



# ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

**HON. TED MORTON**  
LEGISLATOR

October 16, 2014

Hon. Eric Schneiderman  
NYS Attorney General  
The Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Attorney General Schneiderman,

Today, I am calling on your office to investigate the current gasoline prices in Erie County, relative to the rest of New York State and the United States. Every time there is a prolonged decline in oil and gasoline prices on the world commodity markets, the rest of NYS and the country benefit far quicker than the consumers in Erie County. Similar previous investigations have concluded that Erie County is at the “end” of the pipeline and therefore it takes longer for prices to fall here.

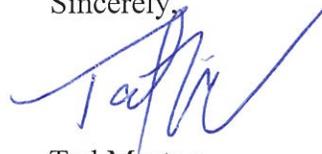
Based on 30 years of private sector employment observing commodity prices, I refute this explanation for two reasons:

- 1). The Cattaraugus Indian Reservation in Irving, New York is as far west as any part of Erie County. During periods of stable prices, its gasoline prices are 25-30 cents less than those in Erie County. Today, prices are 60 cents less. The Reservation is obviously receiving cheaper gasoline at a further distance than the rest of Erie County.
- 2). When the prices on the futures market—where retail prices are set—change, it takes time to change at the pump. However, many parts of America are currently close to or below \$3 a gallon. The rate of decline is always quicker than in WNY. If this was true when prices go up, it would even out. However, the “distance” issue is never an issue in times of rising prices. When Hurricane Katrina hit there was the possibility of a gasoline shortage. Prices skyrocketed within days, often increasing more than once a day. Being at the “end” of the pipeline sure didn’t matter during that time period.

Based on current prices in the commodity markets, regular gasoline prices should be 40-50 cents less per gallon than it is today. For many families this is \$20-40 a week extra in gasoline costs, compared to most of the rest of New York and the United States. For the vast majority of Erie County residents, these savings are significant.

I am calling on the Attorney General for a fair and comprehensive investigation into this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ted Morton", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Ted Morton  
Erie County Legislator  
8<sup>th</sup> District

\*Please see the enclosed documents for further reference.



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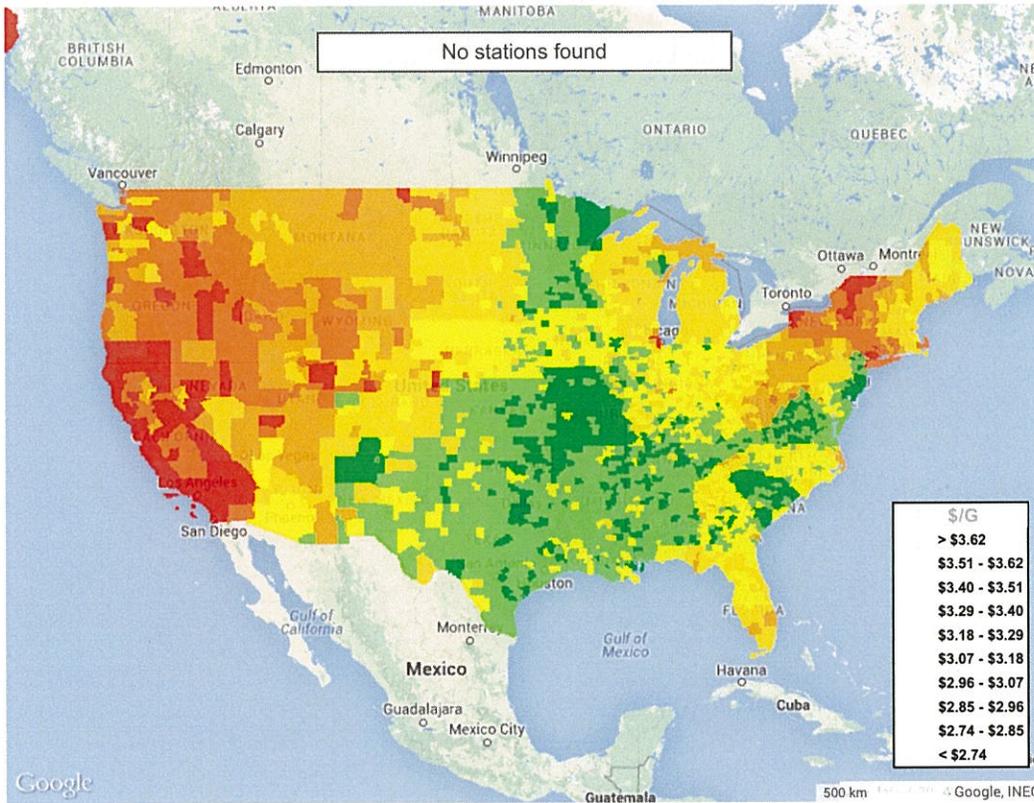
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### USA National Gas Price Heat Map

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### 36 Month Average Retail Price Chart

