody think maybe instead of the Escalade I'll get a Prius.

PARTICIPANT:

I agree. I think that ..I don't necessarily see it as a, as an incentive although for some people it might be. There certainly is a reward to people who are being more responsible or maybe being more..because for

example, if I have a commute, a two hour commute every day and the gas prices go up, all of a sudden I realize, ah, I should probably get a car that gets me forty five miles per gallon, not like my SUV right now that gets me nineteen if I'm lucky. So, you, you make those decisions based on the money that ultimately are better for the environment. But I had never thought about the fact that then that actually hurts the revenue that the state's going to get to fix said roads. That being said, people who drive less shouldn't be having to pay money to fix the roads they don't use.

PARTICIPANT:

So, I mean that's the definition of flat tax. The more you drive the more you pay. So if you're driving more, you're paying more, you're helping to repair the roads more because you're driving on them more. So, yeah, I mean the flat tax can be (pretty fair).

PARTICIPANT:

But at the same time isn't have that tax on the gas sort of like a flat tax?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, yeah, that's what it is.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, okay, that's what I was going to say, cause...

PARTICIPANT:

I think it's also just...the case of a fuel tax compared to other things where progressive taxation might make more sense, it's just ..it's harder to track. And I know that, I've heard some proposals where they could..instead of having a fuel tax you could have it like a tax on the miles you drive, where you have to like report and they check. I just think that's more of a hassle, I think in this case a...flat tax is just easier and less intrusive.

AS:

S, what do you think?

PARTICIPANT:

I'm learning, yeah, about this stuff.

AS:

M, do you have any thoughts on this?

PARTICIPANT:

Um, definitely agreeing with the fact that it is kind of a fair way to see or and regulate the people who drive more and how they're paying more to help fix the roads. I question that I did have is I wonder if there's a difference between diesel and other types of fuels? Is there higher...

AS:

There is different taxation on diesel. It's a different rate than gasoline.

PARTICIPANT:

Is it a higher rate?

AS:

Yes, I believe it is.

PARTICIPANT:

I...

AS:

I believe so, but I'm not the expert. I'm a political science professor.

PARTICIPANT:

I think the reason behind..that would make sense because I think..I could be wrong, I don't drive diesels, but I have ridden in a car with people who do. And I think diesel lasts longer. I think you use less..I mean you fill up but it stays in your tank longer. It gets burned less or something? Because people can go...that's why trucks, that's one of the reasons, one of the reasons trucks use diesel. I think it just seems to be..and so you're using less gas so you need a higher tax otherwise you're not going to get money. Or it could just be that because truckers use diesel then you tax that higher because it's kind of more taxing the companies who have the trucks that put more wear and tear on them? I don't know.

AS:

So if you think about the tax structure that we currently have with the gas tax, who do you think isn't paying gas tax?

PARTICIPANT:

Walkers?

AS:

Yeah, people who walk. They're not driving.

PARTICIPANT:

People who are riding their bicycles. People who take public transportation but in a way they do because they're paying for the bus ride, so I don't know.

PARTICIPANT:

Right, it could be baked into the cost of..

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

I don't think there's anybody who doesn't pay some sort of tax because if you're going to..if you walk to the store, you're paying the store to have those products shipped to the store. So you might be paying less but there is, the only people who don't pay anything for taxes are like people who live on islands somewhere.

PARTICIPANT:

Or children cause we pay for it all.

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

That's true. But ..it's just how much of that share per person.

AS:

What are you thinking about? Were you going to say something?

PARTICIPANT:

I mean I think that while somebody who obviously bikes or walks, they're not paying that tax. They're also not using the road, they don't..they're not causing wear and tear on the road as much. And they're causing less traffic which, if anybody ever drives between the seacoast and Dover it might be nice to have a few less people on the roads, so...I don't ...I don't think that it's that much of an effect. Plus, very few people actually just walk or ride a bike if you think about it, so..

AS:

We've talked about who pays less. Who do you think pays the most then in taxes, or gasoline taxes?

PARTICIPANT:

People who drive the most.

AS:

People that drive the most?

PARTICIPANT:

Commuters.

AS:

Commuters.

PARTICIPANT:

Businesses that have to have their stuff shipped, not trucked in.

PARTICIPANT:

Probably commuters because a lot of times businesses can write off mileage. Like if you're driving for business. I know when I drove for work I could take fifty seven cents per mile in tax credit, in ..off my federal taxes, so it's ..as a deduction... So, I know you don't get that as just a general commuting or driving to the store, so...

POWERPOINT 1

AS:

So what I want to do now is show you a brief PowerPoint that provides you some information about funding for roads in the state. So we all have a background. You mentioned you were learning. This is an opportunity to learn more about this. So the first slide is how the state is funded right now. About a third of the highway funding is from the state gas tax. A third here. Forty percent comes from the feds. We mentioned that the feds were paying. If you think about like I-95 in particular, the interstate highways are funded more heavily by the federal government. You get about seventeen percent from registration and then sales,. If you sell a car there's a fee that's added onto that. So there's a little bit of

money there. It's about ten percent comes from those other sources which are largely fines and so forth .. tickets, fines, all of that sort of stuff. So that's how the entire system is funded now. If you take out that forty percent that goes, that comes from the federal government, this is what the state is raising. So take the money that the feds pay and move it out...this is what's left. So you get about fifty five percent from the gas tax. Twenty nine percent from fees and sales. And then sixteen percent from those other sources.

PARTICIPANT:

So what is the gas tax?

Are you waiting to sell that to us, like a big bang?

AS:

I don't know exactly what it is. We can look it up. But just some other pieces of information. We're talking about the trends. And somebody touched on this earlier. Is it you that said it that when, when the tax went up at the same time the price of oil was declining so we really didn't ..

PARTICIPANT:

It was literally the same week. I just remember this clearly.

PARTICIPANT:

It was increased from eighteen cents per gallon to 22.2 cents per gallon in July, 2014.

AS:

There you go.

PARTICIPANT:

I just remember the tax..gas stations never had to raise their price because it was just a massive drop in the price of gas the same week as...

AS:

So you can see the amount of revenue that the state's been bringing in has been about a hundred, a hundred and twenty five million dollars per year. And this is from cars and light duty trucks. So this is not the heavy trucks, this is not you know, the semis and stuff that are paying..they pay a separate fee as well. But the problem that we have is some people on touched on here..cars have become more fuel efficient. The projections for the tax revenues are going down. The revenues have largely stayed stable now, not so much because the number of people that are driving, but it's actually more people driving more miles driven, so more gas is being used. But the cars are more efficient. So people are driving more but they're driving more fuel efficient cars. So it stayed pretty flat. But it's projected that as cars get even more fuel efficient, as the federal government mandates kick in about fuel efficiency for new cars so the fleet of all American cars are going to be more fuel efficient, and as more people use electric cars...the revenue from gas taxes are going to be going down.

PARTICIPANT:

I do have to say this really quick. I went to California in August and for a rent a car with the kids I did ...a hybrid. And I had panicked cause I saw the price of gas there. But having that hybrid, it was like nothing. I mean I would fill it..it would go forever with a tank of gas with that thing. It was awesome.

AS:

Which is really what we're seeing as cars are more fuel efficient. We don't use as much gas.

PARTICIPANT:

I do the same way..whenever I travel I always book, I always use the same company and they always have..I rent with Hertz and they ..you can just pick your own car. I always try to get a hybrid because it just...I don't have one but usually if I'm traveling and renting a car I'm going to put a ton of miles on it. And it is a lot better and I know personally I won't buy a hybrid for ().

[00:29:47.26]

AS:

And we mentioned the miles travelled, so this is the vehicle miles travelled in New Hampshire. You can see, there was a dip here during the recession.

PARTICIPANT:

It's so expensive.

AS:

Yeah, it got expensive. Now it's picked up here. And then this is the projection that's likely to happen. So we're right now at about twelve or about fourteen million miles per year that are being driven in New Hampshire. No...fourteen billion miles a year that we...

PARTICIPANT:

Now is that including..the people that come and visit as well?

AS:

Yes. But you can see that it's expected to increase up towards fifteen to sixteen billion by 2030. So roads are going to be used more. A lot more driving on the roads. But that tax revenue is not going up. We talked about the mileage issue. If you look at the blue line, the blue line is the average miles per gallon. This is nationwide. What's the average miles per gallon that cars are getting. By 2025 it's mandated to be about thirty five miles per gallon. And so with the hybrid cars and so forth it'll be even higher than that. And the light blue line across the bottom, this is all of those vehicles including new ones and old ones put together. So you can see that there's, the mileage is increasing on the cars that are being driven. The miles driven is increasing and then the other thing that we were talking about is plug in vehicles. This is kind of a moving target. This is, the projections as you can see are quite different. These are two sets of projections. One set of projections says it's going to be close to eight to ten percent by 2030. Another projection has it over thirty percent of our vehicles will be electric by 2030. But probably will be somewhere in here but there's going to be a lot of cars that won't be paying any gas tax coming up. Think of those things.

PARTICIPANT:() the electric bill.

AS:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

There is some discussion in some areas about actually metering vehicle charging systems.

AS:

So if you see this, now that we've seen these numbers. We've talked about this. I think all of you kind of had the sense that this was going on. What are your thoughts now about the way transportation is funded in New Hampshire?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, one fear that this might bring to me is, unfortunately, the people who will least be able to afford an electric car are the people who are of lower income. Which now starts feeling like it's not going to be so much of a flat tax anymore if the wealthier families or people in the state can afford to have electric vehicles and therefore now skip out on the tax altogether. Now all of a sudden the tax jumps to thirty percent because the state says I got to find that money somewhere and the people who are paying that are the people who are having to rely on a vehicle that, that has gas..because they're so much cheaper than the electrical, electric vehicles.

AS:

You're nodding your head, E. What do you think?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I agree. Like..I think we would all be okay with paying another ten, fifteen cents per gallon of gas. But also important is, well, where gas prices are going. I know that now the U.S. produces more gas than the, we use. So I mean ultimately those prices should be able to be..reasonably moderate. So I mean how to tax the other people who have these other cars you know, I don't have the answer to that but ..

AS:

If you look at this, do you think that the current system is fair to all drivers? You mentioned that lower income drivers who may not be able to afford fuel efficient cars might be paying more.

PARTICIPANT:

No, I don't think it's going to be fair at all.

AS:

Who do you think is going to benefit in the future...assuming the tax structure stays the same way it is right now. Who do you think that benefits most?

PARTICIPANT:

People that can afford the electric car. Honestly, they'll still be able to use that road but they may pay, you know, their registration fees and they'd have to do all of that but they wouldn't be paying that tax that anyone that had to use gas would pay. They'd get away with not having to pay any tax, that end of the tax.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that's pretty clear just getting something in place to tax people so we can fund it.

PARTICIPANT:

So, assuming all things are equal there's nobody that's worse off. There's just people that are better off. So people that are better off are the people that can now afford to buy hybrid vehicle, they don't have to pay the gas tax. That's if nothing else changes. But then it begs the question is that tax

structure...outdated, it's archaic. So it's not raising enough money to support whatever road needs there are. So something will have to change there. So then it can become unfair for the people that can't afford a hybrid car if you increase the gas tax. But if you can find a creative way to tax hybrid charging stations or registrations or something then sure..

PARTICIPANT:

...I was going to say I mentioned earlier, instead of a, I mean either in addition to a gas tax or just have a gas tax, you basically have it when you go to register your every year, the way the taxing formula is, it does take in, take in consideration the miles you drive. Basically they just have..they check your mileage when you register your car. It would obviously involve () your tax clerk would have to go outside and look at your odometer. But that's definitely something that could be done where you could lower the gas tax for everybody and then you could basically or just when you pay to register your car that's taken into effect, the miles you drive.

PARTICIPANT:

So the problem with charging for miles driven is that people are going to get hit twice. Unless you're driving all of those miles in this state you're also subsidizing ..you're paying more for the miles that you drove in another state that might have different mechanism.

PARTICIPANT:

And if you don't have a hybrid car you're getting taxed twice. You're paying gas tax and then you're also...

PARTICIPANT:

..it would be, what I was saying is..from knowing a little bit about transportation policy, that's just..that's described as instead of a gas tax.

PARTICIPANT:

So here's my issue with the potential of charging..because I'm thinking about people on both ends. The people who are driving electric cars who are doing something to help the environment. And the reason why they have so many incentives for these people right now is because we really are trying to find alternative ways of doing things so that we can help the environment. So in a way I feel like I kind of cringe inside when I think about almost not penalizing, cause it isn't penalizing but de incentivizing, going back to the incentive..deincentivizing using cheaper, more economic..cause they're not cheaper..they're expensive cars. Cheaper fuel with fuel..oh my gosh, I'm having () issues. Just they use less fuel or use no fuel at all. So the people that are trying to get those cars, the incentive that the government has is you get like tax incentives and you don't get charged for the stations. So I'm thinking there's got to be a third thing out there somewhere where it's neither a gas tax nor an electric tax. Something that hits everybody the same but it should have to be a flat tax as well.

AS:

We talked about heavy trucks. Do you think trucks are paying their share, their fair share?

PARTICIPANT:

I suspect so.

PARTICIPANT:

I mean, what is the cost that we're looking at? Or what is their fair share? Cause their, their impact on the environment's way more. So they're not..they're not paying their fair share that way.

PARTICIPANT:

But they're using more gas which means they pay more in tax. Obviously..

PARTICIPANT:

Or the tax isn't being spent. So the tax revenue that the state generates through gas tax isn't being used for environmental things, right? It's being used for road maintenance. So it's not..like I, there should be no..even if you're driving an electric vehicle you're doing something for the environment in the sense that you're not using fuel but you're still putting wear and tear on a road. I think some of the tax incentives that they offer now for electric vehicles is because there's not the same convenience factor for those people. So there is some deterrent. Because the infrastructure doesn't exist. I mean we live in the Seacoast and we're fortunate in the sense that there are stations. Like Durham has a station downtown.

PARTICIPANT:

Portsmouth has plenty.

PARTICIPANT:

Portsmouth has plenty. There's some at businesses now but otherwise..you know, if that..it's kind of..it seems like there'd be a growing pains period where if you started to meter those ...an electric vehicle charging station. But if there were enough of them so that it was just like a one for one or close to that, that could be a possibility. And still be able to generate revenue for the state...

PARTICIPANT:

I think the one issue that's a little different with electricity as opposed to gas is that if I think oh, my gosh, gas tax has gone up too high....it's not like I can make my own gas unless I've got like that thing from Back to the Future or one of those oil things that you can use like fry oil.

PARTICIPANT:

Biodiesel?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah. But with electricity you can just come back home and plug it in. I mean you're paying your electricity but there are other things you can do. So, yeah, I, I guess I'm just thinking..there's always a way to avoid it. Most people probably won't, for convenience, like you were saying. Like if all of a sudden every gas station from here to Maine, Canada and down to Florida had electrical charging stations I think people would be more likely to get them, regardless of whether or not they're getting charged. I just always try to think of both sides. Cause for me, I can't afford an electric car. So I drive a very, very gas guzzly car. Um, and I'm like, oh my gosh, if my gas tax goes up again

AS:

Stephanie, what do you think about the fairness of this after we've had this little bit of a discussion?

PARTICIPANT:

Um, I don't know. Can you be more specific?

AS:

Well, we've got this issue now where people are driving cars that are more fuel efficient. And they're paying less than other people.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, so where are they going to get the..

AS:

Yeah, where's the extra money going to go into do the maintenance which is not going to get cheaper.

PARTICIPANT:

Maybe the government could give us more money.

AS:

The feds?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

That's one thing.

PARTICIPANT:

() also like they had a..when you go through the tolls, if maybe an electric car paid a different price through the tolls.

AS:

That'd be an idea. Good idea.

PARTICIPANT:

There are different prices in the tolls based on the number of axles...

PARTICIPANT:

Right. Right.

PARTICIPANT:

So..

AS:

Let me throw out another piece of information. The projections for the revenue that the state gasoline tax gets are projected to decline from a hundred and forty five million dollars last year, 2018, down to a hundred million dollars by the year 2040 because of that increase in efficiency. So, do you think that relying on the gasoline tax to fund highway construction and maintenance is sustainable?

PARTICIPANT:

No.

PARTICIPANT:

No.

PARTICIPANT:

The price of everything's going to go up by then as well. You know, cost to fix things is going to be more. You know, even if we were getting the same amount of money, things are going to cost more.

AS:

If you think about that, how would you explain that situation to a friend or a neighbor? We've talked about these sorts of things and your neighbor says something about gasoline tax or you hear something about buying a new car that they're going to get a more fuel efficient car. How would you explain this kind of situation that the state faces to someone else who isn't aware of this information?

PARTICIPANT:

I'd give them your address

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

I mean some of it has to do with taxation in New Hampshire is already...a cluster, I'm not going to say the rest of the word..you have where obviously we don't have a sales or income tax so that means other taxes have to be higher. I think some of that, just the way we..taxation philosophy in the state in general,..I think other states might be able to focus slightly less on tax..such as property or gas tax, be they..they have other forms of income that we don't have here. I think some of it's just also, we have to decide which way our priorities are. Do we want roads, do we want roads paved, do we want roads that aren't crumbling, bridges that aren't crumbling...and so...I think some of it's, you have to pay for it.

PARTICIPANT:

You may not know the answer to this...but do you have like a sense from other states or even other states in New England who may face similar road conditions or maintenance costs? What percentage of their budget for construction and maintenance is a result of taxes? Gas tax?

POWERPOINT 2

AS:

We'll talk a little bit about some of the other things that are out there. I think every state in the country is facing this same situation though. This is not unique to New Hampshire. This is something that all states are really having to confront. The discussion today is really to help the state understand what it ought to be doing and what people think about doing in New Hampshire. I'm going to show you a few more slides to think about. We've touched on what I want to talk about next a little bit in a lot of different areas. So we've talked about other ways that you could maybe have your car registered at a different rate because it was more or less fuel efficient. Or that, if your car was an electric car, you paid more in your annual registration. Something that's been proposed that the legislature will be discussing, is already been discussing. It's called a road user fee. You might call it a RUF, an RUF. And what this is looking at is a way that you could make up that funding difference, the usage difference between more fuel efficient vehicles and less fuel efficient vehicles. So for example, in this chart, the average gas tax paid by a twenty mile per gallon vehicle is the dash line across the top there, about \$125. If your, if your mileage is less than twenty miles a gallon, your road user fee would be pretty small, five bucks, ten

bucks or something like that. All the way up to if you have an electric car your road user fee might be then \$125 which would be the average for a twenty mile a..

PARTICIPANT:

Is that annual, do you know?

AS:

This is a proposed annual ..it's going to vary a little bit from person to person depending on the mileage...but this is the average that's being proposed. So what I wanted to put this up here for an idea so you can kind of see how a road user fee would work. That if you had, the more fuel efficient your car was, you're still using the road as much and you're covering the costs for the road maintenance and development and so forth, the same as somebody with ..a less fuel efficient car because they're paying more in gasoline taxes.

PARTICIPANT:

So this would be in addition to a gas tax?

AS:

Yes, it would be in addition to a gas tax. The way it would ... the goal is to fill that funding gap. If you think of this, these two lines here, the solid light blue line and then the dashed blue line that's declining, that's the projections for gas revenues from the gas tax. If you included the gas tax plus this road user fee it would flatten that out. So it's not raising more money. It's raising essentially the same amount of money as would be used projected across that.

PARTICIPANT:

I know for me the reason I don't necessarily love a road user fee, at least in that way, is there are some people who drive their car very little. And I don't know if they..if somebody has a car that they're only putting a few thousand miles a year on, uh, be it an extra car or let's say my neighbor who is elderly, who literally just drives her car to go to the post office. Other than that, she has people who bring her stuff. She probably only puts a thousand miles a year on it, if that. She should not have to pay..I don't think she should have to pay ..because she has a small, little..her kids got her a small, little sedan because she wanted to have the car. She shouldn't have to pay that a hundred dollar a year fee for driving a thousand miles compared to somebody who might drive..I mean I drive my car thirty thousand miles a year. I shouldn't have to..I should have to pay more than she does. I don't think it's fair that it's in () tax.

PARTICIPANT:

But you are because you're using more gas.

PARTICIPANT:

Yes, but I just don't think the road usage fee is fair because I just think even if I..let's say had an electric car or I had a gas guzzler, that isn't, that wouldn't affect my driving compared to let's say you drive a thousand miles a year, you're really not affecting the road one bit. Simply because you have the car but you don't use it that much. I just think a road usage fee is unfair for people who like either have an extra car or just barely drive their car.

PARTICIPANT:

So I think there is no taxation system that's going to treat everybody identically. In the case ..I forgot your name, but in the case you're bringing up, my guess is that the lady who's driving her car to the post office once a week probably isn't driving a Tesla or a completely electric vehicle.

PARTICIPANT:

She's driving something that probably has forty, forty miles a gallon just because it's a tiny, it's like the cheapest little...not a hybrid but it was something that I just know gets very good gas mileage. It's tiny.

PARTICIPANT:

In general one of the things that has changed over time is many years ago, I don't remember if it was World I, World War II, somewhere...somewhere in there, there was kind of the sense like to be quote American it was kind of a sense of pride. Yes, I paid my taxes or whatever. And there was a sense of like the common good that seems to be kind of declined right now. So I think one of the things that might help the situation is to realize that okay, we're all in this together and we've got to find a way to pay for the roads and maybe that..that, instead of being..you know, one of the primary goals for many people seems to be tax avoidance. It's like oh, if you don't have to pay your taxes..if you can find a way around it you're the smart one. But in the end I think the big thing is how you change the viewpoints of people to say okay, we need this and this is good for everybody. The same way with schools or whatever essential services that we have.

AS:

E, what would you say?

PARTICIPANT:

So, it seems like..if the goal is to remove the gas tax then, fine. This, this will do it. You go back to the other slide that you were just on a second ago, the cars that get less than twenty miles per gallon are slowly coming off the road. People aren't driving those anymore. And that's, the further we get into the future, those bars are going away. And so eventually we're going to get to..like there are federal regulations that say if you are an automaker you have to, your cars have to be this fuel efficient. Now and going forward. That's only increasing. And so all of those () cars are going to go away and now all that's going to be left are these high mile per gallon cars that aren't going to paying a lot in gas tax anymore. They're only going to be paying this. So, then you're back to square one again where you're not generating enough revenue if this doesn't cover it.

PARTICIPANT:

So, I think that, two things. I think the one thing that might happen is that there is this gradual, as you..like let's say I, we always buy like a three to four year old car. Right? So right now I drive a 2015 that we just bought. It's under twenty miles per gallon cause it's a big SUV. But let's say my next car is going to be three years old, so let's say I buy it..now all of a sudden it's like a thrifty range. So I still have some time before I hit this spot but I think you're going to have a lot of people like that, that eventually everybody's going to be paying the 125. You know what I mean? So it's essentially getting rid of the gas tax. Additionally, thinking about this woman, the lady that you were talking about, the..what do you call it, the pretend lady that we made up here, one of the things that maybe is worthwhile to think about adding to this is this idea of like yeah, I agree that we all have a civic duty to pay our taxes but at the same time there are some people on a fixed income that are not going to be able to absorb on top of paying a gas tax now on..although very little, now a hundred dollars a month, a year that..where is that going to come from? So I think that maybe instituting something where that, when you fill out your

registration to have that idea of like if you did only use up a thousand miles that they knock off a hundred dollars off your ...

PARTICIPANT:

..I think going back to some of it is how we have a, our tax system in New Hampshire isn't, if you're let's say an elderly homeowner who doesn't have an income anymore you're going to pay a property tax. We don't have an income tax so you're already going to get slammed in your town by a property tax? I just think that this is almost a, just a car property tax. I just think..

AS:

This is another way of looking at this. If you think of miles per gallon per car from zero miles per gallon to eighty miles per gallon per year. This solid line is what would be paid in gas tax each year based on if you drive twelve thousand miles a year. So everybody's driving twelve thousand miles a year. If you're driving a really fuel inefficient car, you're paying a lot of money in gas tax. Eighteen hundred to two thousand dollars. And if you go all the way out here to a car that gets eighty miles a gallon, a nice hybrid car, you're paying less than four hundred dollars a year in gas tax. If you include the gas tax plus this road user fee, this is the dash line. This would be what you'd be paying. It's not that much different. When you think about going out to the higher cost, you'd be paying a little bit more but it's not a huge amount more. And if you're still out at the other end you're, driving a fifteen mile a gallon car, you're paying the same amount essentially. So this is, this is essentially what we're looking at here. That you're saving essentially \$766 from the average of what it would actually cost if you're driving a car twelve thousand miles a year on a...at twenty miles per gallon. You're saving a lot of money because you're more efficient, more fuel efficient. But the fee to be able to use those roads and stuff, in this case it would be about fifty dollars. So it's still, the incentive is there. And then the last way of looking at this is your annual fuel costs would be plus the road user fee at various miles per gallon for your car. How many miles you drive a year. So the top line, you have a car that gets only fifteen miles a gallon a year, you drive five thousand miles, you're going to be up here somewhere around eight hundred bucks a year in gas tax plus road user fee. If you move up to seventeen thousand miles you're off the charts already. Whereas if you're somebody who's driving an electric car, say, a hundred miles a gallon car, you still have significantly lower costs that you're paying than somebody who's paying more gas tax. So to your point, E, about the disincentives for being environmentally friendly, it's not as big of a disincentive as you might think.

PARTICIPANT:

But won't we like use more gas while we're sitting in traffic waiting for them to fix the roads...

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

That is so true.

PARTICIPANT:

We're paying ().

AS:

So it's a complicated idea but you all touched on this idea that the fundamental thing is that people should pay for what they use, essentially. If you're going to use the road you should pay for the roads one way or another.

PARTICIPANT:

I think probably if you're looking to find a way to pay for how much people are using the roads, probably the easiest way would be like () the streetlights or whatever, put a transponder. People who use the EZ Pass system, it can just track people, people who are travelling more are going to pay more because a system like that could actually track miles used or whatever within the state and still not do stuff outside of the state. So the big problem with that is you have the whole Big Brother thing. It's like oh, the state's tracking you. But a transponder system like that could, could actually track vehicle used miles within the state.

AS:

If you think of this proposal that I just talked about, the last slides. What are your initial thoughts? Do you support this sort of a plan or would you oppose this sort of a plan?

PARTICIPANT:

So here's the issue in New Hampshire is there's still a big libertarian population. And that fear, maybe not fear..mistrust of the government adding one more thing that can be easily, be used all of a sudden now..like you were pointing out, that they're not getting rid of the gas tax. So the gas tax is still there to get more money and then you've got this other fee now that you're paying...just, I like this idea, I actually think it's the one that makes most sense so far. I think it's going to be a tough sell in this state because people mistrust another thing you have to pay.

AS:

What about the rest of you..?

PARTICIPANT:

It seems like an incredibly small, nominal fee. Like you were talking about a hundred and twenty five dollars annually? If you just put that on my registration I probably wouldn't even notice. Like you're paying that annually, like how many of us know exactly how much you're paying for your registration?

PARTICIPANT:

But if you paid that once at your registration, you don't think you would notice?

PARTICIPANT:

I would notice.

PARTICIPANT:

I would.

PARTICIPANT:

I don't think..if you told me I had to register my car and it's four hundred and fifty dollars. I don't think I would look into it and be like, hey, that's a hundred and twenty five dollars more than last year.

PARTICIPANT:

I mean I drive a..my car's from 2011, that's eight years. That would more than..if let's say I had, and I mean I wouldn't have..I have a Ford Fusion which isn't the greatest economic car in the world but like my registration I think is something like eighty dollars. And that might be including the license plate fee

for my Moose plate. That would be, that would like, for some people that would double if you had like a six or eight year car. People...

PARTICIPANT:

..I'm not saying like if it's going to double or more than double. I'm just saying if you're driving a new car, a brand new car, your registration fee is already high in the state of New Hampshire. I drive a pretty new car, it's a pretty high registration fee. And if you were to add a hundred dollars to that I probably wouldn't notice. You, yeah, if you're paying eighty bucks and all of a sudden it's two hundred something, yeah, of course you're going to notice. That's not so..sorry, that I didn't make that, that point clear. But most hybrid cars, most of these electric vehicles are newer. So I would assume that these registration fees are already high. And so if you're saying on top of that if you call it something different, if you just say it's a ..it's a hybrid, I don't know, low mileage something fee..yeah, people are not going to be upset about it. But.

PARTICIPANT:

But he's saying this is a fee for everyone, not just hybrid cars.

PARTICIPANT:

So it would be lower..

AS:

If you have a car that gets very high miles per gallon you're going to pay a little bit more. If you're up here with a car that has low miles per gallon you're not essentially going to be paying any more..

PARTICIPANT:

Right, so your Ford Fusion is not going to have high..

PARTICIPANT:

...I think some of it's the principle of...

AS:

This chart would be maybe a better one to show you about.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, except for the fact that my car, my car in theory is supposed to get like twenty three. And I never get more than nineteen, ever.

PARTICIPANT:

No..no, but I usually drive like eight people in my...cause it's a slow seven. But so I'm thinking like, all of a sudden..well, it's still twenty five bucks. I mean I probably wouldn't notice twenty five bucks.

PARTICIPANT:

Twenty five bucks, I probably wouldn't notice either. But a hundred twenty five, I think I would.

PARTICIPANT:

I think if you tell people, okay, you're going to have a separate road user fee, that's one thing. But if the state said something like okay, we're going to recalculate the registration fees based on some certain

formula or whatever, and not charge a separate fee for that, then you could work it in and maybe people wouldn't be as upset with it as if they were paying a quote separate road user fee.

PARTICIPANT:

That's a fair point. I mean if you just sell it as a re..if you're selling it as a recalculation instead of just an extra fee, I think obviously it just..on a political standpoint that would probably be a lot smarter.

PARTICIPANT:

The other thing that I'm thinking as well is if, is if, they might not look at it as being as much money if you were to also say to them, okay, instead of upping the gas tax we're going to have a fee each year. And a lot of people might look at that and think oh, okay, so that's smaller than what I might be doing in a year if they upped it ten more cents a gallon. You know?

PARTICIPANT:

That's the way to sell it. If there is at least a deal where you say, okay, we're doing this, and we'll cap the gas tax..that's all you have to say. Literally, that's all. Cap the gas..people are not going to be like..oh, well..cause you know, people are going to do the math. And they'll..

AS:

What do the rest of you think of that idea?

PARTICIPANT:

I'm kind of () if they capped it...

PARTICIPANT:

...22.2

PARTICIPANT:

Or thirty cents. Just upped it right now, just to kind of push it forward. And ...

PARTICIPANT:

Say we're capping it there.

PARTICIPANT:

Increase it a bit.

PARTICIPANT:

But see they're capping..even if they said they're capping it for the next five, ten years, like say ten years. We're capping it for the next ten years, this is what the fee is..then we'll reevaluate things again. I don't think it would see, be as hard to look at.

PARTICIPANT:

I have a quick question, real quick. Does the gas tax only apply to car use gas and not like the heating oil?

AS:

Not home heating oil. But it does..but if you have a lawnmower.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, a lawnmower, snowblower..

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, but I mean the lawnmower uses () gallon. So it's not that high.

PARTICIPANT:

And it's worth it.

PARTICIPANT:

Cause once you start talking about raising people's heating cost..

AS:

Heating oil is, a different animal there. But overall do you think that it's fair, a fair way of doing this?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah. I think kind of, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I do.

AS:

Do you think it's a fair..

PARTICIPANT:

...like no highway left behind.

[laughter]]

AS:

How many of you think it's a fair way?

PARTICIPANT:

I do, I think there's always going to be somebody who's not going to be fair, but I think for the most part it is.

PARTICIPANT:

I think it's kind of fair, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, it's a little more transparent, too.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, exactly.

PARTICIPANT:

Like I get the comment about changing the name, but as a user fee, like it feels, it feels clear that that money's being used. At least you would hope that it would be used for the road maintenance.

AS:

Several of you mentioned that it seems like if it's thought of as an extra, that you're paying another tax. Other than that what do you think the most difficult challenge is to try to sell this idea? To make an argument for a road user fee?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, just on the surface seeing that people who are using electric cars are going to get, are going to have to get, essentially, penalized. That's what it looks like on the surface without going into depth about it. So that would, I think, be kind of upsetting for people who are trying to ..

AS:

That it would be hard to explain this to somebody who had an electric vehicle?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

And just psychologically I think you'll have part of the crowd that says, well, if I'm going to be punished for using a more efficient vehicle, why would I bother doing that?

[01:04:40.24]

PARTICIPANT:

Although () paying the gas tax, so..

PARTICIPANT:

Yup, they will.

PARTICIPANT:

But a lot of people who are going to have that attitude, I'm being punished, are the same people who aren't going to bother looking at charts like that. All they're thinking is I'm being punished.

PARTICIPANT:

So, two thoughts. The first one is I think the biggest way to sell this is to educate people really well, like similar to this. There are lot of misinformed or uninformed or indifferent, ambivalent people that may choose not to listen. But those also are probably the people that aren't going to care. .Because people that care will educate themselves on what they care about. That being said, my concern is I haven't seen anything here as to how this is going to address the people who travel in and out of our state who are using hybrid cars, who are not going to be using gas and are not going to be paying anything other than tolls and tolls don't affect people on 125, people on Route 4...all these other roads that aren't going to be travelled on. So that would be, as a resident, my number one hard sell on this. That you're basically rewarding the travelers and punishing the residents.

PARTICIPANT:

Right, Cause there was that feel sometimes, that you feel like, you know, when you're..like I know, for me when they raise tolls, like...

PARTICIPANT:

That one's pretty bad...

PARTICIPANT:

Their roads...

PARTICIPANT:

That's how I'm going home. I always cut through 236 and....

AS:

So, several other states, Michigan and Georgia, for example, have added a flat fee for electric and hybrid vehicles. Just a flat fee. You got an electric car, a hybrid car, you're going to pay this much per year. Not adjusted based on mileage, just what you pay. What do you think of that idea?

PARTICIPANT:

()

PARTICIPANT:

I think that's...

AS:

I don't know what it is.

PARTICIPANT:

I mean...

AS:

It's going to be within the range that we're talking about. They're basically the same sorts of...

PARTICIPANT:

Is it filling that gap in lost revenue for the state?

AS:

I don't know.

PARTICIPANT:

Some of it is looking at the political realities of will that actually happen here. And also knowing a little bit about it, the political realities is some of the states that are doing that had conservative legislatures that thought they were sticking it to the environmentalists, um, who had hybrid cars and I don't know if that would ever happen..I mean currently we have a Democratic legislature. Who knows if they would support that. But I think if it's, I think it has to be more uh, I think something like that needs to be a little more progressive than just on a hybrid or not.

AS:

Do you think the road user fee would be a more progressive way of doing it than just a flat fee?

PARTICIPANT:

I think a road user fee is more progressive. I think personally there's a..it should be even more progressive in the way that mileage should matter.

AS:

For you mileage is..

PARTICIPANT:

I just think somebody who drives very little or people who have, people who have extra cars in their driveway that they never drive but they still register, like that's just going to..

PARTICIPANT:

But if you think about what he had said was that if they're not driving that much then it still might flatten out for them to be what it is for everyone else because they're not paying that gas tax.

PARTICIPANT:

I mean there are just some people who are..

PARTICIPANT:

..they're going to still use the road.

PARTICIPANT:

There are still some people who have cars that they keep registered that they might drive rarely or like a couple times a year. And are they going to keep even regi..paying that car? Like if you had that extra old minivan..

PARTICIPANT:

But the reality that the..then it's kind of almost like a luxury tax. You know what I mean? Is the tax on, on a baby that you have?

PARTICIPANT:

I agree...

AS:

I was trying to get a sense of other people. So overall, when you think about a road user fee, and I'm not an expert on this, but from what you've heard here, I'm hearing that this is going to be a educational challenge.

PARTICIPANT:

Yup.

PARTICIPANT:

It's just as much as a educational/political challenge as it is a..a actual reality challenge.

PARTICIPANT:

But I think if people educated better they might be more understanding.

AS:

But most of you in the room here were supportive of the idea?

PARTICIPANT:

I am, except I think that there needs to be a way to account for the people who are using our roads that are not paying that, which are the people coming in. Which is why I almost feel like I'd rather see a tax on the electric charging stations that was discussed earlier, kind of a metered system. I think ultimately that might be, I think, a better way to close the gap.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, but then when they're at home and they're charging their car they're not getting the tax for the road fee.

PARTICIPANT:

There's ways to do that.

PARTICIPANT:

I mean that's where you have..

PARTICIPANT:

Meter...

PARTICIPANT:

You have the mileage. I mean.

PARTICIPANT:

I think the mileage thing is right on.

PARTICIPANT:

The problem is if it's somebody from out of state driving through on their electric car..I mean though some of that you just..you're going to have...a cost. I know some states that have had, and I think New Hampshire might be one of them with the open tolling, is you know you're going to lose the revenue from let's say Canadians who go through the system who then don't get a bill. But the convenience for everybody else mitigates. That's, I know, I'm pretty sure ..either New Hampshire or in Maine I know one of the states that was an issue. And I forget which one it was but basically the Department of Transportation said the open tolling is so much more of a convenience that the small amount we lose in Canadians who don't have EZ passes, who just go through it and are never going to get a bill, will save time and money for everybody else and...

PARTICIPANT:

Well, the problem is you're talking about the fact that ultimately gas cars are going to be phased out entirely. And then you're, then it's a problem.

AS:

Do you think that's a way, trying to make this point to people, that gas taxes are eventually going to go away because you're not going to have anything to tax?

PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that's one of the things where if you look at that like Bloomberg chart where it's .eight percent versus the thirty percent, once you get to a lot more electric cars this becomes a very different conversation because instead of the..it will be the gas taxes of, in different and you're going to have to change your system. So, once you do get to a point, we're going to have a totally different system just because electric, once the electric cars are at 50 plus one it will totally change our system.

AS:

We beat this horse pretty good. Any other comments or questions or things you have..

PARTICIPANT:

I have a question about the projected increase in costs for road maintenance. Is that considering potential repetitive lost sections of road? So, I'm thinking about Route 1A in particular. I know, let's see last year we had three Nor'easters within a period of twelve days. And that meant that the shale pile in Rye was repetitively lost. As a result of that that was funding from the state. And I would imagine, to some extent, subsidized by the feds, to pay for that repetitive repair.

PARTICIPANT:

The state pays Route 1A and..

PARTICIPANT:

Right. But that's...

AS:

I have no way of knowing that.

PARTICIPANT:

So one thing I think would be really beneficial for the state, in terms of communicating that, is I think it's unclear..the public is not.. doesn't understand how much of the construction and road maintenance is potentially subsidized by the state or by the feds. And if that's projected to change with increasing costs because we're seeing greater impacts from storms and more repetitive loss for potential roads. Like instead of just continuing to try to increase revenue for the state to maintain those roads, to think a little bit..to cast that a little bit further and think about are there potentially places where we could ..this is very unpopular, but potentially places where we could abandon a road because it is a repetitive loss and continuing, being repaired, as was the case last year three times within a twelve week, twelve day period...I mean that's an incredible cost. And only projected to be..you know, to be incurred into the future.

PARTICIPANT:

Or at least make the decision where if we're going to repair this road we're going to make it able to withstand x, y, or z which would be substantially more expensive. But there are ways to engineer things like that.

PARTICIPANT:

True. I mean those systems also are not, they're not perfect, right?

PARTICIPANT:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

In the cases of some of the other parts of Route 1A where we have sea walls to protect..

PARTICIPANT:

I was going to say it's the sea walls...

PARTICIPANT:

...and businesses and roads. You know, hardened structures like that deflect energy. They don't dampen. So, in those cases they're still going to ...I mean, in my lifetime, even in the last fourteen years that I've lived in New Hampshire I've seen that sea wall at North Beach outside Cinnamon Rainbows repaired because it's degraded.

PARTICIPANT:

There are roads..I used to live on Cape Cod and there are roads ..they had a radio station that I've worked at that are no longer there. They just built another road around the other direction. So..

PARTICIPANT:

I just think in terms of educating the public, like if this is something that moves forward because it's talking about raising fees or placing some of the cost on the users, which I understand, I think people..people will have a difficult time understanding why we're, like things are continuing to increase costs when in some cases they may not have to. I mean cost is going to increase over time just because of inflation and things like that. But there are..there are ways, I think, in the future that we could start to try to reduce potentially some loss.

AS:

One last question. I'm conscious of your time, but what method would be the best way to educate people about this in your view? Public hearings, newspaper stories, radio, what do you think would be the best way to kind of make this case to people ...frankly, like you guys..you really hadn't thought about this before you came to the door today. Now you're pretty well educated after an hour and a half. What would be the best way to do it?

PARTICIPANT:

I think public hearings, like where people go to the City Hall and they have like a big thing, and radio. I think radio is great. Especially if you're driving..

AS:

You're stuck in traffic.

PARTICIPANT:

Listening to it.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that might be one but ...the problem is media shows things based on what their audience wants to hear. Um, we have NBC presenting it one way, FOX presenting it another way.

AS:

They're not in New Hampshire so much. Think about local, state media.

PARTICIPANT:

But even, but even now I think there are a lot of people who will only get their information, say from you know, one particular affiliate or something like that. And now a lot of people are only getting their information straight from their favorite medium on their computer or whatever. So I think..

AS:

Would you trust information that came directly from the Department of Transportation?

PARTICIPANT:

I think I would trust more in like direct mailings or something like that than just..have it framed in a way that hey, this is really important. This is going to impact you. And these are the facts. And then how other people present, that's their way.

PARTICIPANT:

I think regardless of the like method of how it's presented or the media that's used, to use case studies or examples. So, you know, Joe drives a..you know, twenty mile per hour gallon car. This is what he pays annually in gas tax. With the proposed change this is what he would pay in annual gas tax plus the road user fee if he averages X miles annually. And show that it's' like a fifty dollar increase. I mean, the graphs and charts are really helpful but they're only helpful when someone is explaining them to you. i think the more, you know, the argument about like increasing taxes at the national level but decreasing your...

AS:

We were working with engineers when we were coming up with these things. You get to the PR people...

PARTICIPANT:

I was...

PARTICIPANT:

Just to finish up..so, the national argument about like Democrats wanting to increase taxes but lowering your health premiums, that..they constantly get people caught in these media blurbs that like well, they want to raise taxes. But no one's looking at the full equation of like you know, if this adding something, right? So that's going to be the soundbite, that they're going to add and add and add. But if you can actually show for a particular person an example, that it's actually going to reduce or it's going to be a minor increase and not like oh, I'm going to be spending so much more money. That would be helpful.

PARTICIPANT:

() is it going to cost me?

PARTICIPANT:

Exactly.

PARTICIPANT:

But you could also put in a comparison of it. You could say, okay, but if we increase the gas tax this is what he would pay versus if we keep it what it's at too.

PARTICIPANT:

That would be a good way for them to see it too.

AS:

What about a website with the calculator in it? You plug in your car and how many miles that you drive.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that's smart..have it where people, instead of just being like a pamphlet with the numbers, like or a pam..like a white paper, make it more, something interactive. Be it a website or an ad where people are explaining I drive this car. This is what I'm going to, this is the difference. Make it more real life. I think in a way you just need more of a creative marketing campaign. Like a good, strong radio, TV ads. Splash WMUR, Splash Celtics and Red Sox games and do it where people are able to actually see it, more than just being like, reading like let's say a letter to the editor or something. I mean, or just like an article where it's just straight numbers where ninety five percent of the people won't get that.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, don't limit yourself to one method.

PARTICIPANT:

I like the calculator idea on the website. I still think the advertising person in me think like, the problem is the people who are going to bother doing that are the people who are either completely going to be against it regardless or completely who are going to be for it, more or less regardless. You've got the people in the middle who are going to be really hard to reach because those are generally the indifferent people and those are the people who are easily swayed by somebody saying to them..for example for me, my sticking point is what about the (trucks?)? Why aren't they paying..so that might be a sticking point for a lot of people I know. Um, and I...

PARTICIPANT:

I would be the person going and going oh, look, hubby, you know we would be actually saving money. Um, but the majority of the people I don't think would. And I think those are the easily manipulated people in one way or the other who ultimately may decide to kill this.

AS:

Any other thoughts about this?

PARTICIPANT:

I'm just wondering what..you say the people who have more money available, the ones who are driving the more expensive SUVs or whatever, and um, they tend to have more of a voice than Joe and Sarah with their three kids earning maybe fifty thousand a year.

AS:

What this would do.. you and I won't get a chance to vote on this directly at all. It's something that would go through the legislature. So it would be a piece of legislation that would go through. So...

PARTICIPANT:

But there's still going to be lobbyists and whatever, trying to give their opinions through. And they..people however still have a vote, a voice. And we still vote for our legislators and um..

AS:

Would this be a big issue for you, in your voting?

PARTICIPANT:

I think it might be.

PARTICIPANT:

Um, well now that I understand it it might not be as bad but I didn't know anything about it.

PARTICIPANT:

It's important.

PARTICIPANT:

As somebody whose..I'm pretty politically active in the state. I just don't, I think this would be..having talked with my legislators, knowing about politics, I just don't know if this would be like ..I don't think this would be a very hot button issue, I'd say. I mean if it's like a fifty to a hundred dollar fee, I think that is one of the...

PARTICIPANT:

I live in a fairly low income city. And I'm telling you, it's going to be a hot ticket item for a lot of people in the Rochester area.

PARTICIPANT:

I mean compared to your property taxes, like..

PARTICIPANT:

A lot of people in our area don't pay property tax cause they're renters. I mean they do indirectly I guess, but..

PARTICIPANT:

Right, but if you got say someone who's got four cars, however many motorcycles, whatever. You start adding those up.

PARTICIPANT:

But that's not what you..and this is why I'm saying that we need to figure, well, they need to figure out a way to be able to communicate this in a way that the people who I think have the greater potential to be against it are those people in the middle who are like I don't know that I can take another fifty dollars a year because I just have two kids in college...and what, I just think fifty dollars is not going to make break even me with two kids in college. But what I'm saying is I just think that communicating very efficiently that listen, this is going to ultimately reduce what you pay. Although I still don't know how that's going to end up covering the hole, but that's another whole story.

PARTICIPANT:

I guess where..what I'm thinking of is how many people, you know, the tax play is so important. No more new taxes in New Hampshire. And it really doesn't matter what the tax is. Um, I think everybody knows yes, we do need to pay for roads and that's fine. But there's kind of this ideological component that people in New Hampshire are just adamantly against new taxes. And this looks like a new tax. I think personally this would work. I think it's important. And especially with more electric vehicles

coming. I just think that there's going to be a fight for it. Look what happened back in the seventies with the snack tax and all the radio campaigns. Oh, () the snack tax.

AS:

This is one of the reasons we're talking about this... I'm looking at time. Thank you very much. I really appreciate you coming. I really appreciate your input. I think this is very, very helpful. And this is going to be..if you want to keep up with what's going to happen, there's some things that are going to be going on in the next month. There's something down in Concord. You'll hear more about this, I'm sure. Now that you're aware of it you will be paying more attention to it. Thank you very much.

PARTICIPANT:

I have a list of names of people who would be like..explain that to me..

END

Manchester

AS: I'm going to pass these out. This is a consent form -- you don't have to sign it. It basically talks about the research that we're doing, your role in it, and that you understand about what is going to be asked from you. We're going to talk about transportation. It will take about an hour, an hour and a half. And it will all be confidential. We're recording it only so that we can get an accurate transcript. No names are going to be used in any report that comes out of it. So it'll all be confidential. The only people who will know who said what is me and I'll forget that by the time I leave this room. For tonight we'll just use first names. And I'll try to remember everybody's names as we go. But that's ...just an acknowledgement. You got the form. You don't have to sign anything.

[pause]

PARTICIPANT:

We don't need to know anything about transportation?

AS:

Nope.

PARTICIPANT:

Okay.

AS:

No, in fact it's probably better that people don't know that much because it's probably more typical of what most people in the state know about transportation and transportation funding So, thanks again for coming. My name's Andy Smith. I'm the Director of the University of New Hampshire Center. I'm a Political Science professor over there. I really want to thank you again for coming to this discussion. I think it would be interesting, even if you don't know anything about transportation, but I know that it

impacts all of our lives and what we do. We're going to talk about those things tonight. The purpose is to talk about your knowledge and preferences for how construction and maintenance of state roads and bridges are funded in the state. How we pay for maintenance of the roads, how we pay for maintenance to the bridges, if you have new roads built, how that all gets paid for. We're going to use first names during the discussion only. No names are going to be used in the report. There are no right or wrong answers. This is really just to understand what people think about, and know about these things. What preferences they have. Occasionally as a moderator I will try to move the discussion along simply because there's a certain number of things I want to get through. I may ask you sometimes whether you agree or disagree or how many people agree with the statement that somebody makes. I may ask some people individually if you haven't said much, ask for your opinion on something. So if you've ever been in a seminar, the same sort of a thing. Zach is going to be taking notes today. Help us with some of the logistics. If you need more soda or you want to snack on something, just help yourself. There are restrooms right across the hall here if you have to get up for a minute to do that. As I mentioned we're audiotaping it. If you could just speak up at a normal voice. That microphone is very sensitive. The one in the center is sensitive. But if you just speak at a normal voice... and if you could also avoid having side conversations with each other simply because we want to make sure that we hear what people have to say. Has anybody been in a focus group before? Anybody ever done this? You've been in focus groups before? You know how this works then. What I'd like to do before we get started here is to just to go around the room and ask you just a couple simple questions so we get a sense of who's in the room. I'd like to ask you just your first name, what town do you live in, how long you've lived in New Hampshire and how many cars or trucks you own? So, Andy Smith. I live in Durham. I've been here twenty years and I've got three cars at home.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is D (female). I live in Manchester. I've lived in New Hampshire my whole life. Twenty seven years. And I have two cars.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is J (male). I'm from Nashua. I've lived in New Hampshire thirty three years. And I have two cars in my family home.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is B (male). I'm from Bedford. I've been in New Hampshire for about forty years. And I've got a pair of vehicles...trucks.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is K (male). And I live in Manchester. And I've been in New Hampshire off and on for about forty five years. And I own four vehicles.

AS:

Cars or trucks?

PARTICIPANT:

Uh, they're all cars...actually...well, yeah, they're all considered cars.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is Z (male). I live in Dover. All thirty one years. And I have two cars.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is A (male). I've been living in Bedford for twenty years now. And our household has three cars and two motorcycles.

PARTICIPANT:

My name's M (female). I live in Candia. I've lived in New Hampshire for most of my life, with a hiatus for a couple years. And we own two vehicles.

AS:

Cars or trucks?

PARTICIPANT:

Cars.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is C (male). I live in Manchester. I've lived in New Hampshire for thirty two years. I own a truck, a car and a motorcycle.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is J (female). I live in Nashua. I've lived here since...I've been in New Hampshire since 1984. So I'm not good at math. You want the number of cars in the household or just ...

[interruption, someone comes in]

AS:

We're just getting started.

PARTICIPANT:

Two cars.

AS:

Two cars. We're just getting started introducing each other. The questions are what your first name is, what town do you live in, how long you've lived in New Hampshire and how many vehicles you have in your family household?

PARTICIPANT:

My name is E (female). I am from Nashua. I've lived in Nashua my whole life. I'll be twenty four in November. Uh, and there are four vehicles in the household.

AS:

Cars or trucks?

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, there are four cars and there is also a motorcycle.

PARTICIPANT:

Hi, I'm B (female). I currently live in Hudson, New Hampshire. I'm twenty eight years old and I have two cars in my household.

AS:

So, before you came in, we talked about consent. This is a form that says about what it is we're going to do tonight. Basically we'll talk to you for about an hour, an hour and a half about ...we're going to talk about pretty ordinary things. There's no right or wrong answers. We're going to be talking about the way New Hampshire funds transportation for road maintenance, bridge maintenance, road expansion and those sorts of things. That's the general gist of things. So, let me start just by asking, in general, how do you think that, from what you know, how do you think roads and bridges are funded in New Hampshire?

PARTICIPANT:

You've got taxes. And road tolls.

AS:

Taxes and Road tolls.

PARTICIPANT:

Taxes can be from state and federal monies.

AS:

State and federal.

PARTICIPANT:

I was going to include taxes on gasoline.

AS:

How about the rest of you...what's your name, sir?

PARTICIPANT:

D (male).

AS:

What town are you from?

PARTICIPANT:

What town am I from?

AS:

Or do you live in?

PARTICIPANT:

I've lived in Manchester I guess for the last thirty two years.

PARTICIPANT:

Okay, sorry about that.

AS:

Your first name, what town do you live in, about how long you've lived in New Hampshire and how many vehicles you have?

PARTICIPANT:

So first name's D (male). I live in Londonderry and two vehicles.

AS:

Are they cars or trucks?

PARTICIPANT:

Cars.

AS:

Two cars. How long have you lived in New Hampshire?

PARTICIPANT:

Twenty seven...twenty eight years, twenty eight years.

AS:

Okay. So now we get back to the first question. You said taxes and tolls?
And you had said...

PARTICIPANT:

With him, taxes and registration fees...

AS:

Registration fees? What other ways?

PARTICIPANT:

Do we get it from, revenue from like, um, tickets from police?

AS:

Tickets, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

I would think that federal grants for the state.

AS:

Federal monies, yeah. Any other senses? So that's pretty good. So who do you think is paying for most of the cost of highway maintenance and bridge maintenance?

PARTICIPANT:

We taxpayers.

AS:

Taxpayers?

PARTICIPANT:

One way or the other, be it federal, state..we're paying for it.

AS:

Mmm hmm. How about any specific people that are paying more or less for any...

PARTICIPANT:

Commuters.

AS:

Commuters? Yeah....commuters.

PARTICIPANT:

Trucking companies pay the most.

AS:

Trucking companies?

PARTICIPANT:

People who live in different cities pay more, right? If you're going...if you live in Amherst for example. I know that my dad lives there..since I've driven I've commuted between Nashua and Amherst. And you always have to pay that toll as you go in.

AS:

Tolls, yes.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, so some people in certain areas will pay more.

AS:

Any other...

PARTICIPANT:

I guess that people who use it the most..like you were saying the truckers. The people that are on the highway the most. Because they're using gases, uh..gas, fuels and the tolls and so forth. They seem to..I'm assuming they pay the most.

PARTICIPANT:

() pay for that...

PARTICIPANT:

Trucking companies charge you for the gas. You still pay for that.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah...(), yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

The consumer pays for it, not the taxpayer. There's a difference. If you really look at it. But the bottom line is we all pay for it at some point.

AS:

Somebody mentioned gas tax. Does anybody know about what the current state gas tax is, per gallon of gas? How much do you pay on a gallon of gas?

PARTICIPANT:

Eighteen percent?

PARTICIPANT:

No, it's like twenty one cents or something.

AS:

Twenty one cents per...

PARTICIPANT:

Per gallon.

AS:

How many of you, before you came here today really don't have any idea? I think that's fairly typical. Most people really don't know. I'll show you some information about the way taxes or the way roads are funded so we can get everybody up to speed and have a little bit of a discussion on that. But first off, if you think that the way that, based on what we discussed here, do you think this is a fair way to fund transportation in the state?

PARTICIPANT:

It's road centric.

AS:

What do you mean by road centric?

PARTICIPANT:

There's, there's nothing going in or virtually nothing going into any kind of mass transportation. I shouldn't say nothing. There's little going into mass transportation in New Hampshire.

AS:

Okay, so road centric, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that...I think that you would have to look at some bigger metrics to really determine the fairness, right? If there are a lot of people who are commuting out of New Hampshire, right? I know that the southern part of New Hampshire has become a lot of the suburb of Boston. So you have a lot of people who work in Boston or live in New Hampshire or...yeah, I think when you ask is it fair I feel like well what metrics am I looking at to determine the fairness?

AS:

What would you think are the metrics that you would use to say if it was fair or not.

PARTICIPANT:

I would people who use the roads..I would want to know that anywhere I drive in my state I'm on a state road that has access to emergency vehicle, that somebody could come ...if you need that () will be plowed, wherever in the state.

AS:

Anybody else? Conceptions of what would be a fair way of funding roads. Or if the current way of funding roads....?

PARTICIPANT:

I'm going to go with what Ella, it's Ella, right? ..What she said ..I believe it's fair in that the people who use it most are paying for it. The people who are using it the hardest..I'll use that term as well..the trucks and heavy vehicles...pay more for the, for the use of the highway.

AS:

Comments on that?

PARTICIPANT:

I think when we think of fairness with that we only think of me on the car, in the car, driving down the road. But uh, cut off the truckers or cut off the transportation that gets the goods to the stores or gets goods to whatever my business might be...and all of a sudden my view on fairness is going to flip around. Because then the road becomes a life blood artery for something other than just moving me from A to B.

PARTICIPANT:

The other thing about fairness is for years I lived in Merrimack. So paid a toll.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Mmm...mm.

PARTICIPANT:

Every time I got on Route 3. And that seemed unbelievably unfair. It still does to me. Why should there be a toll there but then there were no other tolls for miles and miles and miles. So it seemed like the southern..that little toll thing was fueling a lot of other..

PARTICIPANT:

That's why they filled it with pennies.

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

() Bedford had to fight really hard to get their toll removed. It was only supposed to be there for a certain amount of time until they paid off what they needed for a bridge. And then they paid it off. And then people in town had to be like hey, why is this toll still here? They had to fight to get that.

PARTICIPANT:

It seems odd to me that there's no toll on the airport. I mean it's like the only airport I think I've been to in a really long time where you didn't have to pay a toll going in or out. I was just surprised by it. I don't know whether that's fair or unfair. But it seemed odd.

AS:

Those are good comments. These are the kinds of things that we want to get a sense of what people are thinking about. What they're thinking about how we fund it. Whether it's fair or not.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I think in Merrimack it was the only thing that brought the town together, was the (tolls).

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

I absolutely agree with that.

PARTICIPANT:

As a Nashua to Manchester commuter it was the thing that kept me from ever wanting to stop in that town.

PARTICIPANT:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

And you know there's still a toll that they're looking to take out. I mean this is a slow, arduous process to get this toll removed. Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Isn't there a toll in Nashua too?

PARTICIPANT:

No.

PARTICIPANT:

Never a toll?

PARTICIPANT:

There was a talk of making Merrimack...

PARTICIPANT:

Just Merrimack and Bedford...

PARTICIPANT:

...they were thinking about doing that? Putting the toll there instead?

PARTICIPANT:

Just get off at exit 2 and travel ().

PARTICIPANT:

I do what you do. I get off the highway.

AS:

Who isn't paying their fair share for transportation?

PARTICIPANT:

Well someone mentioned the airport. You know, I think when they built the airport initially they wanted to not put a toll there intentionally to get people to use that airport more often and draw in people who would use it. Now it's pretty well established. Maybe it is time to put a toll there, who knows?

PARTICIPANT:

I had heard the airport, the reason there wasn't a toll was because that was federal money that built that bridge and they couldn't put a toll.

PARTICIPANT:

I heard that tool.

PARTICIPANT:

Really?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, because it wasn't state money. To get that bridge built, that's what I had heard.

PARTICIPANT:

There isn't a lot of tolls coming in and out of the main like borders of our state, which like..we are a state, if anything with like major tourism especially this time of year. And you don't see any other state you go to..New Jersey, New York.. you enter into that state you immediately pay a toll.

PARTICIPANT:

()Have you ever gone up 95 lately?

PARTICIPANT:

Have you been to the seacoast?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah..

PARTICIPANT:

95..is that a buck and a quarter?

PARTICIPANT:

Same rule...you people who want to think about road (). Visit there sometime. It's a ball.

PARTICIPANT:

() four dollars.

PARTICIPANT:

....() vehicle for change..you're going to need it.

AS:

So if you think about who isn't paying their fair share, who do you think?

PARTICIPANT:

I live in Candia off 101 and my husband and I travel 101 towards Bedford all the time. We never hit a toll. Yet..

AS:

Just think about not just tolls but other things, like the gas tax.

PARTICIPANT:

In the terms of taxes your basic tax, not your fuel taxes..I assume that ..my first thought is out of state people aren't paying their fair share for the road use but they do get hit from time to time with a dollar and a quarter on 95. You get hit along route 3. And the only other tolls I know of are on the Spaulding Turnpike which would be locals in that area.

AS:

Hooksett and that..

PARTICIPANT:

Hooksett and ..yeah...

PARTICIPANT:

People that don't work or pay taxes don't contribute to the money that goes into the roads.

PARTICIPANT:

They still have to register their car though.

PARTICIPANT:

But are they using the roads that much? If they...

PARTICIPANT:

And if they're buying goods they're buying them from..trucking companies brought the goods.

PARTICIPANT:

I mean I'm all for supporting those people and paying for the transportation and whatever but those are the people that do not contribute.

Not directly, yes.

PARTICIPANT:

When I think of heavily trafficked roads that don't have a toll I think of 93 and what is it, 101 that goes Manchester to the coasts?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

So everyone's saying this right now and I'm thinking this thought right now, like, well, crap I don't want more tolls.

[laughter]]

PARTICIPANT:

I got you, I'm with you...I got you. I'm just looking at...

PARTICIPANT:

I'm not advocating for more tolls, don't get me wrong.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm not saying I want more.

PARTICIPANT:

I don't want any more tolls. Less tolls.

AS:

We really aren't going to be talking too much about tolls. This is interesting it comes up here because I can tell people are going through tolls and you're seeing this more often than the group yesterday in Dover when there really weren't that many mentions of tolls. When you think about the gas tax, who do you think is not really contributing to the gas tax?

PARTICIPANT:

Um, electric vehicles, hybrids.

PARTICIPANT:

Electric vehicles, you still got to..but it's not directly a tax. You still got to pay somehow to create electricity. That's not free...

PARTICIPANT:

Right, that money would be..

AS:

Is there anybody you think that really is paying an unfair amount of money or paying a lot more than other people would be? Other drivers?

PARTICIPANT:

Commuters may be paying...if you look at the share, what commuters that are going into Mass because you gas up here, you drive down, you come back, you gas up. Either before you leave at night, before you go home at night or before you leave in the morning. So they may be covering ..they're spending more of their spend in, in Mass but they're actually making the spend in New Hampshire. Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

I was talking to someone online and they said they worked at a toll station which number one, flabbergasted me. Um, cause they'd be working there for three years. So ...seeing tolls anywhere from a dollar to you know, two dollars..they were telling me that some of these tractor trailers that have to go into weigh stations pay anywhere from fifty to two hundred dollars as a toll. So I thought that was kind of crazy, really high up there.

POWERPOINT 1

AS:

I'd like to show a brief set of slides that should give you a sense of where the money is coming from and how revenues for roads are being paid. So we're all on the same page and then we'll talk some more. First of all this is our current transportation funding source. These are 2018 numbers. And this is all of the revenue that are used. So first part of it is, about forty percent of it is federal aid. Comes from the federal government. Over the top right, thirty three percent is from state gas tax. Seventeen percent from fees, your registration fees or when you sell a car there's a sales fee there. And then about ten percent are tickets and fines and so forth that you build up when you're driving too fast down 101. So this next slide shows just what is generated in the state - if you took the federal aid out, that forty percent federal aid..this is where the money comes from, from people in the state. About fifty five percent from the gas tax. About twenty nine percent from fees, registration fees and sales. And about sixteen percent from those tickets and fines that we rack up. So this is the current structure. So the problem that we have, and this is really why we wanted to talk about this today is, if you look at the revenue that's there for roads and the projected revenues it's not a really good number if you think about the state. The blue line is our historic gas tax revenue. 2010 to about 2018. It's been roughly flat, it's about 135 million dollars per year. And it's projected to go down. And this does not include the

revenue from the big trucks, is just light vehicles - cars and light trucks. It's projected to decline to just over 100 million dollars by 2030. And the reason for this decline are not because we're driving less. We're actually projected to drive more. There was a little drop here in 2005 to 2010 or so during the recession. People were driving less either that didn't have a job or they were just really concerned about it. So less miles driven. But it's been going up. And it's projected to go up, continually go up through 2030. There are more people in the state, we're driving more miles. You can see it's a lot of miles. We're currently driving about fourteen million miles per year of all the people in the state. It's projected to go up to close to sixteen million miles, so a lot of road, driving. One of the major drivers we're finding, a big driver of the decline in that funding of revenues is miles per gallon. As cars get more fuel efficient, we need to buy less gas. If you buy less gas you have less money coming in from the gas tax. So this blue line is the projected average miles per gallon of all vehicles. These are federal numbers, national numbers. They're going to be about the same here. Projected to be about thirty miles per gallon by 2030. This is the new vehicles. This line is. And this is why this is going up. The federal government has mandated a thirty five, thirty five mile a gallon for light vehicles by supposedly 2025. But it's increasing because more people are buying hybrid vehicles, electric vehicles and so forth. And this is another example. These are electric vehicles. This is the forecast of the percentage of vehicles sold in the state, in the country that are going to be light vehicles. The problem with this forecast is there's really wide ranges of what people think is going to happen. Because a lot of this is dependent upon the price of gasoline. If the price of gas was low people don't buy as much of them. If there was a subsidy that's either there or not there they buy less or more of them. So there's a lot of areas here. But the estimates are between roughly ten percent by 2030 of the cars that are sold in this country will be electric. Upwards of over 30 percent is one estimate. So these are the big things that we see are driving this shortfall in tax revenues while there are more people driving and more people on the road and more miles driven. Which means more wear and tear on the roads, you get stuck in traffic more. If you need any expansions of roads, there's a limitation because the revenue's not coming in. So this is the position that the state finds itself in. It's not unique to New Hampshire. This same scenario is playing out in every state across the country. So, after seeing this, what are your thoughts about the way we fund transportation in New Hampshire?

PARTICIPANT:

Probably needs to change because the other thing is I'm sure that the cost of road maintenance is not going down.

PARTICIPANT:

We just need to keep up with the technology that's getting better and I think that's where we lack..Is we don't keep up with the technology so things like even laws don't keep up with it. The budget's don't keep up with it because it's just rapidly changing and there's no chance to like sit back and take a look.

PARTICIPANT:

Didn't they try to change the budget a few years ago to increase the gas tax and it got voted down?

PARTICIPANT:

They also brought this up a while back to about taxing or somehow deriving funds from cars that use less and less fuel. And how to like miles used..how would you now look at as opposed to ..the simple one is how many gallons you're using, you pay for at the pump. You're not doing it anymore. And you're plugging in your car at home. So where is the meter that says how much has gone into your car and how far you've gone and how do you tax that?

PARTICIPANT:

Is the amount of federal aid...similar, high, is it in the middle of other states?

AS:

It's fairly similar to what other states are seeing. You get into some large rural states that have a lot of interstate highway going across them, without much population, they probably are getting a higher percentage from the federal government just because there aren't that many miles driven on it. But I think this is fairly similar to what you see throughout the northeast.

PARTICIPANT:

Aren't the taxes broken out in..the federal ..they have a certain...amount that the tax...j

AS:

Yeah, the federal tax is upwards...

PARTICIPANT:

Different versus the state tax. Which is a totally different thing. Because the federal tax can only be used for interstate highway ...maintenance.

PARTICIPANT:

Some local if they can get them to do it but it's hard to get those funds to do that for the infrastructure repairs or whatever for state roads and facilities. But I know the state tax, that could go to whatever the state wants it to go to. But it's difficult, again, because it's just the ..the usage and the amount of I guess the available cash isn't there anymore. So, the infrastructure..they're having problems with the infrastructure, trying to keep up with it. Keep it repaired.

AS:

The one other area that the federal government's tax gas tax is more than double what our state tax is. And then we have the tolls that you pay on the interstate. There's a toll road fund that is separate from the general highway fund that goes into. So there are some other limitations on where monies can come from to fix and expand just regular roads in the state.

PARTICIPANT:

And other states, nearby states...of Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, do they have a thing on their pie chart that's not non-New Hampshire? Is there a way that we could be funding that we're not...we didn't bring up or it's not there?

AS:

Um, if there is it wouldn't be a significant amount. So you could argue that we've got specialty license plates that you could start to get and that might raise a little bit of extra money but it's not the kind of monies that we're talking about there.

PARTICIPANT:

I think..this would be a hard thing to track at this point. We have technologies that could do this. But you're looking at miles driven per vehicle in New Hampshire. I mean you could do that. It's just a matter of how do you do that? Eliminate say a gas tax and go to a, because we're...or moderate the gas tax and start increasing..like every time you go to register your car..again, this is how many miles did you drive in New Hampshire as opposed to Vermont? You don't owe anything in Vermont or whatever. But somewhere along the way determining how many miles your vehicle has driven in New Hampshire and allocating funds from those miles.

PARTICIPANT:

That's how they do it for trucks?

PARTICIPANT:

So....trucking is totally different as far as the way they pay their taxes.

PARTICIPANT:

So would it be possible to transfer that technology over?

PARTICIPANT:

() using eleven miles per gallon..a new truck, a () truck. You're only going to get 22. That's as far as expected. And that's () They have deep pockets.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, they're paying for it now, right? I'm not saying change that type of thing but I 'm saying you're going to hit ...assess people with personal vehicles. Electric vehicles, from what my understanding is because of the increased Bloomberg's projection of 32 or 35 percent by 2030, that's a sizeable increase in untaxable vehicles because you're not using gases. Where do you, where do you recover those funds for the miles used?

PARTICIPANT:

I just want to understand what you just said. Are you saying that individual people should be evaluated and then pay a tax of how much they drive?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, I was actually starting to go down a similar thought process as him where gas...you know, the gas you buy is becoming an obsolete method of tracking the amount of miles you've driven, where possibly if, when registering your vehicle if they keep track of your mileage you've driven..you know, charging you during your registration for that usage.

PARTICIPANT:

Only for electric cars?

PARTICIPANT:

And then ..no, no..do that for all cars and then reduce the gas tax because...

PARTICIPANT:

Minus the gas you've used in New Hampshire.

PARTICIPANT:

Right, the truckers do it that way because...

PARTICIPANT:

..I don't know if that would be a good way to do that in the state () though.

PARTICIPANT:

It's a thought. I mean this is something that's going to have to evolve. It's not like this is how it's got to be now. Yeah, you're right.

PARTICIPANT:

The reason the truckers do it that way is because so much of the trucking is interstate. So you go all over the place. You're not just staying in New Hampshire. So they have to have a way to segregate how what they used in New Hampshire for mileage. So you can declare 30,000 miles in New Hampshire, 50,000 miles in New Hampshire. Is there enough taxes out ...

PARTICIPANT:

....regulate when you have your vehicle inspected? When you have a vehicle inspected...especially trucks..I know they do it with cars too. But especially with trucks they're monitoring your mileage like you...

PARTICIPANT:

Well you have to. You have to fill out a fuel sales tax every year and send it to the state. Absolutely, that's how you do it. And that's how they monitor.

PARTICIPANT:

()you have to be in alignment...

PARTICIPANT:

If you pay too much they give you money back. If you don't pay enough they write you a bill.

PARTICIPANT:

I've never gotten a check back.

PARTICIPANT:

You're lucky.

PARTICIPANT:

You've done it right.

AS:

If you think about the current way we're doing it, who do you think is paying more than their fair share, paying the most out of it.

PARTICIPANT:

People with old, crappy cars.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah. Yeah, low mileage vehicles.

AS:

Who do you think is benefitting from the current system?

PARTICIPANT:

Hybrids, electrics.

PARTICIPANT:

()foreign built cars.

PARTICIPANT:

But there's an audience that doesn't get covered in any of this so maybe it's beyond the purview of this but there are folks in the transportation community who don't have a car who need transportation. And this state particularly has been particularly bad at funding anything for mass transit which is probably the only way we're going to meet emissions goals, is by increasing our mass transit. And yet that's a particularly tough one because mass transit requires expenditures that are not per mile expenditures. They're a big bulk out of the income tax, out of the business tax kind of expenditures, that we don't see in any of this.

PARTICIPANT:

We don't have the population centers in the state which would make the mass transit much more palatable type of alternative. It's too bad. It would be much better to do it that way if possible. But when you think about the largest city north of Worcester Mass is Manchester, and outside of the few buses they have running around inside Manchester, then they have the bus service going to Boston, that's about it. There's not much else there.

PARTICIPANT:

But if there were..

PARTICIPANT:

Well, that's the thing. But do you want to make that type of capital investment in mass transportation that might relieve that end of it but are you willing to invest a billion dollars or whatever the cost to build that system up to use it? What would be the return on that over a period of years?

PARTICIPANT:

And what would it pull off the roads.

PARTICIPANT:

And would it pull anything off the roads? People like to drive their cars. It's a psychological fact. People like to drive cars. How many people in this room have more than one car?

Just about everybody, right? It think there was only one or two people that have one car. Everybody else had two or three or four cars...so..

AS:

So the revenues from the state gas tax are projected to decline from about 145 million dollars now down to about 100 million dollar by 2040. So, thinking about the current structure that we have, do you think this a sustainable model?

PARTICIPANT:

No.

PARTICIPANT:

No.

PARTICIPANT:

No.

PARTICIPANT:

The biggest problem is the infrastructure. I mean without a doubt. Because the bridges and the roads are just..most of the bridges. The state will tell you are in really critical condition. They have to be repaired.

AS:

It's not like we live in the south – we have winters.

PARTICIPANT:

You don't have the winters down there...but up here we do have the winters and the roads can't, and the bridges can't take the stress and just what we do as..I guess how we handle it to repair them. And it's just..how many people, how many times do you drive down the road and you fill a pothole and then two weeks later you go back, the same pothole is back where it was? Because we just can't seem to get it right or we can't do it efficiently or it just isn't something we can do efficiently.

AS:

When you think about the issue that we've got, how would you explain it? I just went through three or four slides trying to explain this problem that the state faces. How would you go about explaining this to say a neighbor or a friend of yours if you got talking about roads or complaining about roads? How would you do that? How would you convince somebody that there is a problem? Because it seems in the room everybody is shaking their heads saying no, it's not sustainable. How would you make that point to someone else?

PARTICIPANT:

Same way you did. Say, this percent of money comes from the feds. Thirty three percent of it is gas tax. Cars are becoming more and more fuel efficient. People are also buying electric vehicles. And so we're taking in less money for gas. And we still have to maintain the roads. So, it's not sustainable, I mean over time. It just is not sustainable.

PARTICIPANT:

In the budget itself, in the state budget...say let's just use the state budget where is the funding in the state budget as far as this level goes? Is it below, is it above, is it right where it should be?

AS:

It's below ..and it's declining.

PARTICIPANT:

And it's declining. So what is the gap, or what is the percentage that is less than what it should be?

AS:

That's why we're talking tonight - because there's no other alternatives for the state that the gas tax revenue is going to drop by about thirty five million, about forty five million dollars per year.

PARTICIPANT:

So the priority of the budget where should this, this line item be? Should it be up here? Or should it be down here? Where does the line item fit in the budget to draw the most potential or the most potential revenue direction? I mean that's, to me that's a critical number because you have to look to see what

programs ...if the taxes are going to keep going up, whatever the taxes are..whether it be road taxes, gas taxes, whatever they are, they're going to keep going up because they don't go down. As someone pointed out, with the tolls. They don't drop the toll fees down, they keep going up. They say they will but they don't, they go up. So where does that budget fit in in the state budget anyway to say what's the importance of this program versus..what are we going to give up for this?

PARTICIPANT:

I think one of the chief things we could do is just say it simply, we are not currently paying for the miles that we're driving. We're not meeting...you know, we're paying for this and we're driving for this.

PARTICIPANT:

Or we're not investing enough in the way that we're fixing the roads. We're fixing them just as like a coverall for however many years they will last.

PARTICIPANT:

...Band aid.

PARTICIPANT:

We have better technology so that the roads last through the winters and the bridges actually last. Then eventually that's going to () out.

PARTICIPANT:

We've ridden on the investment of the sixties and the..the fifties, sixties and seventies for a long, long time and we've forgotten that that took investment..I remember the signs: your highway tax dollars at work. A few of us are old enough to remember that. And, but the truth is is that is not any longer the case. These investments are having to come from..we're having to make up those shortfalls. And so if I was telling somebody I'd say you're not paying for the miles you're driving. Even with the toll, Merrimack....you're just not. And we have to look at it. The reason I brought up mass transport, mass transportation is because that is a different..it's a different part of our brain. This one that says well, I'm paying for it because I'm putting gas in my car and paying tolls. This one says, well, I don't use mass transport or even if I do I don't use it very often so I don't want to spend ten million dollars. But actually we got to transfer that over to say either side is going to take investment that is not paying for miles driven. Because we're not paying for miles driven.

AS:

Some of the younger people -- how would you explain it to your friends? What do you think?

PARTICIPANT:

Uh..most of the budget comes from federal but also a lot of it is from gas tax, so it just makes sense that you're paying ..if you're using less gas and then there's also the cut in of electrical vehicles then less gas is being bought and less money is being given to the taxes that fund...keep it simple. Don't try to confuse..

AS:

What would you do?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I would say...you know how we have to fix the roads? Okay, so most of the money that comes to fix the roads comes from gas tax. But cars are getting more efficient so people are using less gas. So that means that there are less taxes being taken out and less money to fund the roads. So now we have a problem where this is the main way that we fund the roads. And we don't have enough people buying enough gas. So there is an underfunding problem because we're not buying..cause cars are getting more efficient.

PARTICIPANT:

And the idea of non sustainability, it's also of going back to the idea of the potholes and what not. Instead of better technology and longer lasting roads ..

PARTICIPANT:

Can I just intersect something also here. If you look, for us that live in Manchester, and I'm sure the ones in Nashua, there's been a lot of road repairs done this year...I hate to say it but it's an election year...so they get out and...but on the other hand, the metropolitan areas like Manchester or Nashua would generate, be generating a lot of wear and tear on their roads just cause of the volume of people that are in the cities. Versus say someplace like Concord or maybe Laconia where there isn't quite that much volume going through there. So again there's an equity issue there. Would those people be willing to look at what maybe the bigger areas would want..Nashua, Manchester, maybe Portsmouth area, versus say the more rural areas like Concord or Laconia or Lancaster or Lincoln or one of those places. Where the highway network is really their lifeblood. Without that they don't have a lot of ..and that's all federal just about, going up there. There's not a lot of roads up there that are going to be affected by overuse like we have down here. We have a lot of overuse of roads down here. Because just the nature where we are, in the state. So...

POWERPOINT 2

AS:

I want to move on and show a proposal that's being discussed in Concord now. This is not fixed so don't walk away thinking that that's what they're going to vote on. Because if anybody's familiar with the way legislation goes on in Concord... there will be lots and lots of input, lots of committees. But this is getting at some of the things that have been brought up in the discussion already today of ways that maybe would be useful to address this. Its what's called a road user fee. So what the road user fee would is is an adjustable amount of money that you would pay during registration of your vehicle that would make up some of this difference -- even out the difference. So if you're driving a car that gets less than twenty miles a gallon, you're not going to pay much of the road user fee. Very small amount, because you're paying that already in gas tax. You're paying that in gas taxes. Whereas if you go up to an electric car you

pay \$125 a year for this. Because you're not paying any money for gasoline taxes but you're using the road. So it's adjusted here by the miles per gallon of your vehicle to try to balance it out. So they, that would be the average of the gas tax paid by somebody using a 20 mile a gallon vehicle. This is a way of balancing out. So another way of looking at this is the goal is to fill that funding shortfall. So if you look at the blue line, the solid blue line and then the dash blue lines are the historic tax revenue for gasoline taxes, the projected revenue decline. And that green line across the top would be the road user fee plus the gas tax. To balance that out to what is an anticipated. The amount of what would be \$145 million. So this kind of is a way of showing what that could look like. Look at this: this axis here is showing about what you people are paying right now driving 12,000 miles a year in gas tax. So if you've got a car with less than 20 miles a gallon you're paying over 2,000 bucks or so in gasoline taxes per year. As you move out to a forty mile a gallon car, so maybe a hybrid or a very small car that's very fuel efficient, you're right now paying only about 800 dollars or 750 in taxes. And then the road user fee would bump that up a little bit. by about fifty dollars. If you go all the way up to somebody driving an electric car and getting eighty miles a gallon the gas tax is minimal. That would be an additional road user fee that you would pay. So the idea here again is that it's trying to balance this out without making any one group of people pay a lot of money. Now, there's of course going to be individual people that this is not going to work out real well for or not as well for. But the idea is that you are going to increase a little bit for some people. But also something that didn't come out is that when you think about electric vehicles, you don't want to discourage people from driving their electric vehicle or fuel efficient.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah..

PARTICIPANT:

See, I've got a problem with this whole concept...

PARTICIPANT:

The messaging's bad.

PARTICIPANT:

..in that you're tagging the people who are doing the best to save the planet. You're tagging them. It's like you're doing your best, you're working hard and we're going to mess up with you. We're going to tag you guys. That's my..

AS:

The flip side of that is..

PARTICIPANT:

But that's the other side. I got to look at that too because they're not paying for the road as much as the trucks are paying.

AS:

I wanted to get you thinking..

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, this has been an argument of mine against this whole concept.

AS:

So if you just look at how much they're paying per year. This is annual fuel costs at a certain miles per gallon per year. If you got a fifteen mile a gallon car your fuel costs, if you drive only five thousand miles a year you're paying close to a thousand bucks. You're off the charts here once you get up driving seventeen (hundred) miles a gallon. This is twenty miles a gallon, twenty five miles a gallon, thirty, thirty five, forty, and this is if you have an electric car. The maximum road user fee would be for the electric cars, would be considerably lower than that. This chart shows that the road user fee, it's not a huge amount of money that's going to be applied to any given person or any given car over time. That the goal, again is to try to.... have this roughly even there.

PARTICIPANT:

I completely get the evening out of things. But like I say, ever since this whole concept came out I always laughed at those poor suckers who are buying those fuel efficient cars. They're going to get tagged because you're being so smart and fuel efficient. Now you're getting messed up with. The state's saying I want a piece of that.

PARTICIPANT:

But you're still saving money.

PARTICIPANT:

You're still saving..yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I get it, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

And that was my immediate reaction as well until I ..you know, looking at the numbers on the graph, that's such a small fraction compared to what they're actually already doing from the gas tax. It's relatively small comparatively. But I wouldn't want to do anything to ince..disincentivize people from using electric.

PARTICIPANT:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

So my next thought then was I would almost want to..if you take it to a complete crazy extreme, remove the gas tax and completely do all of it through a road usage fee. And charge everyone that way.

PARTICIPANT:

Per..not per miles per gallon but per miles traveled. And don't forget, what everyone's saying it's just a minimal fee. You said it right. The taxes never go down. It's an entry level. Next year, oh we need more, we need more, we need more. So those poor people that are driving those electric cars, we need more ..not from you, but we need more from you, more because you're not paying your fair share. Where does it end?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah...I would say..I'm the person who..I just recently invested in like a hybrid car. And I think this is fair, right? Like I could see the benefit in this. But the reason I invested in a hybrid car is not only because it's fuel efficient, because I believe that's the future, right? I think that a gas car is obsolete not only because there are not enough resources to like sustain gas cars forever but because they're getting more affordable, because they are better choices. So when you start this..how sustainable is this and then how much do we end up charging people () fees, right? Like you said, it sounds like these fees will just go on and on increasing, in increasing amounts.

PARTICIPANT:

So the other things is..

PARTICIPANT:

I'll also split the difference on this. I ride a motorcycle. My registration triples based on this. And a motorcycle gets about fifty miles to the gallon. And I travel a lot more on my bike than I do on my truck. I get screwed by this. This kills me. I can't ride my bike anymore. So I got to put my motorcycle up.

PARTICIPANT:

What if you did a percentage of your registration? So depending..if you have a brand new electric car your registration is sky high anyway. Tack another \$125 on, that could make or break somebody from buying the car, honestly. But if you do a percentage, just like they do for all..they decide your registration, the cost by the year of your car, how many miles it has..if they did a percentage instead of a flat fee, you might pay more this year but in ten years you're going to pay less. And the tax never goes up. You actually go down the older your car gets, kind of like your registration fee.

PARTICIPANT:

But are you still using the same miles? So you're paying less..

PARTICIPANT:

Are you filling that gap? Cause there's gap there that..

PARTICIPANT:

..its' not a car registration if you really don't pay on the miles or anything on the car registration. You pay on ..the value of your car.

PARTICIPANT:

But the other thing is, and I see this because I'm on the Board of the National ().

PARTICIPANT:

...it's the same thing..

PARTICIPANT:

..I see this because I work on the Board of the National () Shelter. And we have people in the community who donate cars which we fix up and () clients who don't have any other transportation. So they have the gas guzzlers. Because that's what people () nothing. So in some ways it's like a disproportionate tax on people who have less income and cannot afford to replace their cars. So, and those cars get sold. And I'm not saying..It's great that people donate the cars. But so those people right now are paying for..

AS:

Right now are paying..

PARTICIPANT:

Right now they're paying more. So that would help make it more equitable.

PARTICIPANT:

Personally, if you () million miles in your travel in commercial, you ain't working.

AS:

For those people who aren't driving a commercial vehicle. Most people are driving just a regular car.

PARTICIPANT:

So ().

AS:

This doesn't apply to commercial vehicle. Only cars and light trucks. A commercial truck, or an over the road truck has a completely separate tax structure for that.

PARTICIPANT:

Trucks pay for mileage and tax.

AS:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

Road use tax, road toll tax and they also pay for miles. Also.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I know.

PARTICIPANT:

Has there been any conversation with this model, with the lobby for the better emissions vehicles and the electrical vehicles. Because so much of that pressure has been about cost. We want to switch to this because we'll entice consumers because it's a lower cost. And all of a sudden we're flipping that on its head. I think that would get fierce opposition.

AS:

These discussions have been going on in Concord for quite a while. There are going to be hearings on this in the next couple months. So I am sure that the electric vehicle manufacturers, automobile manufacturers are looking at this. Right now about twenty states have or are considering some version of a road user fee already in place. So this isn't new to us. It's in place in a lot of other states already. Or it's going to be in place in other states.

PARTICIPANT:

Do you know how they deal with the motorcycle problem? Because I feel like when you said that I was like oh my gosh..

AS:

I would imagine that for motorcycles it would be a different.

PARTICIPANT:

Talk about lack of hurting the roads..

PARTICIPANT:

Impact on the roads.

PARTICIPANT:

I put thousands of miles on my motorcycle a year. I bought my car six years ago. I put five thousand miles on it.

PARTICIPANT:

So is this road user fee, and you probably said this and I might not have caught it..is it tied to your actual use or just tied to an average expected use?

AS:

It's tied to the miles per gallon for your car and average miles driven. So it's not down to a personalized like that. I think it's probably because ease of administration and that it would make it cost more to administer if it were personalized.

PARTICIPANT:

Imagine putting a tracking device in New Hampshire-ites cars [laughs]

PARTICIPANT:

They'd love that.

PARTICIPANT:

You got them already.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, that's true.

PARTICIPANT:

We just ().

PARTICIPANT:

Well, they have them in trucks so...do cars.

AS:

What do you think?

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, me?

PARTICIPANT:

It makes sense to me. Having an extra tax based on something other than a commodity that is not longer standardized between all people. Mileage, miles per gallon doesn't make the most sense to me. It makes more sense to do more miles driven, maybe plus miles per gallon? I'm not sure about that but. But for electric vehicles, that extra...because they're paying so much more doesn't account for the, the electricity that they're paying for to charge their actual, their vehicles.

AS:

That's something that...Georgia and Michigan have a flat fee, an additional flat fee for electric and hybrid vehicles. So there are a lot of variations of this. What I'm talking about today is more a concept of a road user fee. Because what actually makes it through the legislation is not going to look exactly like this.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

But conceptually it will be with this sort of a model.

PARTICIPANT:

So I guess having thought about it for a minute now, the, just the concept of a road user fee and the scaling of it, increasing based off of miles per gallon in particular, makes me just feel like, you know, the chart clearly is declining on what we're getting for the gas tax. And clearly we all acknowledge that's wrong. This just sort of feels like a almost arbitrary way of okay, this will make the chart sort of look right without necessarily being the best way. Not that I have a clear answer on what the best way is to track the mileage. But it almost feels like increasing the tiers just by miles per gallon is you know, sort of just a..this will fix the chart to make sure everything continue to be status quo. And maybe it isn't the best tracking method.

PARTICIPANT:

After all, it's not about the..environment, it's about the usage of the roads and how much hurt they're taking. It has nothing to do with miles per gallon, I believe. It's how many miles you're driving.

AS:

Miles per gallon is just there because that's the way we've always done it.

PARTICIPANT:

It's easy to track, that's easy to track from the..

PARTICIPANT:

Someone brought it up before, I think..and I agree..the mileage is the most fairest way to track it. And I think someone said just get rid of the gas tax. And I don't disagree with that either. Only because if you do it properly with tracking the miles then the people that drive the most miles based on the charts that we saw, would have to pay the most amount of user fee. Because that's the only..when you look at it for a fairness standpoint, probably the only way to look at it. Cause people that don't need to drive their cars and they sit in the garage, they're not going to pay a big user fee. But people that have to..they're salespeople who whoever, they're driving their cars forty, fifty thousand miles a year, that's going to be part of the expense they're going to have to deal with. They don't have to pay taxes on their gas but they do have to pay a user fee.

PARTICIPANT:

And that's fair...

PARTICIPANT:

That's a fair ..

PARTICIPANT:

If gas is cheaper people will drive more. It's the people that don't drive a lot because gas is too expensive even if it's only twenty something cents. Sometimes, you know, just getting to work, people

would rather walk or whatever. But if the gas is cheaper people will drive more making everyone probably pay more because they're driving more.

PARTICIPANT:

One thing they're trying to do in Manchester right now is make Manchester more sustainable as far as public transportation and/or alternative transportation like bike riding or walking. Make it more...

PARTICIPANT:

They already did. You have to license your bicycle.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, but the thing is, that's short term or short movement in transportation. You're only talking a few miles. You're not talking thousands of miles like the chart just showed up there. What's the projection for whatever, the 2035, whatever that screen was we had there? Uh, that was just creeping up and up and up. No, not that...that one, right there. And you can see that the projection is going up and up and up. So unless that projection starts going down again, then the only fair way to look at it is from a user fee, and a respective.

AS:

It's not going to go down, first off because the population is going to be increasing and people are going to not really stop driving.

PARTICIPANT:

People love their cars, they're going to drive them.

PARTICIPANT:

What about, I mean this doesn't handle the problem of..I mean I live in Nashua. How many people commute to Boston every day? So that's really..they're not really paying for the miles they drive in New Hampshire () as much as the road damage they're doing in Massachusetts. And I assume that more and more states are going to be looking at this.

PARTICIPANT:

That's the way that you can look at it from that perspective and say okay, when I register my car I have a form I got to fill out. The form says I drove this many miles this year. Seventy percent of those miles were driven in Massachusetts. Do I have to pay tax on, the user fee on those miles? Again, that's how the truckers do it. The truckers pay on a percentage basis on what state they drive through. They have to pay that amount or not?

PARTICIPANT:

What's the administrative fee with something like that on a mass scale? I mean, that's...

PARTICIPANT:

Well, the state does it right now. The state of New Hampshire does it right now. With the road tax bureau. That's how they do it.

PARTICIPANT:

But for the truckers. But we're talking a mass scale for every driver, every car in the state.

PARTICIPANT:

So I thought that was going to be a problem but it's not because he said earlier that it's charged based off of the average user per anyone in this state. So if they're averaging across the whole state you don't have to worry about any particular individual and sure, Nashua to Boston commuters are kind of..

PARTICIPANT:

He's talking about specific mileage tracking.

PARTICIPANT:

For every single person.

PARTICIPANT:

So when you register you pay for what you drove.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, no, but he said that's not what the proposal said.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, no. But I'm talking about..

PARTICIPANT:

The biggest issue is going to be accurate data collection for miles driven in whatever state that you're going to be taxed.

AS:

So somebody mentioned this earlier -- nobody in New Hampshire ..the Live Free or Die state of New Hampshire aren't likely to want to have a device on their car tracking...

PARTICIPANT:

If There's an incentive I bet you could get ()people to do it.

AS:

How many of you think that that would be something that would be useful in New Hampshire?

PARTICIPANT:

No.

AS:

This is not being proposed as far as I know anywhere.

PARTICIPANT:

I keep seeing the ads for Progressive, put this thing in your car and you're going to pay less for insurance.

PARTICIPANT:

Insurance rates.

PARTICIPANT:

And I won't do it. So I'm not going to put something in my car.

PARTICIPANT:

I don't want somebody to know everywhere I go.

PARTICIPANT:

That's exactly what's going to happen.

PARTICIPANT:

() already. I mean, really? We all carry a computer. They can track you anywhere, they can look at you anytime they want to.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, but I also think one thing that, cause we're from this other part of New Hampshire that we're not considering and why..I agree with you, I think the average is the most important, not the individual. Is that we all have access to anything that we want, right? It doesn't take..I bet most of you could walk to food if you really needed to, if you live in Manchester or Nashua, you could walk and get food. If you live above the Notch you're driving, putting a lot of miles in your car just to sustain your life. And a lot of people in New Hampshire rely on driving for their business, especially in the North and rural areas.

AS:

We are going to be doing another group up in the North.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I know, and I would just say that like an average for the state is more fair, like a flat one, then taking out individuals. And also the whole live free or die, like no one's got to know how much I drive. Where am I driving? I don't know, state, you have to know.

PARTICIPANT:

In lieu of accurate accounting, general accounting would be the next best thing, like you're talking, and averaging.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, it's funny because we want to not be tracked for our miles because we, like you said, I don't want to have that thing that..your car by the way is really there to tell Progressive and the other insurance companies whether or not you are honest about how many miles you drive. That's the real reason it's there.

PARTICIPANT:

Yes, exactly. But we have this idea on the flip side that, well, I don't use the roads that much. So why should I have to pay for it? I think we need to move to a model..I think it's a much better model, that it is a more civic model that says I pay for the roads on the average. Everybody pays for the roads. And this moves us that direction. It's an education issue. And we start thinking about it as this, you know, these are arteries that we all use rather than, well, I don't. It's a particular New England thing. I shouldn't have to pay for it because I don't use it. You know, I'm from the West Coast originally.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, maybe we did in Seattle too, I'm not sure. I said we didn't. But at least we start thinking about these things as..I think we used to. We used to be proud of our highway system. Our interstate highway system even though I might never go in Montana, I would know that there was a road there that my tax dollars helped to build. If we could get back to that, if this use tax does that and, and I think it's an education issue that maybe we can build off of.

AS:

Let me switch to that topic because I want cognizant of our time here. What do you think the best way would be to educate the public about this? I walked through some slides and explained it. I'm not an expert in this area so I can't answer all of the questions that you thought about this. The best way to..

PARTICIPANT:

..some type of phasing, some type of phasing of...

PARTICIPANT:

..yeah, of the concept itself. And then actually in the phasing part of it when you start putting the system in you phase it in. It's not just an ultimate, we're going to start from one mile to this mile. That's it.

PARTICIPANT:

Right. Exactly. You phase it in over a period of time. And you make exceptions for certain types of criteria that might come up. I mean we have..look at our tax..the taxes we do. How many exceptions do we have in the tax code? You know, thousands of exceptions in the tax code. You could do it with this also.

PARTICIPANT:

You can't call it a new tax, cause the second you call it a new tax...in New Hampshire. Think of a new name.

PARTICIPANT:

But the other side of it is removing that gas tax as you're phasing this in you're phasing that out because otherwise it's a new tax.

PARTICIPANT:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

If it's a rebalancing and not a new tax...

PARTICIPANT:

Ah, rebalance is a good word.

PARTICIPANT:

I also think you need to tell people. I mean, like we had this whole thing in Nashua about the fact that for years, uh, our previous mayor fixed the sidewalks, did not do road maintenance. So now we are, have every major artery in Nashua has been torn up and they're trying (to catch up). In the meantime asphalt has gone up tremendously. So everybody is always annoyed all the time, until you start finding out, well, they really didn't do anything for six years. So there's costs to that. I think you can tell people, we have this many miles of road in New Hampshire. We have this many failing bridges. And you have to be really specific. And you know, we're a whole state. We're not just the people in Claremont, we're not just the people in Nashua. We are all in this together. And we have to look at the fairest way for everyone, not the fairest way for people who drive the most or the fairest way for the people who have the most () vehicles. The fairest way for everyone.

PARTICIPANT:

Taking that, piggy backing off of that, I feel like what could be dangerous, as any legislation moving forward, isn't it just attaches politically. So like this conversation has literally nothing to do with any other larger like partisan issue. But the moment that..it could be manipulated by local politicians.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Any politicians.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, any politicians.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm a Republican, I hate that. I'm a Democrat...I don't want that.

PARTICIPANT:

You could tell me..

PARTICIPANT:

It is tied into the budget, it is tied into the state budget. And the budget is a certain requirement regarding the budget. How it has to be produced and how it has to be projected. And the governor has responsibilities, the legislature has responsibilities. So someone's got to come up with kind of a balancing act there to say all right, who's going to be responsible for putting this forward, to () it forward. And who's going to support it? Because without the support it's not going anywhere. () we just continue on the road that we have right now which is not...as everyone saw, it's not right.

AS:

What this process that you're all a part of now is to help, help understand what the public would know or an informed public would think about this. The report that we write will go to the department of transportation and they'll be bringing this up at the state legislative committees that are making these decisions.

PARTICIPANT:

Have you seen what's his name, Andy Volinsky's presentation on how education is funding, funded in the state of New Hampshire, with his big stick and everything? The thing is, until I went to that, I had no idea of how it was actually done.

AS:

So a model similar to this?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah. I mean people in the room were just like what do you mean we only get this many dollars from the lottery? What do you mean that people in towns much smaller than this...have a higher tax rate.

PARTICIPANT:

How many people don't even know the name of their representative is?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Can everyone name their representative.

PARTICIPANT:

I can see that in an ad campaign...

PARTICIPANT:

...or their senator?

PARTICIPANT:

Man in the car, woman in the car, and you just have a microphone and say, um, are you fully funding the roads? Well, of course I am. Well, how many miles are you driving? Well, how much gas do you use? And then you do a quick calculation and you say you're actually using this amount that you didn't pay for. Just something that simple. Just to..you're not paying for what you're driving.

AS:

What about the idea of an online, a calculator on a web page where you put, plug in your model and car, miles you drive.

PARTICIPANT:

Why would I go on that?

PARTICIPANT:

Who clicks on ads?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, why would I go on that? Are you targeting Facebook? The demographic of people who use Facebook are older people. Are you thinking about Instagram, is that how you're doing it? You know what I mean? I think that like ad campaigns, like I would be curious about like who are these ad campaigns for? Because drivers range from six, like sixteen to ninety. But taxpayers range from eighteen on. So like who is the education program for? Because it depends on who you target. Is it run on television? How expensive is it to buy the media markets in certain areas in New Hampshire to fund something like that?

PARTICIPANT:

And the things are what are you going to say? How are you going to present them?

AS:

The language is what I'm curious about. What are the ideas and the language...

PARTICIPANT:

I like the rebalancing.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, you have to keep it simple. Because most people read. I mean if you really put like a million people in a room, most of those people are only going to read at a fifth grade level. So you have to really make sure that you're getting to your uneducated and to your most educated. And the way to get all the people that drive in one place to vote or to have an opinion on something is where they register their vehicle to begin with. So having a poll or a computer or () people today are going to go to this computer and we're going to..you need to look at these slides and educate yourself on this and vote. And that way everyone has the information in front of them that's...

AS:

We're not going to vote directly on this. Nobody in this room will unless you're in the legislature between now and next couple of months.

PARTICIPANT:

The other problems that you have too is the gas tax itself, not to get back on that for a second, but the gas tax is a big white elephant hanging out there. Because that's the way that they fund everything now, or a lot of..everything's funded. And that's something that can be changed at the whim of the legislature or the..

AS:

The last time..the last time it was changed it was 2014.

PARTICIPANT:

Right, because you can bring to bear pressure on your representative and or the House of Reps or the Senators, whoever has to vote on it, to push it up in the air to get it higher. But what we're talking about here I think is totally different. I think we're talking about a way of sustaining a proper costing on this problem which is the continual miles going up and no way to finance what we have to do to keep that from absorbing every dime that we have in the budget. By using a different type of payment strategy to make this work, as opposed to the white elephant of the gas tax which is sitting out there that everyone says oh, we'll just make the gas tax higher. And the problems will go away. I don't think they will.

PARTICIPANT:

Also, just telling people what they're paying for, right? Like I hate potholes. I go through New Hampshire winters. I understand that we need to pay for the roads. So making it focused on like this is the way we have to do it to pay the roads. The roads need to get fixed. And making it problem solving focused rather than like tax focused, how to turn their attention to we have a problem, here's the solution rather than here's a tax. I think there's going to be plenty of people ... I might be wrong, but I feel like there's going to be plenty of people who say why are we just replacing this lack of income with another source of income...instead of investing in trying to fix our, the way that we fix the roads.

PARTICIPANT:

Can you explain that more?

PARTICIPANT:

I just think..and I'm not an expert in paving, so don't count me on that. But I think a lot of the methods that we're using right now seem to be outdated and we're not using advanced technology () and materials and things that will actually have roads that will sustain themselves long term. Because if we don't fix that problem, the source of problems in our roads always need to be fixed, we're going to continuously run out of money. Because we're going to need to find different ways to tax everybody's money to fix them. So I think this plan, when spread out and you can educate the public on it, I think there's a way to do it in marketing, so there's definitely a way to do it. But you have to..for the other people who are going, wait, this just feels like a band aide, you have to have a back up plan of this is what we're trying to do as well to make sure that we don't run into this situation again.

PARTICIPANT:

I like that a lot. I feel like when you said that to me it makes me feel very comfortable.

PARTICIPANT:

Feel safe...?

PARTICIPANT:

I see billboards that say did you know you're driving on this road and not fully paying for it? OR something...no, I'm serious. Something like that that's very simple, that gets the message across. Because if you don't go that, that dirt simple, if you try to break it down like you just did, there's no time to do that. But you put it where the people are driving, and ...

PARTICIPANT:

And I think you also have to tug at people's emotions. Like these are our roads. This is our state.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, that's good.

PARTICIPANT:

We want this to be the best that it could be cause we're from New Hampshire and we're awesome. Like people love the pride they have in this state.

PARTICIPANT:

I hate to say it but fifty years ago New Hampshire roads were just about the best in New England, as far as the quality of the roads.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, you also should just say who uses the roads? Everybody. Even if you ride a bus you use the roads.

AS:

We kind of flogged this horse pretty good. Are there any other things related to this that you haven't had the opportunity to talk about or say?

PARTICIPANT:

It's a little weird but I have absolutely no problem paying a little extra. And a little by anywhere from a hundred to two hundred dollars a year extra for..as long as it's going to the right thing. As long as the money's being used to actually fix the roads and make things better. Because if you do the math, I've done the math and it's anywhere from five to eight hundred dollars I spend at Dunkin Donuts a year.

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

Comparisons like that...

PARTICIPANT:

I'd give a buck up of coffee a day.

PARTICIPANT:

So if you were to have an advertisement to like compared to something like that it's really not that much. And there's so many things nowadays. Everything in this world is changing. And modernizing. And there's a lot to keep up with. So this is just a part of it and we need to accept it.

PARTICIPANT:

But I think it's definitely getting ahead of the acceptance. So like the motorcycle scenario. You need to have an argument and plan ready for those people because they're not going to go quietly. And motorcycles are a huge part of... like Bike Week..

PARTICIPANT:

Well, it's our culture.

PARTICIPANT:

Our culture, yeah. We need to make sure that for () sustainability, we're supporting our culture in a way that people feel like they can drive what they want to drive. And a bike is going to take no, like skin of the road versus what our huge cars and trucks and things are taking off. So..

PARTICIPANT:

I wouldn't register my bike. I'd still ride it, I just wouldn't register it.

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

Cardboard license.

PARTICIPANT:

() do that?

PARTICIPANT:

Your tickets would be ().

PARTICIPANT:

They'd have to catch me.

PARTICIPANT:

I was going to say, you're faster than those cars are.

PARTICIPANT:

You know how hard it is to catch a motorcycle?

AS:

Any other last comments or last issues?

PARTICIPANT:

I have an issue with this because I have come to believe that this is putting a band aid on a situation that is going to be untenable in thirty to a hundred years. And we are not making any plans for the future. We're making plans for the past. So..

PARTICIPANT:

Well put.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm going to be the guy that says, look, I don't want to pay any more taxes than I have to. But I realize there's a problem here. I want to make sure the money that does get, that I do pay, goes to what its' supposed to be taking care of. Going to the roads and not other, not some other program.

PARTICIPANT:

A lock box.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah...a lock box.

PARTICIPANT:

A document and archive of where specifically the money goes.

PARTICIPANT:

That's the biggest issue, that's an issue.

AS:

You have a general () fund.

PARTICIPANT:

I don't want it to go to a general fund. It's going to go to highways specifically for highways because it gets lost.

AS:

My understanding of current gas tax is most of it goes to highway repairs, some of it goes to public transportation funding.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh yeah.

AS:

There is the political pressure to keep this one, you're right. Other areas, as you mentioned, with the lottery..the lottery doesn't really go for it.

PARTICIPANT:

Wouldn't it be nice if they told you the truth.

AS:

Any other questions?

PARTICIPANT:

I just am interested in...I don't know if you guys have our information now. But other states, I'd like to know what some of them are that have done this.

AS:

And that's one of the reasons they've come up with this model. These are the models that have been used or are being considered in in other states. We're not coming up with something here that is completely unique. And there a lot of smart people that are doing the same sort of stuff in other states, that are looking at the same..they're got the same problem. In some states it's a lot worse than..

PARTICIPANT:

How do they implement it in the other states so successfully?

PARTICIPANT:

() you can tax everything. Even your schools. () you're paying higher taxes..() by far.

PARTICIPANT:

Are there any states that have eliminated a gas tax and gone fully with the road usage method of payment for it entirely?

AS:

Uh, I'm not positive. I know Oregon was talking about doing this. I'm not positive that it's gone through. Because a lot of the same concerns came up in Oregon about the only way they could really do this is tracking the ..track exactly how much you've driven in the state versus out of the state and all those sorts of issues. That brings up technology problems, big brother problems, all that sort of stuff. I'm not positive of that but I know that was a state...

PARTICIPANT:

If you're going to have both gas tax and this reduce age tax you might as well separate it into two categories, keep that road usage tax away from electric cars. As long as it doesn't overpower gas tax.

AS:

That's kind of what Georgia and Michigan have done, where they've said they'll have a separate fee that electric vehicles will pay. Though they haven't done it yet as far as I know. So there are a lot of different models that are out there. Our goal in this research is to try to understand what people think about this idea, what objections they would have, what things they think are good about it, how it might be focused to deal with some of the issues you'd want to like..this is the first time we had somebody talking about motorcycles. We haven't had that before. These sorts of things are what the legislature is going to have to consider when they come up with the final piece that goes through.

PARTICIPANT:

So you take this information back to the transportation committee in the legislature?

AS:

This is going back to the Department of Transportation and the people that are working with them to come up with this. And then that'll go to the legislature. And then there will be discussions.

END

Claremont

AS:

Well, why don't we get started? The sooner we get started the sooner we can go home and I have to drive back to Durham tonight.

PARTICIPANT:

That's a long way..

AS:

I passed a consent form around, please take a look at it, any questions you have about that I can answer any questions. The key thing is that the research we're doing is for the state, the Department of Transportation. Nobody in this department will know who you are. In the report there will be no names used. We're recording it tonight simply because I can't remember everything. The transcript will give us an accurate reflection of what was said tonight. But even with that, as soon as we get everything in the transcript all of the tapes will be destroyed. The only thing we'll have left is a transcript with the questions I ask what somebody said in response. Nobody will know who says what. Not that anything we're covering tonight is any problem but these are the things we have to say. So my name's Andy Smith. I'm the Director of the University of New Hampshire Survey Center and I'm a professor in the political science department there. And I really want to thank you for coming tonight. If you think about transportation and transportation funding it's kind of a mundane, sort of boring thing and nobody ever really thinks about it. But I think by the end of the night you'll have a pretty interesting discussion.

PARTICIPANT:

Could I ask you a question before we get into ..you said that we're all getting fifty dollars?

AS:

Yes, we are.

PARTICIPANT:

And I just wondered where that funding came from?

AS:

This comes as part of the research funding to do this research. It's all part of the research project. With any sort of research, there are always costs involved. And for focus group research, in particular, in order to get people to come out and give up an hour, an hour and a half of their time it's really only fair to you and, I wouldn't say compensated necessarily but we appreciate the time that you spent.

PARTICIPANT:

So it's not coming from DOT?

AS:

From who?

PARTICIPANT:

The Department of Transportation?

AS:

Not directly, no.

PARTICIPANT:

..because they're probably crying..they're crying () mouths, so I'm wondering.

AS:

Yes. So the purpose of this group tonight ... First of all, has anybody ever been in a focus group before? You've been, a couple of you have been in focus groups? Basically it's a discussion where I'm going to ask questions and I want to get input from all of you. And if you want to respond to what somebody else said, great, please do that. The ground rules are that since we're recording it I want to be able to hear what people say. So try not to talk over top of each other. Try to talk one at a time. Try to speak loudly enough that it can be picked up. I think the, since they stopped the Zumba lesson or whatever they were doing over here earlier it's pretty quiet in this room now. We're going to use just first names. I'm going to ask everybody's first names so I can talk with you tonight. Occasionally I'll move the discussion along to the next question. We've got a few questions that we want to go over. I'm also going to show some information and ask you to respond to it. There are no right or wrong answers. I might occasionally ask the group if you agree with something or do you disagree. I'd like to start off by getting a sense of who's in the room tonight. Tell me your first name, the town you live in, how long you've lived in New Hampshire and how many cars or trucks do you have. So, I'm Andy, I live in Durham. I've been in New Hampshire twenty years and I've got three cars.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm S (female). I live in Grantham. I've been in New Hampshire since 2007 and I have one car.

PARTICIPANT:

Um, I'm S (female). I live in New Hampshire for seventy five years. And I have, my family has..yes? My family has four cars, one truck and one tractor.

AS:

What town do you live in?

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, sorry. I live in Stoddard.

AS:

Stoddard?

PARTICIPANT:

I'm M (female). I'm from Claremont. And I have one car. I've been in New Hampshire off and on for fifty one years.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm L (female). I live in Claremont. I've been in New Hampshire for about forty three years and I have one car.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm S (female). I live in Claremont. I've lived here, I've lived in New Hampshire for sixty six years. And I have two cars.

PARTICIPANT:

My name's J (male). I've been living in or around New Hampshire for the past seventeen years. I currently own one car.

AS:

What town do you live in?

PARTICIPANT:

I'm from Claremont.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm D (male). I've lived in New Hampshire now ten years. And I have one vehicle.

AS:

And what town do you live in?

PARTICIPANT:

Claremont.

PARTICIPANT:

My name's S (male). I've lived in Claremont all my life, I'm fifty three. I have a company so we, I don't know if that's the total you're looking for?

AS:

Think of your household..?

PARTICIPANT:

Household then, uh, four. Four vehicles and one tractor.

AS:

Everybody's got a tractor. Winter coming up I think we'll need to get them out soon. I'd like to start off our discussion tonight by getting an understanding of what you know or what you understand about how the state funds transportation in the state. That is broadly speaking building and maintenance of state roads, uh, some of the other public transportation things that it funds as well. So how do you think the state funds its transportation system?

PARTICIPANT:

Tolls?

AS:

Tolls? Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Taxes.

AS:

What kind of taxes?

PARTICIPANT:

Uh, state taxes. Or income tax.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah. There's also the gas tax.

AS:

Gas tax?

PARTICIPANT:

Gas tax, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Federal grants.

AS:

Feds, yeah. Federal.

PARTICIPANT:

Towns.

AS:

And how are the towns...

PARTICIPANT:

I think they have to cooperate and pay part of, if something is done, if the bridge is built they have to pay a part of it. The state pays a part.

PARTICIPANT:

Your registrations.

AS:

Registration, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Fines.

PARTICIPANT:

Tickets, fines.

AS:

So, if you think about the way it's funded, who do you think is paying for most of the costs of the transportation system?

PARTICIPANT:

Theoretically it would be the taxpayer.

AS:

The taxpayer. Are there any groups of taxpayers, the people that are paying more or less?

PARTICIPANT:

Truck drivers.

AS:

Truck drivers?

PARTICIPANT:

Our company is...our company is in trucking so we pay highway use tax. Federal highway use tax as well as roads, toll...EZ pass plus. There's also a federal excise tax when you purchase a

truck over a certain weight. That automatically goes into the federal government, which we assume comes back to infrastructure.

AS:

Who else is paying more than their fair share?

PARTICIPANT:

Homeowners.

AS:

Homeowners?

PARTICIPANT:

Mm hmm.

AS:

So somebody mentioned gas tax. Does anybody know what the state gasoline tax rate is or how much per gallon, when you buy a gallon of gas what's, how much per gallon is?.

PARTICIPANT:

Unless you go to look it up you, it's kind of hard to tell.

AS:

Does anybody think you know?

PARTICIPANT:

Eighteen something.

AS:

Is it eighteen cents?

PARTICIPANT:

I don't know. It just went up four cents, a couple..a little while ago. Some...it was something () that.

AS:

Would it be fair to say, before I asked you this questions, you probably hadn't thought about what the gas tax is?

PARTICIPANT:

twenty five percent, maybe?

AS:

Twenty five percent?

PARTICIPANT:

It's cheaper than Vermont.

AS:

So if you think about the gas tax, do you think that's a fair way to fund transportation in the state?

PARTICIPANT:

I think it lends a little bit of fairness because it's based on use.

PARTICIPANT:

Yes....

PARTICIPANT:

I would agree.

AS:

So if you think about that, who do you think, though, is not paying for road conditions?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, I believe the current outcry is with the rise in electric vehicles.

AS:

Electric?

PARTICIPANT:

Although I kinda think ..that's half the reason some people go into that is because they don't have to pay..this, that or the other. But I think...I suppose that's a different discussion altogether.

AS:

We will come back to that.

PARTICIPANT:

Okay, fair enough.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, we don't have very much public transportation in this neck of the woods. Um, so you know, if, if we were riding..if we had a lot of people who took buses and public transportation then..that would make some sense. But we don't, we don't offer that to people, so...

PARTICIPANT:

Right. People who don't have cars don't pay that much in gas.

PARTICIPANT:

Right. They have to scurry for rides to some place, yeah.

POWERPOINT 1

AS:

So what I'd like to do is show you some information. This was compiled by the state so hopefully it's as accurate as it can get here. So ... this is where the money's currently coming from. About forty percent of all of the money's that come to fund states, roads and bridges and transportation system, come from the federal government. About forty percent. About thirty three percent, so a third of it comes from the state gas tax. Seventeen percent from fees, and sales of cars when you sell the car, there's money that goes back into the state. These would be your registration fees and so forth that you pay every year. And then finally about ten percent comes from the other. The other are those fines and tickets and so forth that you get. There's a couple other sources of money as well.

PARTICIPANT:

Where are the tolls?

AS:

Tolls fund just the roads that use tolls. So, if we take out the federal government money, the forty percent from the federal government, this is the state breakdown. Just more than half, fifty five percent of all the dollars that are raised by the state for roads come from the gas tax. It's the single biggest driver. Thirty percent comes from sales and registration fees, etc. And about sixteen percent from tickets and fines and the other assorted little things. So that's, that's where things are coming from right now. Again, this does not include the tolls which are going into the turnpike fund which is a separate piece.

This is the issue that the state is facing and why we're doing this research now. This is the gas tax revenues. And this is not coming from heavy trucks. Heavy trucks have their whole own system of how that is funded with diesel tax, diesel fuel. But for light trucks and cars, this is what's going on. You can see we've had relatively flat revenues for a while here. On the

projected revenues are expected to go down fairly significantly from somewhere around a hundred and thirty million dollars per year down to close to a hundred million dollars per year. And the gas tax rate has been level. The decline is largely based on more efficient cars. If you have cars that are more efficient, either electric vehicles or cars that get thirty, forty, fifty miles a gallon in the hybrid cars, they don't buy as much gas. And if they're not buying as much gas, the revenue from the gas tax goes down significantly. That's the big concern here. It's not because we're driving less. In fact with the little dip here during the recession, but it's picked up. And we're expected to be driving more. This is the VMT, the vehicle miles of travel. It's projected to go up somewhere upwards of sixteen billion miles of travel on New Hampshire's roads by the year 2030. A lot of travelling. We're using the roads more but revenues are going down. And a big reason for it is the miles per gallon. This blue line here is all light duty vehicles. This is the average miles per gallon currently and projected into the future for all light duty vehicles. You can see it's going up by the year 2030. It's going to be upwards of thirty miles a gallon. A lot of that is because new vehicles have significantly better gas mileage than older vehicles. And the federal mandate goes up to thirty five miles a gallon for new automobiles by the year 2025. If that goes up that way, you can see the miles per gallon is going to get drug up as people replace older, less fuel efficient vehicles with more fuel efficient vehicles as we go forward. These trends are the drivers of what we're looking at right now. Another thing that we talked about was electric vehicles. Electric vehicles right now are in this unusual phase in that we don't really know specifically where they're going to go except there are going to be more of them. There a couple of projections displayed here. The lowest one is that by 2030 about ten percent of all car sales will be electric vehicles. The higher estimates is upwards of thirty percent of all vehicles are going to be electric vehicles. So it's going to be somewhere in that range there. But it's not going down. We're going to have more vehicles that are more fuel efficient, or electric vehicles not using gas at all, which means that major source of funding for our roads, the gas tax, is not going to be an effective funder for the roads. So, I want to give everybody this idea to think about. And we'll talk some more about the way the roads are funded now to see if there's any changes that you have with your thinking about how fair it is. After seeing this, do you have any specific thoughts that you see from this information about how transportation is funded in the state? Any things that jump out, any conclusions or aha moments that you see from this that you might not have thought of before?

PARTICIPANT:

I think it's really too bad that we depend on gasoline so much. To keep our roads going. So that's a problem.

PARTICIPANT:

We have to find a way to tie funding to energy as a whole () consumption of what we () energy ().

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, I'm thinking about the electric cars. I think they ought to be doing something to make an impact.

AS:

Any other thoughts? So the current system...do you think now that you've seen some of this, is it fair to all drivers?

PARTICIPANT:

Probably not.

AS:

In what way would you say it's not?

PARTICIPANT:

In the sense that the one..if we are relying at least on that percentage for the gas tax, the number of drivers not contributing to that will all create a bit of a whole in the budget.

PARTICIPANT:

Also as a sales tax it's a regressive tax. So even though it's a use tax which is fair its' going to fall more heavily proportioned on less profitable businesses ().

AS:

Why would you say that?

PARTICIPANT:

Because they're going to spend a large part of their income. so ().

PARTICIPANT:

() start getting up into the thirty percent it becomes a much () factor. And also just, at the same time it's discouraging people from using you know, more..less damaging fossil fuel vehicles, but they still are wanting the same roads and have them maintained at least as well. So somehow you could find an equitable way ..maybe it's a cost per mile or () somebody may have to become a system to somehow people, based on mileage, somehow. Maybe that's when you register cars inspected, or some system in place..it's still an even fair because if you drove a hundred thousand miles per year that would show up. But if you only drove five thousand, you know, not hold the burden of some...

PARTICIPANT:

And that's..

PARTICIPANT:

I thought one of the states was working on, maybe it was Vermont.

AS:

Every state in the country is looking at this same issue..

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, but I meant you know, on ..instead of paying all this excess fees, but charge you for how many miles you drive ().

AS:

Oregon is one state that I believe has looked at that and want to go ahead with it. I'm not sure if they have yet. And we can talk, talk a little bit later about what are the positives and negatives on some of these different proposals that are out there. Um, but yes, this is not unique to New Hampshire. Every state in the country is facing the same issue.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that we already have something in place, as Scott was saying, that would enable us to figure out how much each person drives, that each vehicle is driven once a year. And then when you pay your registration that would be part of the fee.

PARTICIPANT:

They don't collect information on mile..on your, the mileage of the vehicle when they do the registration, do they?

PARTICIPANT:

No, they don't but they..all that stuff is, it would just be another question on the..

AS:

They do when they inspect it but those are..

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, okay.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, when they inspect your car. But it wouldn't have to be. I think it would be an easy thing.

AS:

So who do you think is benefitting from the current system?

PARTICIPANT:

Everybody cause our road's ().

PARTICIPANT:

Our roads are crummy. [laughs]

AS:

Who do you think is benefitting more than others?

PARTICIPANT:

Tourists. The tourists.

AS:

Tourists?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

Tourists? Unless they buy gas here.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, but...

PARTICIPANT:

() benefit more than someone who didn't, people who don't have a car...maybe carpool or ride with someone else might not be...

PARTICIPANT:

People who ride bicycles for the use of roads.

PARTICIPANT:

I would imagine the actual wear that bicycles put on the road would be like significantly less than a car would.

PARTICIPANT:

Right, but you still have to have the road in good shape to ride your bike.

PARTICIPANT:

Fair enough.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, certainly a hitchhiker must truly benefit.

PARTICIPANT:

I think we're getting into the fringes there now.

PARTICIPANT:

() always ultimately pays off the oil companies. I mean you're with, maybe the roads themselves. It's just all ..petroleum based crap.. I mean they haven't really looked at recycling things.

PARTICIPANT:

They recycle the stuff that they tear off the road and grind that back up and..

PARTICIPANT:

...yeah, I know but I mean other things like plastic or whatever, instead of tar.

PARTICIPANT:

Some places they use, they use ground up tires..

AS:

We mentioned electric vehicles. Do you think they're paying their fair share?

PARTICIPANT:

As of current, probably not.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, they're not doing all the harm.

PARTICIPANT:

Right...() they're much more costly to purchase.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I think they're more..it costs more so that you're paying more when you register or car every year and your..taxes.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, but that's a myth with all the electric cars right now. They're saving the environment. When you're charging that car up what are you doing? You're using power, power...more..electricity.

PARTICIPANT:

You're right.

PARTICIPANT:

All () we phase out coal, that'd be better.

AS:

So you mentioned trucks. Do you think trucks are paying their share?

PARTICIPANT:

Oh yeah.

AS:

You guys are in that business. Now, don't be swayed by them ... what do you think about the trucks? Do you think they're paying their share?

PARTICIPANT:

I truly don't know how much trucks pay. So, I mean..I..

PARTICIPANT:

I don't know, what's fair?

AS:

And to be fair, trucks do the most damage to the road.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

Cars generally don't do really any damage so much to the roads as heavier vehicles. So, the projections for the revenue for the gas tax are projected to decline from about a hundred and

forty five million dollars, total, in 2018 down to under a hundred million dollars by 2040. Do you think that relying on gasoline tax is a sustainable way to fund highway construction?

PARTICIPANT:

No.

AS:

In general agreement? No?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

So, I showed you some slides here. We had a discussion and talked about this. How would you try to explain this to a neighbor or a friend or somebody you worked with, this situation?

PARTICIPANT:

I think it's similar to.. Vermont has a bigger problem because it's magnified over there. Less population, more people try to do the right thing, so to speak. And no one thinks about the infrastructure and its required for all things () one. Like solar power in Vermont is bigger, bigger thing. And it got so out of hand that they had to restrict the amount of solar you could have because people were making so much solar power, selling it back to the grid..there's not enough money to support the power lines that everyone needs to really make the whole system work. So starting..it's a very similar situation to this. So we've got to find a way ...we don't want to discourage people from doing things that require, that make less pollution but that we do still want power lines and we still want roads. So something else has almost got to pay ..

AS:

Do you think this would be a hard argument to make? Suppose you had a neighbor that says, well, the gas tax is too high. I think I don't want to pay anything more, I've got myself an electric vehicle so I don't have to pay that gas tax. How would you convince somebody like that that there's a problem here?

PARTICIPANT:

I would take them for a ride on our roads.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, if they want to drive on the same roads and have the same snow plow, clear the roads, so somehow it's gotta be based on per mile. I feel like..if someone wants to really limit their riding around and their trips to the store and () fishing. You can get rewarded by you don't drive as

many miles. But someone that does, or part of their living is driving, then you can expect to pay more of the share. Cause they're using the roads more.

AS:

How about the rest of you?

PARTICIPANT:

Sort of like () said, I'd just have them go for a ride from where we live up to exit 14. Your wonderful vehicle is probably ruined now just after going over..

PARTICIPANT:

Or take them to Alstead and go to the () Springs which has been closed now for maybe nine and a half or ten years already. And they're not even on the list to be funded this year so it's another ten years when they're not going to be, have that bridge open. You know, think about it..a kid gets hurt..in order to get to the hospital on the other side of that river you have to all the way () around.

PARTICIPANT:

I () here. I think Vermont kinda gets a better short stick on, on some of this. Because down here in Southern New Hampshire, especially if you live along the river the close..the closest highway you got is 91. 91 you have access to pretty much the entirety of Vermont and New Hampshire from their, at least fifty percent of each. I know that I've put a hundred and thirty six thousand miles in the last four to five years because I got my brand new. And that's what my odometer reads. And most of my driving has al been highway miles. And I go up, up and down 91, 89. Ninety percent of my drivings in Vermont. So...

PARTICIPANT:

So it doesn't account for people living rurally and having to travel long distances to get to work or..people living in cities and...idling in their cars for...

POWERPOINT 2

AS:

What I'd like to do now is show you a few more slides about a proposal that the state is thinking about. The Department of Transportation is thinking about this. This is only a proposal from the DOT and consultants that are looking at this and what's going on in other states. It goes to the legislature. There are committees that are looking at this right now. The information that we're gathering tonight, and the other focus groups that we're doing across the state, is going to go to that committee as well. They're looking at ways to address this problem. So this is one of the

ways it's being proposed. It doesn't mean this is going to come out looking like this. But it's a proposal. So it's what's called a Road User Fee. And what it tries to do is to make up that difference between the cars that get a low gas mileage but pay a lot in gas tax and those cars that are much more fuel efficient, that get higher gas mileage but they don't pay much gas tax. Right now the average gas tax paid, if you got a twenty mile per gallon vehicle over the course of the year, about a hundred and twenty five dollars is what you're paying over the course of the year in a gas tax. If you have a car that gets less than twenty miles a gallon your road user fee, the proposed user fee, would be quite low. Ten dollars or something like that over the course of a year. If you have a more efficient car, it'd be a little bit higher. And as you go up these ten mile per gallon increments, the fee goes up to the point where if you've got an electric car, you're going to be paying the average of what somebody would be paying with a typical car out there. So, the idea isn't to make it so that any one person wouldn't be paying. It's just trying to balance off that gas tax paid, that you're paying right now with the road user fee, to take into account those people that have, they're driving just as much but they're not paying the same, same amount for maintenance and construction cost. So that's basically what it looks like. The goal is to fill that revenue shortfall. The current historic revenue is projected to go down. This is what the revenue would be, including the road user fee and the gas tax. It will go up somewhat. But it would get up back up to 145 million dollars which, still isn't going to make the state flush, as you had mentioned. The timeline is quite long for getting a project done. I live over in the seacoast and Route 16 from Dover down to Portsmouth is in its eighth year of construction because they didn't have the money to pay for it all at once. The road user fee is not designed to really increase revenue so much as it to keep that about that 145 million dollar range. Here's how it would work if you look at annual costs by the miles per gallon of a vehicle. This includes your annual fuel cost, not your mileage. Not just your tax, but your annual fuel cost. How much it's going to pay you to fill your gas tank, plus the user fee. Assuming that you average about twelve thousand miles a year. If you've got a car with low mileage, under twenty, you're going to paying close to two thousand bucks a year to drive twelve thousand miles just for the cost of your gasoline and the gas tax ... what you're paying to fill your car up. As you go across here, you get to forty miles a gallon, you're paying a lot less. You're paying only about seven hundred and fifty dollars in gas and tax, but the road user fee would bring costs up a bit, about fifty dollars. It balances that out a bit. And if you get all the way out to somebody over here at eighty miles a gallon, which is essentially an electric vehicle, they would be paying a little bit more but it's not a significant amount. And the reason that they've designed it this way is that we don't want to discourage people from getting more fuel efficient cars. We don't want to make it so you're going to be paying an enormous amount more money. You'll still be saving a whole lot compared to a car that's getting twenty miles a gallon. You're paying close to fifteen hundred bucks a year for gas, to get around. Even with the road user fee you'd still be only paying around five hundred bucks.

PARTICIPANT:

At that point it would get more affordable..

AS:

To maintain the maintenance levels and the construction levels that they anticipated. And just one more slide here that looks at this. The maximum amount that you would pay is here for the road user fee. That would be if you were in an electric car. But you could say that if you've got an electric vehicle there's still typically some gasoline that gets used, some costs that are involved. You're still going to pay a lot less than you would be if a car had forty miles a gallon all the way up to here. If you got a car that gets fifteen miles a gallon, you're off the charts in how much you're paying. But again, this is just another way of looking at this. The state doesn't want to disincent people from having more fuel efficient cars. If you have a less fuel efficient car you're still going to paying a lot more than people who have more fuel efficient cars but it still would try to fill that gap. So, after my going through this brief description, and again, this is a proposal, this isn't necessarily going to be the one that makes it through the sausage grinder of Concord. What are your initial thoughts about using the road user fee model for funding transportation, construction maintenance?

PARTICIPANT:

More fair.

AS:

You think it would be fairer? How many think it would be fairer than the current model?

PARTICIPANT:

Definitely.

AS:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Very similar to the truck model. Cause we have a road use tax in each state, that you report how many miles you drove on their roads. So they take a piece of New Hampshire..they broke it down so when you buy a gallon of diesel in New Hampshire and then you drove it all in Vermont, you're talking about kind of..they don't do that with gas. But if I do that with a big truck, Vermont gets a portion from if that..

AS:

Yeah, I think with trucks they actually have a little transponder in your car that knows where you're going.

PARTICIPANT:

You have to report it yourself. But essentially everyone with a truck is doing this right now. And you're getting four to eight miles per gallon. So it's, it's expensive but it is , it does seem like it's kind of the fairest, based on usage.

AS:

Would you support this sort of a model?

PARTICIPANT:

A use model?

AS:

Yeah, a road user fee model?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

AS:

Anybody have any objections to it or think, things that you think would be problematic with it?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, I think it should probably be made a note that...you have to communicate that we're not encouraging people to drive less fuel efficient vehicles, because oh, you drive..you drive more efficient vehicles, you're going to have to pay more..blah, blah..but it's like there's a whole cultural component to having a truck that I've seen in the last seventeen years. It's like, I'm a country boy I've got to have, I've got to have my Ford F150 despite the fact that I do nothing with it. It's, I've always had a bit of a gripe with that. So forgive me if I'm a little salty. But, but it's like, yeah. I had something else but I forgot what it was.

P;

And they're rougher on roads and they use more gas. And people just cruise endlessly for no reason.

PARTICIPANT:

Although I suppose it's more a young man thing than, than anything else, but yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

But they would pay more..

AS:

They would pay more still because of their gas and mileage.

PARTICIPANT:

I guess my point is to probably communicate to () misconception, that's all.

AS:

That's a good point.

PARTICIPANT:

So if you had an older car and you were struggling to make ends meet, would you end up being penalized with this, under this system? And if so would there be some kind of way that you could get, you know, like gas stamps or something like that?

AS:

I would say, I don't know...

PARTICIPANT:

You understand what I'm saying?

AS:

Yeah, I understand your point. Let me paraphrase. You're saying that if you can't afford a new car with high mileage and you're driving an older car that doesn't get good mileage, are you going to be penalized by the imposition of any extra road user fee? I think the answer would be probably not much. It's really going to fall more so on people with higher mileage vehicles. This slide back here shows that if you got a car that's only getting say twenty miles a gallon, your road user fee is going to be fairly small. And it's going to fall primarily on people with higher mileage vehicles than lower mileage vehicles. But that is a good point. That would have to be thought of.

PARTICIPANT:

It's a concept that we have no control over, but if you could somehow get control of the energy industry to some degree, stabilize, everybody would pay four or five dollars a gallon for an extended period of time two year ago. Our fuel cost went to the roof. But you still had travelling, () do your job. And.

AS:

And the gasoline tax didn't increase.

PARTICIPANT:

So it does show the worse case scenario if you had to add forty five percent. Fuel, diesel fuel prices now are down almost fifty percent of what they were at one point. So, conceivably if you had to add to the gas tax as well, as I'm () this, most consumers would they would still buy gas. This seems like the fairest across the board.

AS:

One thing I didn't tell you, you asked that question of the gas tax. Currently it's twenty four cents a gallon, roughly. The federal gas tax I think is around forty cents a gallon. So the feds take a much higher chunk of it than the state does.

PARTICIPANT:

I guess the only other thing that comes to me about a possible downside of the part () what you're saying is that also this state is aging really rapidly. And people will probably drive less as they age.

PARTICIPANT:

Right, so that will have to be measurable.

AS:

Which, again, cut into the gas tax revenues.

PARTICIPANT:

Which would stop degrading the infrastructure as fast but some of it's already pretty much there..

AS:

It's not the cars that are doing the degrading of the roads.

PARTICIPANT:

Trucks..

PARTICIPANT:

Truckers are getting older too...

PARTICIPANT:

Vermont made the top ten list of worst places for your tire. One of the major factors is how poor their roads are and how much of an effect it has on the value of your personal vehicle.

AS:

I drove over Route 7 a couple times this year. ..

PARTICIPANT:

There was a horrific accident on Route 17.

AS:

Really?

PARTICIPANT:

A young woman killed. Car left the road and struck three other vehicles and she was killed.

AS:

So we talked about other states. Several other states have introduced. Michigan and Georgia introduced flat fees for electric vehicles and hybrid vehicles.

PARTICIPANT:

Flat? What is that?

AS:

An additional fee ... kind of like a road user fee but it wouldn't be based on your mileage so much. They just basically said if you have an electric car it's going to cost you, I'm making up this number, but it's going to cost you five hundred dollars a year for a usage fee for the roads for an electric vehicle. What do you think of that idea?

PARTICIPANT:

Collection would be difficult. How would they collect that?

AS:

At registration, registration time. That's how this would be implemented as well. I've got a 2002 Toyota Camry. When I go to the, to register my car they'd be able to say well, you get twenty five miles a gallon on that car. That's what your road user fee is going to be based on. If I've got a smaller car that gets higher mileage, it may not be particular for the way you drive or that your particular car, but on average for that car, this is what you're going to get. So that's how they

would implement that. And that's how the states of Georgia and Michigan are implementing this fee for electric vehicles. They say you got an electric vehicle here, pay this much.

PARTICIPANT:

I bet the rate of (screwdriver) transfers went up twenty percent in each state.

AS:

To change the odometer?

PARTICIPANT:

I think that would sound..it's probably fair to figure out what it's cost, but it put a negative connotation to electric vehicles and () discourage people. And electric trucks are a big thing..in a couple ().

AS:

So if you think about this, and again, I'm not an expert. I'm a political science professor. I'm not a transportation engineer. But if you think of the model, the road user fee model that is proposed here, graduated by miles per gallon for your vehicle versus just that flat fee for electric and hybrid vehicles, which one do you think is more fair?

PARTICIPANT:

It's based on usage. A flat fee is going to () fair or it is unfair to some. Someone else is going ...if a guy that puts a hundred thousand miles on an electric car is going to get heck of a deal. Versus the ten thousand, spends that ..so maybe this..in my opinion, would be much more fair.

AS:

So what do you think? If this is something that's proposed, what do you think are going to be the most difficult challenges for the legislature to face when they're trying to sell this to their constituents? The new tax?

PARTICIPANT:

Nobody likes the idea of a new tax. I'm just thinking along the lines of ...a bit of a social disparity. Those who are, might be more affluent, who can pick up a new or electric vehicle, at the current price tag. They might be able to say, okay, it's a hundred and twenty five, it's an extra hundred and fifty bucks. You know, no big deal. But somebody else who might be at a lower tax bracket, who wants to get into that ...they see all the upfront costs and they're like I can't afford that. It's just a little bit of a..

AS:

So the problem with the disincentive is going to be a challenge.

PARTICIPANT:

It's (not) a huge disincentive but it provides some disincentive.

AS:

So one of the things that I thought might be an idea is a website where you plug in a 2002 Camry with a V-6 engine. And the site calculated how much you would pay. Would that be something that would be useful?

PARTICIPANT:

Very much so.

PARTICIPANT:

To be able to see what you as a taxpayer would pay for your own situation, that would definitely be helpful.

PARTICIPANT:

I think it would be helpful because not only could you see what you would pay, you would also be able to see what she would pay, I would pay, you would pay..and our different cars and you'd get an idea of the fairness or the unfairness of it.

PARTICIPANT:

And also what you'd like to replace your current car with..

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

How else do you think it would be useful to communicate to other people about?

PARTICIPANT:

I think it's a general conversation of people on a regular basis about the condition of roads. Sounds like a conversation starter, that there's bigger problem looming and that's, we already can't maintain the roads where we'd like them to be. And the income is dropping. So we need to find out what (.). Everybody wants better roads.

AS:

Right now the state is putting more of its money into the major roads, like 101 or 125. The ones that really get a lot of traffic. But the smaller state roads...

PARTICIPANT:

As you go farther north, above the Notch..you get..

AS:

Farther north and west.

PARTICIPANT:

Even though they say just because you don't get a lot of traffic on the roads, that seems to be the driving force or at least what they say the driving force...you still have all the damage from the winter that, frost and so..it's still going to degrade even if the amount of traffic isn't heavy.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, the weather's worse.

PARTICIPANT:

There are more log trucks, more loggers.

PARTICIPANT:

() and stuff are less intense. The weather's pretty much..

PARTICIPANT:

Forget the traffic, just the shifting of the air from the seasons is enough to damage quite a few roads.

PARTICIPANT:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

Never mind major disasters like the occasional tropical storm that runs up here.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, the size of the roads.

AS:

So we kind of beat this up. Are there any other things about this topic that you think, or do you have questions about or you'd like to know more about? Or that you'd like to say about this, that you'd like people in Concord to hear about, we haven't talked about or discussed today?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, whenever something has to collect more information than it needs collecting, makes () process, it doesn't mean that there's going to be this huge constituency angry. I would expect they're going to say why do I have to..

AS:

I don't think it would be the auto inspectors that would be angry.

PARTICIPANT:

But there's always..whenever you change the way you collect information, whether you change in the survey form or you're asking with the questions, there's () rough patches.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, especially nowadays with the stigma of information collection. It's like, oh, all my information on all ...like...

AS:

That does bring about a point. In some of our earlier talks, you brought it up today about how your mileage is being tracked. And where you are is being tracked. What do you think of the idea somebody mentioned in Oregon. Oregon wanted to put devices on vehicles that would track where you went, see how many miles you drove. Do you think that's something that would be of interest here in New Hampshire?

PARTICIPANT:

No.

AS:

Interstate trucking has that sort of stuff.

PARTICIPANT:

In the state of Live Free or Die?

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

Tried....

PARTICIPANT:

That's about ..that's about to go over just as well as some other things that have exploded in the last couple of weeks.

PARTICIPANT:

No matter how () people will...

PARTICIPANT:

That's reporting on exactly where you are when you are...who you're with..

PARTICIPANT:

They'd rather walk.

AS:

You know how some insurance companies are advertising that you use their special driver program you could save money. They put a device on your car. Essentially what they're doing is see how far you drive, how fast you drive, things like that.

PARTICIPANT:

Trucks have that...they have a lot of..and cars do too, but you're getting to close to some..oh, no....

PARTICIPANT:

Most of the systems, as we () do make almost, across the board, people are better drivers, more conservative with acceleration and braking. And all that stuff is already in everyone's car. If they really want to know where somebody is, yeah...and in your car...we saw that download. Just cause you get a USB plug in your dash, () plug to your phone. Every phone call, texts, every,..if they want..

PARTICIPANT:

That's another good point because I've had to have ..I've had my location enabled for a Fitbit on the last couple of months. And so along with that I noticed on my Google Maps the, it's been giving me kind of a..this is where you've been today. And so it's like, okay, I can see, I can see all the information, all the roads I've driven on those particular days. Which brings up the point, we don't need the transponders, they're already here. But at that point it's more of an optic than a forced..it gives the information.

PARTICIPANT:

I resisted that for a long time and our company just..and it is, it's an information collection. And when they come to audit your speeding, violating, anything, it's all there. They can see everywhere you went, how many..in trucking they track your hours in service. You're not

supposed to truck..not supposed to drive over a certain amount...all these stipulations that make it possible to, you know, twenty four seven (fitness). But at the end of the day it's so much easier. I have an EZ Pass, it's more efficient than stop and start and getting money out. But some of the stuff that we resist that I realize just actually makes us more efficient, pushes you to do just do it correctly ().And you can track most of this and not really invade other people's privacy. You don't really care where they went. You're either in New Hampshire or you're not. That's how many miles you went.

AS:

That issues came up a lot more closer to the Seacoast where you've got people living along the Massachusetts border and working in Massachusetts. They say I live up here, I register my car in New Hampshire but I do eighty percent of my driving in Massachusetts. Why should I be paying for all of New Hampshire? I should be paying for the Massachusetts roads. People in Massachusetts said absolutely you should.

PARTICIPANT:

That's how trucks do it. So they may even come up with that, a version ..

AS:

My sense is they likely won't this time around because I think that would be too big of a change in a short time. They're looking at this road user fee as a balance between shifting to a complete system in which we track where people are driving and how much they're driving in what state to maybe getting rid of the gas tax completely to another system that's relying completely on the gas tax. So kind of in the middle.

PARTICIPANT:

If you get to that point, the next level, that would also bring every out of state's miles, that revenue would come with it. If you could get to that.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, right..

PARTICIPANT:

Right now, like you said, that might be too much.

PARTICIPANT:

It might be but if you say the..

PARTICIPANT:

..it'd be the fairest way.

PARTICIPANT:

It would be the fairest and the infrastructure is in place to do it.

PARTICIPANT:

And a person, like you said, lives on the border, drives in Massachusetts, they're () their fair share. Hopefully everybody got along ().

PARTICIPANT:

Well, at that point you'd be talking about a dissolution of the current system and moving towards more of a federal system that just kind of umbrellas everything. But that's, I supposed that's a whole different conversation.

AS:

If not, I want to thank you very much for your time. I hope it was interesting. You really don't think about this stuff as interesting but something that we see and do and use every day. When you kind of realize what's going on with ..

PARTICIPANT:

And complain about it every day.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, living in a rural state you have to use the roads .. nothing is really close.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm actually a little bit dismayed. I feel like this conversation just got started.

END

Plymouth

AS:

Why don't we get started.... I'm going to pass out a sheet of paper to you. This is a consent form. Basically, for all research that we do at UNH that involves people we have to inform you of what it is that we're going to do, how that would involve you, what your role is, what you can do and not do. Basically, it informs you of any consequences that might occur from this. Since we're not going to be using any names in the report, I don't think there are really any consequences. Most importantly, the topic that we're going to discuss, I don't think is anything that is going to be problematic for anyone. We're going to talk about transportation and transportation funding in the state. Has anybody ever been in a focus group before? You've been a focus group before. So

if anybody's been in a seminar, a college seminar or anything like that -- where you're in a classroom and there's a professor there who wants to get everybody to talk, to see what it is they know...well, the nice thing about this compared to a seminar is there's no grade that comes out of it. There are no right or wrong answers. There was no material that you had to read in advance.

[someone comes in]

AS:

I was just saying that this focus groupit's going to be just first names that are going to be used in the discussion tonight. When we write the report there will be no names used. It's about transportation. The state Department of Transportation has commissioned us to do this research for them. The information that we're going to be gathering for them, .and this is the fourth one of these focus groups we've done across the state, will go up to the legislature and become part of that discussion when they're deciding ways of funding transportation, expansion, maintenance and so forth in the state. So your voices will actually be quite important in helping the state understand what it should do. My name's Andy Smith. I'm the Director of the UNH Survey Center. I'm a professor in the Political Science Department. First of all I want to thank everybody for coming tonight. It's not the nicest night of the year. Again, the purpose of the discussion is to talk about your knowledge and preferences for the way construction and maintenance of state roads are funded. So, how New Hampshire goes about funding state roads. We're not going to really talk about town roads or the interstates or the toll roads or things like that. Those are all funded through different mechanisms. These are the things that the state has to fund roads in the state. As I mentioned, we're only going to use first names in the discussion. I'm going to just write down your first names because I'll want to know who I'm addressing tonight. As I said there are no right or wrong answers. I just want your honest feedback. I'm going to be recording. because I can't write everything down and we want to have an accurate transcript. If you could speak one at a time, and speak loudly. That microphone is very sensitive. The only thing that's tough is that if multiple people speak at the same time we really can't hear what any individual says. So if you can just go one at a time. Occasionally I'll move the conversation along, skip from one question to another question to another because I want to get through all the material. There might be some times where I'll ask how many of you agree his or disagree with certain sentiments that come up. If you want to react to somebody who said something, that's fine. Just wait your turn so we're not talking over top of each other. Discussion is an important part of this -- reacting to what other people say. Because for most people I doubt that you've even thought about the way transportation is funded much on day to day. I mentioned we're audiotaping this. I'd like to start off by introducing everybody in the room so we know who's here. I have a few questions -- your first name, what town you live in, how long you've lived in New Hampshire, and how many cars or trucks that your household has. We want to get a sense of people's transportation. So, I'm Andy, I live in Durham. I've been in New Hampshire twenty years. And I've got three cars. Let me go this way...

PARTICIPANT:

My name's J (female). I live in Plymouth. And I've lived here for most of my life but moved away...about twenty years. And I have two vehicles.

PARTICIPANT:

W (male). Sanbornton. Sixty five years. And I've got one vehicle. Unless you want to count tractors.

AS:

You got to put gas in them. Is that car or truck?

PARTICIPANT:

Truck. Pick up.

PARTICIPANT:

My name is S (male). I live in New Hampton. Twenty five years. And we have three vehicles.

PARTICIPANT:

K (female) with a K. I live in Warren. I've lived in New Hampshire for twenty nine years but I've only lived in Warren for six.

AS:

And how many vehicles does your house have?

PARTICIPANT:

One SUV and one pick up.

PARTICIPANT:

S (female). I've lived here. '94, moved to Durham. Moved up here, to Wentworth in 2007. So, 35 years. We have two vehicles -- a pick up, a car and a blue goose, which is a New Holland tractor. We call it the blue goose.

PARTICIPANT:

M (male). Plymouth. I've lived in New Hampshire for forty years. Plymouth for thirty three.

AS:

How many vehicles do you have?

PARTICIPANT:

Three.

PARTICIPANT:

M (male). Almost all of my life.

AS:

What town do you live in?

PARTICIPANT:

Northfield.

AS:

Northfield.

PARTICIPANT:

Two passenger vehicles and one pick up truck.

PARTICIPANT:

J (male). I have two cars. I live in Plymouth. I was born and raised in New Hampshire but it's been fifteen to twenty years outside. And I've been in Plymouth for about ten years.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm B (male). I'm from Franklin. And I've been here about forty years.

AS:

How many vehicles do you have?

PARTICIPANT:

Two passenger cars.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm S (male) from Laconia. I've been here twenty six years and two cars.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm J (female).

AS:

And what town?

PARTICIPANT:

Laconia.

AS:

Laconia? How long have you lived in New Hampshire?

PARTICIPANT:

Uh, fifty three years.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm P (female) from Laconia. Lived in New Hampshire forty six years. And I have two passenger vehicles at my house at this time.

AS:

Great. So we've got a broad range of people from different parts of the area. This group is conducted here because the further north you go, you get different transportation patterns and needs that people have. That's why we've spread out the focus groups that we've done across the state ... to see how different people think about these things in different parts of the state. I'd first like to ask your understanding of how you believe, or what your perceptions of how

transportation in the state is funded right now. So, I'll just throw it out to the group, how do you think, or where do you think the funding for the state transportation system comes from?
Yeah...?

PARTICIPANT:

I would think from gasoline taxes and maybe the tolls on the highway?

AS:

Gases and tolls.

PARTICIPANT:

From the general fund.

PARTICIPANT:

These are just state roads, correct?

AS:

Yeah, we're talking really about state roads. Because the town roads have their own monies. Obviously there's some money from the state that kind of goes into different pieces of it. But we trying to focus on the state.

PARTICIPANT:

Are there any federal funds?

AS:

Federal funds, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Registration fees?

PARTICIPANT:

License plates. Driver's licenses.

AS:

Yeah, driver's licenses.

PARTICIPANT:

If my understanding of our property taxes is correct part of the property taxes go to the state. How much of that goes into transportation I have no idea.

AS:

I think they generally try to segregate the transportation funds.

PARTICIPANT:

That's what I didn't know.

AS:

Generally. I can't speak to it completely because, as you know in New Hampshire, we have one general fund that all the money goes in and out.

PARTICIPANT:

I know town wise, the town highway comes out of my property taxes. But the state..I didn't know.

AS:

Any other ways? Somebody mentioned gasoline taxes. Does anybody know what the state gasoline tax rate is per gallon of gas? How much you pay when you buy a gallon of gas, how much of that goes to gasoline tax?

PARTICIPANT:

I bet it's low because it seems like our gasoline prices are lower than like Vermont.

PARTICIPANT:

There are federal taxes too.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

What would you say ..?

PARTICIPANT:

About forty cents.

AS:

About forty cents?

PARTICIPANT:

Per gallon?

PARTICIPANT:

Is that right?

PARTICIPANT:

I believe so.

AS:

I really want to get what you guys think about.

PARTICIPANT:

I think so.

PARTICIPANT:

I have no idea.

PARTICIPANT:

I have no idea.

AS:

How many of you really don't know. You ... you have an idea?

PARTICIPANT:

I don't know.

AS:

Most people don't know?

PARTICIPANT:

It's really quite low. Isn't it like fourteen cents and then the federal has something?

AS:

If you think about the gas tax, do you think it's a fair way to fund transportation in the state?

PARTICIPANT:

(Definitely).

AS:

Why do you say yes?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, because it's based upon the usage of the road. The more gas you use it's cause you're on the road more. So therefor...

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I would agree with that.

PARTICIPANT:

Now you've got the advent of electric vehicles and hybrid vehicles that the..

PARTICIPANT:

They should have that...find a way to () tax that as well as they can. I know it's not always easy cause some of the charging is free.

PARTICIPANT:

The flip side is you've got lawnmowers, motor boats, snowmobiles...off road vehicles that don't use the roads but they're paying gas tax.

PARTICIPANT:

But I don't think that it's a fair way to pay for it because then it just involves..well, not completely but I would think we would want some of our tourist industry to pay their share..

PARTICIPANT:

...they may drive here.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, they do, they do.

PARTICIPANT:

A lot of industries multi -- like my company I work for has forty something vehicles and they all run on gasoline.

PARTICIPANT:

The other part of fuel tax is all of your trucks, I'm talking commercial trucks...they get a fuel tax and they definitely use the highway.

AS:

Yeah, the trucks pay a whole different rate than ...

PARTICIPANT:

I realize that..

AS:

Than light vehicles do, but that is a very important.

PARTICIPANT:

But the other thing is every truck that runs through the state of New Hampshire pays fuel tax in New Hampshire whether they buy the fuel in the state or not.

AS:

I believe trucks have to log where they're driving..

PARTICIPANT:

..how many miles you drive in every state.

PARTICIPANT:

And then all, then that gets ...

PARTICIPANT:

So they're taxing that?

PARTICIPANT:

It's almost like a mileage tax than a gas tax in a way.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, it's paid through the fuel.

PARTICIPANT:

Wait till they all go electric.

AS:

So somebody said electric cars earlier. Do you think electric cars are paying their fair share?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, no...

PARTICIPANT:

I think it's uncharted territory right now. So it's still new..

PARTICIPANT:

Exactly. And they also are providing some overall benefit to society, too. So, probably, in the short term they probably wouldn't tax them anything cause they want to encourage more people to have them..

PARTICIPANT:

Are they heavier, though, so that they would be more...

PARTICIPANT:

Not necessarily.

AS:

I should say that the vehicles that really cause damage to the roads are the large commercial trucks. Light cars and trucks do very, very little damage. Unless you get frost heaves and () everything ...

PARTICIPANT:

If they could catch the electrics with car registration.

PARTICIPANT:

That's true.

PARTICIPANT:

And I've heard that before too but I don't think that's fair if you spend the extra money to save gas and improve the environment, why should you pay a penalty in addition to that, you know? We should be encouraging people to drive vehicles that get better gas mileage and in a sense we're penalizing people if they do that, if we add some sort of extra tax for their vehicle.

PARTICIPANT:

But it's not really extra. Because if a gallon a gas is say, two bucks and ten cents of that is transportation per road maintenance, then the electric car driver gets away without having...they get to use the road but they're not paying ...

PARTICIPANT:

There's going to have to be some sort of a new mechanism to, in the future to..because going forward there's going to be more and more electric vehicles on the road. Or vehicles using renewable energy but they're still using the roads.

PARTICIPANT:

And then that would result...

PARTICIPANT:

Put in more tolls and the state's going to figure it out.

PARTICIPANT:

That would take them a while to figure that out. () free or less money..

PARTICIPANT:

I understand where you're coming from but then a result of that would be once there's a critical mass of electric cars there will be a shortage of funding.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, then they'll change...charge to pay for things.

PARTICIPANT:

It's possible, I would imagine, if you're using public charging station that, just like with a gas they could charge a tax per kilowatt or whatever it is, how they determine ...

PARTICIPANT:

We still have many vehicles that are () and many that are not. They drive the same amount of mileage, the same roads, the same wear and tear for the people who have fuel efficient cars pay far less than (). So if anything you're penalized if you don't have fuel efficient cars.

PARTICIPANT:

And well we should....

PARTICIPANT:

No.

PARTICIPANT:

We all used to be..() cars used to have pretty standard mileage, but not anymore.

POWERPOINT 1

AS:

So what I want to do now is, this is a nice segue ... I want to show where funds come from for transportation in New Hampshire. This chart shows where the funds are coming from right now. Now, this does not include tolls. Tolls go into a whole separate fund. Tolls are used for toll

roads. So right now, about forty percent of the funds for our state highways come from federal monies. Money from the federal gas tax that comes back to New Hampshire. Thirty three percent from the state gas tax. About seventeen percent from fees ... this would be driver's license fees, registration fees, etc. And about ten percent comes from other sources, largely traffic tickets, fines, the sales of some road right of ways that aren't needed anymore.

If you take the federal monies out, about fifty five percent is the gas tax. About twenty nine percent are those fees, driver's license, registration, so forth. And about sixteen percent are those other fines and tickets. The gas tax makes up a majority of all the state revenues for transportation. So here's the gas tax revenue that's coming from light duty vehicles. This means cars and regular light duty pick up trucks, not heavier vehicles, not commercial vehicles. And just from the gas funds, it's in about a hundred and thirty million dollars. It's projected to drop in the next several years, largely because people are getting more fuel efficient vehicles. Revenues are not coming in. It's not because we're not driving. We're actually projected to be driving more. We had a little bit of dip in the miles that we drove after the recession. Maybe you remember right around that time the price of gas was up a little bit high. Since that time the price of gas has declined. We have more people in the state, more people driving in the state, more money in our pockets to drive. So we're seeing that travel has gone up. And it's expected to go up for the next ten, twenty years, anyhow.

This blue line is the average fleet miles per gallon of all of the cars on the road. And we're, right now, we're somewhere in the twenty three, twenty four miles per gallon range. And that's projected to go up to about thirty miles per gallon by 2030. And this is just new vehicles, the new ones coming on to the highways. You can see that new vehicles are more fuel efficient now for quite some time. Federal regulations are saying that they have to be more fuel efficient. We're looking at more fuel efficient cars that are going to be coming out.

PARTICIPANT:

But they cancelled some of those federal regulations under the Trump administration.

AS:

Many automobile manufacturers are doing it anyway. They can't plan, they can't change their plans that quickly.

AS:

And then somebody had mentioned electric vehicles. Electric vehicles are really hard to figure out where they're going to go. Here are two estimates that the state provided, this low projection is expecting that it might be ten percent by 2030. But Bloomberg has done projections of thirty percent by 2030. So there's a broad range here. It's going to be somewhere in the middle, between ten and thirty percent. We've seen a lot of increased fuel efficiency in cars, which is leading to the problem that the state's facing. And it's not just New Hampshire. It's every other state in the country is facing this issue about been funding their roads, construction and maintenance with gasoline tax primarily. Gasoline tax revenues are going down while usage is going up and there are more people, more cars in the country that are going up. So that's the issue that we wanted to talk about today and I wanted to get everybody up to speed on where things were. Yes, sir?

PARTICIPANT:

Nobody likes to have their taxes raised but if we're looking at how many, the gallons reflect how many miles we drive within the state roughly. I know we go out of state and things like that. But I think, it sounds to me like the, it's like inflation. You know, you have to raise it to cover the costs of the roads. So I would think that just raising the gasoline tax would probably be one of the better ways to do it.

AS:

And that's something they did about six, seven years ago. They raised it about nine cents. We're up to about twenty four cents a gallon, just under twenty four cents a gallon right now. And if you recall that, that was a big lift to get that through the legislature, to get funding by the governor, that last one. This issue would have been far worse than it is now for the roads, had it not been for that increase.

PARTICIPANT:

And you also have the side benefit too of a higher tax on gas. That encourages people to switch to more fuel efficient vehicles.

AS:

But that's gong to drive that..

PARTICIPANT:

Down.

AS:

That down. You see the quandary that we're in. And this is what the Department of Transportation and people in the legislature are asking, okay, what do we do? What do we do about it?

PARTICIPANT:

Do away with the gasoline tax and raise the price of registering your vehicles and try to figure out an algorithm of how much each car would pay.

PARTICIPANT:

It () incredibly expensive for registering. If you're funding with gas you're paying it (). And if ..() income.

PARTICIPANT:

If you even make registration ()..you could pay ...three times a year. Like you do your property taxes. Twice a year.

PARTICIPANT:

That sounds horrible.

PARTICIPANT:

It's an idea.

PARTICIPANT:

But that's not fair either. I've got a vehicle that's three years old. I've got less than twelve thousand miles on it. I don't drive a lot. So, in that sense I'd be paying more. I'm already paying more. And my vehicle's not really fuel efficient. Cause it's a..heavy pick up.

PARTICIPANT:

It was just an idea.

PARTICIPANT:

I know.

AS:

This is what we want to hear.

PARTICIPANT:

That's a discussion.

PARTICIPANT:

But if you switch from a gasoline consumption formula to a ...

PARTICIPANT:

Time on the road...?

PARTICIPANT:

Right, exactly, the time on the road or miles travelled then that starts to spread out that...you know, what people are paying..it spreads it out, it makes it a little bit more fair versus people who are driving electric vehicle and you know, plus engines as well. It makes it a little bit more fair.

PARTICIPANT:

One hard part you have with that, and I don't necessarily think that's a bad idea, but uh, you know, what you can do is that every year for inspection they verify your mileage and then it's based on that. But you had some people that live close to the Massachusetts border, for example, that are going to Massachusetts all the time. So, there's a balance there. And also Massachusetts. I'm just using the Massachusetts example cause it's closest. But Massachusetts people coming up here and using gasoline here will also increase our revenue.

AS:

We don't have a lot of space..

[someone coming in]

PARTICIPANT:

Well, I was going to add on that something I've been thinking is our tourist industry. We're selling a lot of gasoline to out of state people because of our high tourism rate.

PARTICIPANT:

That's true.

PARTICIPANT:

And if we based it on mileage which seems like a fair way to do it for people who live in state, but what about tourists who come up every weekend or you know, there's a lot of Massachusetts cars that are in New Hampshire..

PARTICIPANT:

And maybe more than in New Hampshire that are going down to Mass, so it may not even..

PARTICIPANT:

Definitely.

PARTICIPANT:

What's the Massachusetts gas tax?

PARTICIPANT:

I don't know.

PARTICIPANT:

It's higher because of gas prices.

PARTICIPANT:

I know liquor and many other things we profit from people coming over the border. I wondered what the gasoline comparison was.

PARTICIPANT:

It's because all the tourists are buying..

PARTICIPANT:

It's because of Massachusetts buying all...

PARTICIPANT:

Well, electric vehicles have been (kilowatt) hours equivalent to gasoline. So, they could at some point, we need to figure out some way to meter that so that you know if you're using kilowatts or however you measure that.

PARTICIPANT:

I guess I wonder, where is it encased on () that this all has to be, the taxes ..the Department of Health doesn't tax us. Economic development doesn't tax us. They get money from some place.

AS:

They're coming from our taxes.

PARTICIPANT:

All money comes from taxes.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm talking about not vehicle tax. Not..we're concentrating on taxing gasoline. What about the other taxes that people pay, which we pay too? Is that () source of revenue?

AS:

I'm not here to say one way or the other.

PARTICIPANT:

How much is collected through gasoline? I mean how much is the budget, put it that way?

AS:

Uh, the gasoline tax, I think total is bringing in ..they hope to get around a hundred and forty five million dollars a year is about what they're looking at. A hundred and thirty to a hundred and forty five million dollars.

PARTICIPANT:

There's about a million people in New Hampshire so that would be..

AS:

About 1.4 million.

PARTICIPANT:

A hundred and forty five dollars per person, child.

AS:

About a hundred dollars per adult, yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

So when you went to register your car you know, if they were going to do it that way, that's a big number.

PARTICIPANT:

So do they feel that's enough money or do they need more? There's never enough money.

AS:

I'm going to provide some more slides and describe some of this. I think that they're looking at trying to stabilize the revenue. Right now they see a revenue decline, a fairly significant revenue decline over the next twenty or thirty years, with increased mileage being driven ...more people in the state, and so forth. So they're kind of bumping...

PARTICIPANT:

Is there a federal gas tax?

AS:

There is. I think the federal gas tax is around forty five, fifty cents a gallon. And we get some of that back so the forty percent of our total revenue for roads that the states get comes from federal, federal grants. Most of that from gas tax.

PARTICIPANT:

Where do they skim that forty five cent off?

PARTICIPANT:

...no, I mean where do they get it?

PARTICIPANT:

At the pump.

AS:

Yes, at the pump.

PARTICIPANT:

At the New Hampshire pump?

AS:

Yeah. Every time you gas up money's going down to D.C.

PARTICIPANT:

If you look at the only way that you could really use mileage in New Hampshire, and then we have to look at that and say how reasonable it is that we've come to that, you would almost have to have all the vehicles have some form of GPS that can register the mileage within the state of New Hampshire. But again, if we didn't have like a national system for that, people from Massachusetts coming up here wouldn't have that system. So, so I think it is great to charge people based on their usage but the question is how do you do that?

PARTICIPANT:

What if you put extra tolls?

PARTICIPANT:

() miles.

PARTICIPANT:

That's a huge privacy issue.

PARTICIPANT:

So many issues involving that.

PARTICIPANT:

Just the technology, too. Cause maybe you could start putting in new cars, but my car's about fifteen years old or so. I mean, you know...

PARTICIPANT:

This tells you where you're driving.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh yeah, there's ways to track people but the question is do we want to allow that?

PARTICIPANT:

It's already happening.

PARTICIPANT:

...lets' say you're driving..

PARTICIPANT:

That's how they tell, like when you're on the Google maps and it turns red..they know, that they track that from your cellphone.

PARTICIPANT:

They also do that from your cellphone. The question is how many cellphones in the car and what if all the cellphones are registered on Google Maps. Because I've had passengers who want to follow along with me, that would show two drivers instead of one. So, you'd have to have it by on a per car basis.

PARTICIPANT:

If your car has a computer it's already registering miles.

PARTICIPANT:

But perhaps not where though. As far as New Hampshire versus Vermont...

PARTICIPANT:

All it is is a matter of taking the computer and plugging it in. The way you know that is OnStar. It's already keeping track of how many miles you drive.

PARTICIPANT:

And where.

PARTICIPANT:

I get monthly reports from On Star. Now I won't pay for On Star because I don't, I don't drive enough to have to have it. But they give me monthly. And they have, when they send me the report they know exactly how many miles that vehicle's driven. The technology is already there.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh no, it's available, but again, not everyone has a vehicle equipped with all On Stars...

PARTICIPANT:

I'm saying it doesn't have to be On Star. It's in the computer.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, the vehicle, well so do you pull that out during the inspection..? Like every year...?

PARTICIPANT:

..they scan it like your electricity.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah. But, again, there's still the question of ..

PARTICIPANT:

Privacy.

PARTICIPANT:

Where the vehicle...that too, but also where the vehicle's being driven. Cause again, somebody who lives on the Massachusetts border and works in Massachusetts, most of their mileage may be in Massachusetts. So if we're just going based on mileage it might be kind of difficult.

AS:

I think you're seeing the quandary that the state is in.

PARTICIPANT:

IT's going to have to b a combination.

PARTICIPANT:

I don't want somebody to have my complete driving record of where I've been, where I've gone, how long I've stayed there.

PARTICIPANT:

No, but if it was a minimal..

PARTICIPANT:

I hate to tell you...

PARTICIPANT:

If they just took your mileage when you got your car inspected...and you had to report it, just like when you sell your car you have to put the mileage down. People would have to provide...if they charge just a small amount for the mileage so it wasn't increasing, you know..it wasn't a huge amount. I mean people could take a small amount of taxes, a small amount of tolls, a small amount of mileage. I mean they're going to have to use a combination.

AS:

Let me throw something else out. The projections for revenues from the state gasoline tax is projected to decline from about a hundred and forty five million dollars now down to a hundred million dollars by 2040.

PARTICIPANT:

Ouch.

AS:

A drop of forty five million dollars.

PARTICIPANT:

But the costs are going to go up.

AS:

So do you think relying on gasoline tax is a sustainable way to fund...

PARTICIPANT:

No, absolutely not.

PARTICIPANT:

Did we say that tolls don't get counted? Cause the..

AS:

They don't, they don't.

PARTICIPANT:

Only for the roads that are tolled..

PARTICIPANT:

Put them in and ..because that's how we could tell.

PARTICIPANT:

It's a () county...the ..

PARTICIPANT:

People who are coming from out of state, in our state...

AS:

They can only be used for the toll roads. The tolls can.

PARTICIPANT:

But I think she's talking technology wise, we could use that. Matter of fact I drive down to Logan and if you're going a certain..I do some Limo driving. The Limo lot, they charge us for our visit to Logan by zapping our..

PARTICIPANT:

EZ Pass.

PARTICIPANT:

EZ Pass, cause everybody has one. So that, it would be a way to tell how many miles someone drove within the state. Cause again, the thing is..you don't like toll booths but you could..use an overhead scanning devices like we see in Hooksett and Bypass. Perhaps if you had those at the state borderlines, then you could use that to say okay, this car from Massachusetts entered here and when it exited, you know, maybe just add..somehow have it add the mileage information to indicate how many miles it spent in New Hampshire.

PARTICIPANT:

Theoretically they can track every one of us everywhere.

PARTICIPANT:

They run the numbers, say if you increase the gasoline tax five cents. Given that our current usage, how much that would generate?

AS:

I don't have that information. I think that their, that the bigger concern is what do you do about the fairness issue between the increased use of higher mileage vehicles, electric vehicles versus a non electric vehicles and that balances...

PARTICIPANT:

That curves, that sustainable would just tax and gas. It's going to have to be a mechanisms to...

PARTICIPANT:

..well, not necessarily because if it's () on usage, increasing five cents a gallon, that could generate twenty million dollars, I mean I don't have no idea. But it could generate a lot of income just by doing that.

PARTICIPANT:

But with more fuel efficient vehicles that tax would have to continue to go up and up and up.

PARTICIPANT:

Taxes usually do, that's the nature of taxes.

PARTICIPANT:

But if you resorted just that mechanism of funding. But if you came up with a way to spread that cost to include electric vehicles and charge, and tax the kilowatt hours, like you said, or/and have some sort of consumption of miles driven mechanism as well it could be..it seems to me it's going to have to be multiple funding mechanisms to spread it out and to meet the..

PARTICIPANT:

To be fair about it.

PARTICIPANT:

And funding needs.

PARTICIPANT:

I think currently a lot of your registration fees are based upon the weight of your vehicle and the weight of your vehicle has a lot to do with the wear and tear that is put on the road.

AS:

It's the value of the vehicle.

PARTICIPANT:

It's the value of the vehicle?

AS:

When you get into commercial trucks...

PARTICIPANT:

Maybe it was..I think other states may use gross vehicle weight. I know I've lived in a state that had that. That may be a way to..

PARTICIPANT:

There may be a balance but maybe the truck's already paying more.

PARTICIPANT:

And New Hampshire's already very high for registration. Cause I lived in a different state for a while and came back and my jaw dropped when I had to register my vehicle.

AS:

So let me ask you a question. Go ahead.

PARTICIPANT:

I used to work for the government. And the Department of Transportation won't be happy when they hear this but they have, there's a certain amount of excess floating around in all government coffers. And part of ..if you're trying to..eat away at this deficit here...tell them to cut their budget. I know that they'll (scream). We did..I worked for the federal government..but every year ..they (), every year we got a ten percent cut. Right off the top. And we survived. And we survived. We screamed loud and we survived. Because it's always a certain amount of well, you don't have to really go to the. You don't really have to have that meeting there.

AS:

The one thing that most of the cost for transportation though is concrete and asphalt and just the construction.

PARTICIPANT:

Even if we did..

AS:

And those costs are even going up.

PARTICIPANT:

Even if we did find a way to save money out of that budget, it doesn't solve the long term issue of how do you equitably move that tax around. Cause you could say we do save that, that's kind of a long time thing. And now you still have to say okay, if we're only taxing gasoline the electric cars are not paying their fair share.

AS:

So I mentioned that hundred and forty five million down to a hundred million by 2040. How would you explain this problem to a neighbor? I've walked you through some numbers and some charts. How would explain this issue to a friend or a neighbor? Somebody's talking about the roads... oh, the roads are terrible. I can't believe I drove on the roads and I hit all these potholes and stuff. And...

PARTICIPANT:

We're buying less gas. We're paying less tax. So they get less money.

PARTICIPANT:

It seems pretty straightforward to me. That, you know, as..we're all headed on using less gasoline. The future is using less everywhere. And if you're basing the funding on the gasoline tax, of course it would go down.

PARTICIPANT:

I think the state has to look at other areas. It just can't ...getting most of the revenue from gasoline.

POWERPOINT 2

AS:

All right, so this is a good time to segue into our next segment. So one of the things that the state Department of Transportation is looking at, is something they call a road user fee. Some people call it a RUF, RUF. This is the proposed annual road user fee by vehicle miles per gallon. So, if you had a car that gets twenty miles per gallon, you pay an average gas tax of about a hundred and twenty five dollars in gas tax. That's about what you are right now, a twenty mile a gallon car. You're paying about a hundred and twenty five bucks a year in gas tax. If you were driving a car with less, with twenty miles a gallon your road user fee would be quite low. It'd be about an extra ten, fifteen dollars a year. If you were getting about thirty miles a gallon it would be a little bit higher. A little bit higher ... at forty miles a gallon,..if you get up to electric vehicle it would be essentially the same as if you were driving a car at twenty miles per gallon. So, basically what they're proposing is some of the things we're talking about: how do you compensate for those cars that have higher miles per gallon. You don't want to make them pay more than other people but to try and balance out what they're not paying in gasoline tax for the usage of roads in a different way. Another way of looking at it ... This is our historic gas tax revenue and the

decline. This is if we added this ten mile per gallon RUF. And that means there'd be a change every ten miles a gallon, roughly, from twenty to thirty to forty. This was about where we keep it, somewhere about a hundred and forty five, a hundred and fifty million dollars a year. That's the projection that they're, the state is using. And this, to get a sense of how this would work, is if you think of ... instead of just the tax that you would pay on gas, if you want to look at the cost of putting a car on the road for a year. The cost of a car that gets twenty miles a gallon, it's about sixteen hundred bucks a year if you're driving it twelve thousand miles a year. If you take a car that gets forty miles a gallon, the cost goes down quite a bit. That's the reason you're buying a car with much better mileage. And all the way down to electric cars. Essentially, if you're getting eighty miles a gallon its' considerably low. This dashed line here is what that cost would be if you payed the gas tax plus that road user fee. So, one of the things the state is concerned about is that they don't want to disincent people from getting higher mileage vehicles or electric vehicles by making this really high at this end. So you can still see it's a little bit higher here. But it's still considerably lower than the people here are driving lower miles, mileage vehicles. That's the way of kind of, graphically maybe see it a different way how that works.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm just curious how they came up with the figure, what the miles per gallon is for your vehicle? Is it by the manufacturer's rating?

AS:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

So if I buy a car in 2005 and they say it's supposed to get twenty eight miles a gallon and it's now 2015 and my car doesn't get twenty eight miles a gallon any more. I mean there's a lot of older cars on the road in New Hampshire. That, the accuracy for the vehicle ..it's just really a disparity cause, there just really is.

AS:

They're looking at that way of doing it simply because there are going to be some cars that get the same or more. They maybe started off getting more than the average for that car and lower later on. So they're using this, frankly, as a way of easily administering it.

PARTICIPANT:

There's also, it also depends on your driving habits too. () reasonable.

PARTICIPANT:

And they're using highway miles here. And in New Hampshire mostly everything is () miles.

AS:

Another way of looking at this, is if this was your annual fuel costs at various miles per year and miles per gallon. If you drive only five thousand miles per gallon per year, even if you've got a car that's not very fuel efficient, you're still paying less than a thousand bucks a year to keep that car. If you're driving an electric car it's very low. And this is with the maximum road user fee here. You can see if you're driving a car that's not very fuel efficient, you're driving upwards of

fifteen, twenty thousand miles, you're off the charts in terms of the gasoline that you're paying. Whereas if you're down here with a more fuel efficient car you're still paying considerably less. This is, again, another way of showing you that it's not really disincenting the high mileage vehicles much. It's trying to recoup some of those revenues but not trying to say, all right, we're going to dump all the money on the higher mileage vehicles.

PARTICIPANT:

Are there other states that are using RUF right now?

AS:

Yes. Right now about twenty two states are considering some variation of this. As I mentioned, we're not the only state that's doing this. Michigan and Georgia, for example, have a separate fee that's just tacked on electric vehicle gets hit with an annual fee that accomplishes some of this but it doesn't distribute it as much. It's just on the electric and hybrid vehicles. The road user fee is trying to compensate, not only for the electric vehicles, but for some of the higher mileage vehicles as well. Because we still want to keep the concept of it being a user fee. The more you use the roads, the more you pay, the less you use the roads, the less you pay. And with gasoline tax you can accomplish that and with the RUF, the road user fee, kind of pulls back some of that for those higher mileage users.

PARTICIPANT:

How does New Hampshire propose to collect that?

AS:

At annual registration.

PARTICIPANT:

And that would be based on your odometer reading?

AS:

No, this is isn't odometer. It's the type of car.

PARTICIPANT:

Type of car...

AS:

Yeah, the type of car you have. If you think of it from the state's end, some of the things we were talking about with the monitoring specific mileage in the state, the cost of administering that probably is going to take away any extra money or revenue that you would get to try to do that. They've also looked at people, say that come in from Canada, for foreign visitors who aren't paying really the federal gas tax unless they're buying gas here. But they're not paying for maybe other way, in any of their other taxes. It's just not worth going after them for that. It would cost more money to go after them, try to get any money than you would gain from it.

PARTICIPANT:

And also...just disincentive tourism. you know, you wouldn't want to come here if ..

PARTICIPANT:

Will they know where the gasoline tax..?

AS:

This is not doing any lowering of the gasoline tax. All this is doing is adding that additional fee which will go up for higher mileage vehicles.

PARTICIPANT:

It might make it more palatable if they did.

PARTICIPANT:

I see a drawback with that, though. People who have extra vehicles, like I keep a van, an old van for going to the dump and whatever. I put very few miles on it. If I had to pay a sizeable fee to register it, I might consider just getting rid of it.

PARTICIPANT:

Get a new car.

PARTICIPANT:

I have a new car but I keep the old one for..people have old trucks here just to haul stuff or...

AS:

What are your initial thoughts of this?

PARTICIPANT:

I was going to answer her question. That's where you fall back..the old farmers, we have Aggie plates and farm plates. I can't remember which is which anymore but one of them you couldn't run at night. You couldn't run more than twenty miles away from your home. If they did this RAF, RUF, one of the things to do on that is have a separate registration for that vehicle that you don't use very much.

PARTICIPANT:

That's a good idea.

PARTICIPANT:

With fines if you break the usage requirements.

PARTICIPANT:

Which goes back into the kitty.

PARTICIPANT:

You can only use it on dump days.

PARTICIPANT:

Like a mileage cap a year, something like that?

PARTICIPANT:

() has a farm plate on his truck. He just uses it to deal with the dump or to haul stuff back and forth.

AS:

What are your other thoughts about this, just seeing it?

PARTICIPANT:

Seems reasonable.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, on the surface it seems reasonable.

AS:

How many of you think it seems reasonable? Most people?

PARTICIPANT:

As long as they try to explain ...that that..

AS:

No..? Why don't you think it seems reasonable?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, I mean it's the same fee whether you drive a hundred miles in a year or ten thousand, correct?

AS:

Yup.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, but those vehicles are driving the higher mileage, they're paying the higher taxes on gas, right, as well? So, you've got that added...

PARTICIPANT:

In this scenario you still have gas tax as well as RUF, so it's ..I believe, yes?

AS:

Yes. That's what this chart shows.

PARTICIPANT:

() if you are driving a lot more than the other person you will be paying more because the gasoline tax ..

AS:

Even if some of you've got a twenty five mile a gallon car. If you're driving twenty thousand miles a year you're paying significantly more than somebody who isn't ...because ..

PARTICIPANT:

So in a roundabout way did not (shock). A citizen with..

PARTICIPANT:

It's like a cover charge at a bar. RUF is the price of admission. If you want a car, then if you want more drinks..

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, it's a cover charge for cars.

PARTICIPANT:

Spread it out.

PARTICIPANT:

Good analogy.

PARTICIPANT:

Can I just ask -- you said like a car that gets twenty miles to a gallon. What would the RUF be for that vehicle?

AS:

If you have a car that gets twenty miles a gallon your RUF is very low ... It's going to be about ten, fifteen dollars a year.

PARTICIPANT:

Okay.

AS:

It's a low amount. Cause you're paying the gas tax.

PARTICIPANT:

Because you're getting more gas.

PARTICIPANT:

Okay.

AS:

You're paying it through the gas tax. It's really just to balance.

PARTICIPANT:

So it would balance out if you had a vehicle, like I was just saying with the van.

AS:

You would not paying much.

PARTICIPANT:

I was thinking backwards.

PARTICIPANT:

So the people with the fuel efficient cars are still saving money. They're not getting penalized with rising gas prices?

AS:

They're going to be paying more than they are now because of the RUF. But they're still not being penalized comparatively because the difference is relatively small on the overall cost per year.

PARTICIPANT:

The biggest thing I see is the difficulty in explaining this to people.

AS:

That was my next question. How would you explain this?

PARTICIPANT:

Because when you look at that it looks like you're reading..first of all it looks like you're being charged more for having an electric vehicle, when it really isn't. So, you know, people can't..I don't think the average person can really take a difficult definition. That's why you have politicians have their, what do you call it, their sound bites. If you try to explain the best thing in the world to people, half of them just tune right out. So how do we sell anything.

PARTICIPANT:

So New Hampshire's known for fee-ing us to death. We don't have an income or a sales tax but we have fees for everything. I think the town clerk is going to be hard pressed to collect another hundred and twenty five dollars in fees or whatever it might be from folks..

AS:

It'd be part of your registration. Right now when you write a check...

PARTICIPANT:

() registration doubled?

AS:

It could, yeah. For some people.

PARTICIPANT:

Whereas with the gas tax people don't really notice another penny, another half a penny.

PARTICIPANT:

Once a year they could spread it out...twice a year, so that that hundred and fifty becomes seventy five or...might be more palatable.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that's why we're here. Cause the state's afraid of how we're all going to react when this comes out..

PARTICIPANT:

The people who vote these laws into existence are afraid they won't be in office anymore.

PARTICIPANT:

And it would be hard to explain to the average person ..it would be so easy for somebody...you know how Facebook stuff goes..is to say oh, now I have an electric car and I'm getting screwed. I think that's how they will perceive it.

PARTICIPANT:

() public blowback.

PARTICIPANT:

I think what we need o do is shut off Facebook and

PARTICIPANT:

There's an idea.

AS:

Or a lot of ...

PARTICIPANT:

We already know, as you said, that New Hampshire registration fees are quite high. But we don't have excise taxes as other states may. () either annually or semi annually.

AS:

Do you think this is a fairer way of doing it than the current way of funding with just gas tax?

PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

PARTICIPANT:

I do.

PARTICIPANT:

It's surprisingly fair.

PARTICIPANT:

Has anybody asked the towns ..check with their clerks and put them in the position of having to..

AS:

They already do this though. They already have to separate money that goes to the state.

PARTICIPANT:

You know how much you're paying. If you're paying \$250 a year for your truck. And then all of a sudden they say no, it's going to be \$400 because you've got an extra tax or an extra fee.

PARTICIPANT:

But the person with the good mileage in the electric car, their gas bill is shot way down so they're not going to be as shocked..

PARTICIPANT:

They write that check for their license..it's going to be oh yeah...

PARTICIPANT:

() their gas bill has gone down.

PARTICIPANT:

They don't think that way.

PARTICIPANT:

Is...they () think that when you walk into the town clerk.

AS:

The maximum RUF they're talking about is somewhere about a hundred dollars, a hundred and twenty five dollars a year.

PARTICIPANT:

I think the problem that a lot of people are alluding to is no matter what the state calls it a lot of citizens are going to say here they are taxing us again.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh, sure.

PARTICIPANT:

In the ()...I just read the Union Leader..

PARTICIPANT:

Without getting too deep into politics, I think we try to avoid that..because New Hampshire only has.. they don't have all these other taxes, it seems less fair. If we had, like a sales tax, you're getting people that come from Massachusetts up here, they would be paying some of the sales tax with things they bought so they would benefit us. Where right now it's almost like, in some ways it's almost like a Massachusetts person gets a free ride in New Hampshire. They don't pay any taxes to us. A little bit in gas tax. They're spending time here.

AS:

I think one of the things that the legislature is going to have to deal with, is how they're going to accomplish to make it fair but also to make it understandable to people. That's, I think it's going to be...

PARTICIPANT:

You need a good spin doctor.

PARTICIPANT:

As a person who has a good, fuel efficient car..lots of miles, I don't really like that you're catching up with me.

PARTICIPANT:

() in stages...

PARTICIPANT:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

It started at ten dollars, and then next year it goes to twenty dollars. And then it goes...

PARTICIPANT:

If we phase it over time..

PARTICIPANT:

One of the things that might make the RUF a little more palatable is if it was a monthly charge. Because, again if somebody said break it into two payments. But say you're paying a thousand dollars. Five hundred is still a big chunk for a lot of people. But instead of that, if you took it as...twelve hundred dollars, you're paying a hundred dollars a month.

AS:

The maximum is proposed to be about a hundred and twenty five dollars.

PARTICIPANT:

Not necessarily because of commuters. Commuters..there's a little bit more.

PARTICIPANT:

We can handle that, like Netflix.

PARTICIPANT:

How are you going to..you're going to write a check every month?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, how is that...?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, again..a lot of people..we can't just base it on how we do our things. We have to look at how people are going to do things in the future. More and more people are going to be, you know, like right now I write one check a month because most everything else I have it taken out of my bank account. Not everybody does that now, but it's..that's a dying thing.

PARTICIPANT:

It's going to take a long time for New Hampshire to get to that point.

PARTICIPANT:

We just got () with no checks.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Convert it to EZ Pass.

PARTICIPANT:

() computer..

PARTICIPANT:

The other thing is what about a young family who is struggling.

AS:

Hold on a sec.

PARTICIPANT:

We, our median age here is up there, but what about a young family in their early twenties who has ..all they can do just to register and inspect your vehicle. I remember when I was young. And you know, and now it's going to be more ..you know, as a one payment kind of thing. I see that as a little bit of a problem for struggling, financially struggling young families.

PARTICIPANT:

But for that age group it's a month of lattes...

PARTICIPANT:

Not always, you know.... I mean....

PARTICIPANT:

State could have..

PARTICIPANT:

They could skip the lattes for a month.

PARTICIPANT:

The state could get to a point where quarterly...not have to be monthly but even quarterly would be a huge help for people.

PARTICIPANT:

Could you have an option where people could choose to write that check right off the bat or maybe have the state take it out monthly? You know, like an automatic thing? That automatically...

PARTICIPANT:

() insurance. You can pay for your insurance with one check for the year. You can pay for it in three or four payments. Usually they add a service fee for each payment. So it incentivizes you to pay it all at once. But then you could say oh, it'll only cost me a buck each time.

PARTICIPANT:

What about..so somebody mentioned EZ Pass. What about an option to link it to your EZ Pass and do...you're paying, with your EZ Pass most people put it on auto load anyway. And you can have..you could set it up to pay it over the course of the year or quarterly or ..it seems like that would be an easier mechanism.

PARTICIPANT:

Then they () write a check.

PARTICIPANT:

My husband would not...

PARTICIPANT:

You can set it up with your bank to have ..paid.

PARTICIPANT:

That's a valid point. Right now, I think some people..of course I think it would be solved by using the technology more. But yeah, right now some people still will try and go around tolls. But if you have more of these units everywhere then there's no where to run.

PARTICIPANT:

Right, but if you have. You have the option of paying it at registration. Or if you utilize EZ Pass and maybe there's a mechanism where you can pay it off.

PARTICIPANT:

An example is I used to live in Massachusetts. And when you submitted how much per sales tax, that you did, they had this thing that how much, I think it was like how much sales tax...how much did you buy that wasn't in Massachusetts. And then they could tax you based on that. Or you give them twenty five bucks. So it's kind of like you can itemize everything or pay X. So they could use something like that where they say you pay X but if you would rather have it based upon your actual usage you will then have to submit to, again, the EZ Pass or something else so...

PARTICIPANT:

It'd be a lot of twenty five dollar checks written.

PARTICIPANT:

I know.. I'm not saying it'd have to be twenty five, but I'm just saying that's an example where they...

[talking about chair]

AS:

Michigan and Georgia have that additional flat fee for just electric and hybrid vehicles. What do you think about that? Just for electric vehicles and hybrid vehicles. They have a ..

PARTICIPANT:

How much is...

PARTICIPANT:

But that doesn't address the, the rest of the vehicles are getting higher gas mileage. It's a mechanism but it doesn't spread it out among all the different vehicle types.

PARTICIPANT:

Can you go to the graph that shows miles per gallon and how much your gas bill would be a year?

AS:

So this is fuel costs. So this includes the tax, but it's fuel costs a year.

PARTICIPANT:

But my point is so the electric cars, basically..yeah, so if I had a car that goes, what, twenty five miles or thirty miles to the gallon?

PARTICIPANT:

Fifteen hundred in gas. And now I have an electric car so I'm paying nothing in gas. So we're talking a flat, like a hundred dollar fee on an electric car? They're already saving fifteen hundred? I don't see a big issue with that.

That's not a penalty. I wouldn't see that as a penalty for trying to get an electric car. Now if they wanted to charge me a thousand bucks then I feel like I was getting penalized.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, it's basically a road use tax, right?

PARTICIPANT:

Cause the sentiment was brought up earlier, let's not penalize someone for trying to be environmental. That doesn't sound like..

PARTICIPANT:

() give them a free ride...

PARTICIPANT:

But don't give them a free ride..

PARTICIPANT:

I think that's fair..

PARTICIPANT:

Basically what you're saying is the average driver is paying let's say a hundred dollars a year in fuel taxes. So the electric car owner is going to pay that hundred dollar fuel tax at registration, in the RUF.

AS:

Right. So balance that out.

PARTICIPANT:

So actually your RUF would be based on the type of vehicle that you have?

PARTICIPANT:

That's easy to explain....

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, that's ..what we were trying to solve is the RUF is based on the type of vehicle you have. And again, just like anything else, if someone says I don't want to pay that much in this, then maybe it is time I trade my old clunker in for...

AS:

This is about what you would pay in your proposed fee so high mileage or low mileage vehicles you'd pay next to nothing in it. Electric cars..and this is electric cars, you'd pay up to a hundred twenty five bucks.

PARTICIPANT:

If there was an easy to read thing...there was the sentiment as well, the poor town clerk is going to have to...beating up the messenger here, they're going to bear the brunt of this when it hits. But if there was like a simple explanation, probably hard to do but, that showed how you weren't getting screwed over..

PARTICIPANT:

Maybe if they had a chart that says, basically if your..because you're giving them two separate things. You're giving them a gas tax and you're giving them this. But you could say with this an average..a car that averages twenty five miles a gallon, this is your average cost per year. So..not perfect, but it's...

AS:

One of the things that I suggested, would be a web page where you plugged in your car. I've got a 2006 Toyota Camry with a four cylinder engine. On average how much ..and if I drive twelve thousand miles a year this is what my gas tax would be, this is what my RUF would be.

PARTICIPANT:

The other thing..there's something going on that's misleading. And that is, if I get a fuel efficient car and then I look at the price on, of gas, up on the sign there and I tell myself look how much money I'm saving in gas. But what I'm not thinking is there's about eighty cents of that that is, that doesn't move. The tax part of it. The part that's moving is the remaining two dollars, two dollar or buck sixty. So maybe that's probably hard to do but..

PARTICIPANT:

Maybe make that visible. You know? At the pump. Show the user hey, this went to the feds, this went to the state, this is actually what you pay for gas.

PARTICIPANT:

They're going to have to do a long campaign for you to know what kind of tax they're charging. A long...public relations campaign.

PARTICIPANT:

Right, but..

PARTICIPANT:

Get people out there talking in English, not in government. And ..and someone who puts this together its' got to be a non government person.
They can't...

PARTICIPANT:

Need a PR firm.

PARTICIPANT:

().

PARTICIPANT:

It's pretty clear, you go to Town Hall, you got a Road User Fee, pay it.

PARTICIPANT:

And that's the spin..

PARTICIPANT:

You're using the roads. The legislature..gas is way too cheap, way too cheap. They manipulate it sickeningly. And () forever. Play around with (). They jump the numbers up the day after. Something happens and it's..six week to eight week mind change. If the state had any intelligence they would double the gas tax. When it was low, at 2.20.

PARTICIPANT:

I remember that.

PARTICIPANT:

() blame the Middle East for that.

AS:

It coincided. If it hadn't been going the other way it really would have..

PARTICIPANT:

But then when it went back up it wasn't the tax that was going back up.

PARTICIPANT:

It was the gasoline...() minds.

PARTICIPANT:

A lot cheaper gas.

PARTICIPANT:

() Virginia, Maryland..much cheaper.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Texas is cheap because they've got the refineries.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh my God.

PARTICIPANT:

California.

PARTICIPANT:

Martha's Vineyard. Paying four dollars a gallon.

PARTICIPANT:

They got to ship it over there.

PARTICIPANT:

And Hawaii.

PARTICIPANT:

The thing that made the most sense to me when I was watching what you were showing us, is that the state is not really trying to raise taxes. They're trying to keep taxes from dropping. That seems to me a kind of persuasive argument. And if you can make that case and also make the

case as to what we will have to raise gasoline taxes by, per gallon, if we do not do something like this.

PARTICIPANT:

Right.

PARTICIPANT:

If I may...

PARTICIPANT:

()this is what income tax would have to...

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

If I may clarify one of the little things you said...in other words they're not trying to raise taxes, they're trying to raise revenue. That's the part.

PARTICIPANT:

() changing the formula because of the fact that the types of cars out there are changing. That's, in a sense bringing things back into balancer where you are roughly paying for ..and that's what I call RUF..you're roughly paying for...but you're ..what your (use) you have.

PARTICIPANT:

It's a revenue shortfall and how are they going to fix it?

PARTICIPANT:

We need to have a mascot that's a dog if you're talking about RUF.

[laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

I think even a larger component of that is not only are revenues are going down but usage is going up. And to...

AS:

That's not sustainable.

PARTICIPANT:

No, it is not.

PARTICIPANT:

Salaries are going up. Price of () is going up.

PARTICIPANT:

Labor.

PARTICIPANT:

We also have a lot of people from out of state that spend a good portion of the year here but the cars are registered in other states. And I wonder if it would be something that could make that a little fairer. Like we have a lot of students here and their cars are all registered in other states. What makes it..what's the criteria of...

PARTICIPANT:

How would you track that?

PARTICIPANT:

I don't know. I'm just saying in a week...

PARTICIPANT:

() turn around and say oh, okay we'll tax your guys coming in by the bus every day.

PARTICIPANT:

We have a huge amount of people who ...from other states that are bordering New Hampshire that..

PARTICIPANT:

Still, if they're paying gas here then we are getting something from them.

PARTICIPANT:

But they're not registering here.

PARTICIPANT:

But I see...there's no RUF.

PARTICIPANT:

You could have...if we try to get too much from people from other states then we have reciprocity in all these states () do to each other and it's a big battle.

PARTICIPANT:

But they're paying the toll and we do get some money back from the federal government on the tolls, right?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

So if they're coming..they come into the state from Massachusetts.

PARTICIPANT:

People are coming up...

AS:

It's not () liquor store...

PARTICIPANT:

They take it home.

PARTICIPANT:

But the tolls are just ().

PARTICIPANT:

Do we have any numbers..?

PARTICIPANT:

But we still get money into the general fund from that, too, right?

AS:

From the tolls?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

AS:

The tolls are pretty segregated because those are set up by federal government.

PARTICIPANT:

Where does the money..don't we get money back from them?

AS:

No, it's money that stays in the state. But it's segregated for use on the roads where you....

PARTICIPANT:

The highway..

AS:

You can't use those..

PARTICIPANT:

It's still a road usage..

AS:

But it's for the...

PARTICIPANT:

The highway is owned by the federal government.

PARTICIPANT:

Consider it a private road. There actually are companies in other states where a company will put in a road and you pay a fee and it goes back to the state because they're in charge of the road.

PARTICIPANT:

() giving us...the highway to (Princeton) down to Nashua, that's a state road. It's not a federal road. Those monies are segregated by the state ...federal. They can only be used to maintain ..

AS:

The state, that road.

PARTICIPANT:

The () road, the infrastructure of that road.

PARTICIPANT:

That's the Everett Turnpike, right?

PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

AS:

Same is true for some of the bridges and some of the...

PARTICIPANT:

!-91 and that way...

PARTICIPANT:

The question I had is are out of state cars in New Hampshire, we have those figures of, do we have estimates of how many miles are driven on our roads by out of state cars? Is it significant enough on this shortfall?

PARTICIPANT:

It's ()

PARTICIPANT:

Cause it could be insignificant.

PARTICIPANT:

Are all states different? Or what's the criteria for registering your car in the state? You have to be six months in that state?

PARTICIPANT:

Florida it's thirty days.

PARTICIPANT:

But again, that's where you have those..some states will give you a deal because they're trying to get more cars registered. Indiana, you look at most of your trucks on the road. A large number of

them have Indiana plates because Indiana offers some of the lowest registration fees for trucks in the country. So, there..

AS:

There's always somebody who can game the system.

PARTICIPANT:

Delaware, has their situation that makes people want to incorporate in Delaware. So there are going to be some states that will take a hit if they're looking for volume. a

PARTICIPANT:

EZ Pass knows if you're from Massachusetts. They will clock you when you come in on Friday, clock you when you leave on Sunday. They know how long you've been here. And they could partner with EZ Pass to add on a fee there.

PARTICIPANT:

Seriously.

AS:

I've got the EZ Pass in here several times. I'm just..I don't know how that would possibly work but it's something that we could certainly bring up to them about that, try to figure that out. So I'm being cognizant of our time. We've beaten this horse pretty good. Are there any other things that you haven't had a chance to think about or say?

PARTICIPANT:

I just has a question. Do you know where does the money go at a charging station? For an electric vehicle?

AS:

I don't know. I have no idea.

PARTICIPANT:

A lot of those are free. If you have a Tesla..and you go to the one on the interstate that's part of the cost of owning a Tesla, is that they put those things out. You don't pay anything.

PARTICIPANT:

But somebody's paying to () somewhat.

PARTICIPANT:

Elon Musk is.

AS:

I don't think he..I think we are.

PARTICIPANT:

Still, there's some deal running now. But again those might be the things that..they're incentivizing now but after we hit a certain number then the incentives can go away and they can start charging.

PARTICIPANT:

That was..

PARTICIPANT:

Tesla's putting charging stations in people's homes. They just put on in my son in Nashua, who just bought a Tesla. Well, he's had problems with it. Maintenance. I told him he was going to have problems with it. So they put, in his garage a charging station. They just had to boost the 110 up to 220. And put it right in. Didn't charge him a thing.

PARTICIPANT:

He's paying more in higher electric bills, but yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh yeah.

PARTICIPANT:

Part of the vehicle cost...

PARTICIPANT:

Depends...where you plug it in. I think if you plug it in near the Common Man..

PARTICIPANT:

For ninety thousand dollars.

PARTICIPANT:

If you plug in somewhere else..

AS:

Any other things about this...

PARTICIPANT:

I'm just in favor of raising the gas tax at the pump.

AS:

Still like the gas tax?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I would..I'd take look at..

AS:

How many would just pay for raising the gas tax at the pump and leaving this out?

PARTICIPANT:

At least it was ()...

PARTICIPANT:

Not that I like it, necessarily...

PARTICIPANT:

()Plateau..electric vehicles.

PARTICIPANT:

You mentioned something about that..I would agree with raising the fuel tax at the pump except for the electric and hybrid vehicles.

PARTICIPANT:

Again, they could pay that RUF tax then.

PARTICIPANT:

They pay a flat rate tax fee, call it the RUF tax if you like. And then if you're talking about, I don't know how many people, if you remember in this state we used to pay our taxes once a year. Property taxes, once a year. When they got to a certain point and people couldn't afford it that's when they split it up into twice. I remember when my town voted on it. So,

PARTICIPANT:

So maybe it's time to register twice a year?

PARTICIPANT:

That's the other thing is your registration may be twice a year.

AS:

We'll be doing that monthly.

PARTICIPANT:

Oh my God.

AS:

I'm going to say thank you everybody for your time...and I have one last logistical thing that I have to get from you...if you could write your name and sign your name and [finishing up, talking about parting gifts and thank you...]