

**A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BE
LEGISLATORS LORIGO, GREENE, TODARO, AND MILLS**

Re: Support for statewide suspension of New York's Gas Tax

WHEREAS, according to AAA, as of March 22nd, the average cost of a gallon of regular grade gasoline was \$4.36 in New York State. The current rate is in contrast to the January 2021 average of \$2.26, the January 2020 average of \$2.22 and the pre-pandemic January 2019 average of \$2.24; and

WHEREAS, in Erie County, it is our poor and middle-class residents who feel the most financial pain from the swiftly rising costs of gasoline; and

WHEREAS, in New York, the cost of gasoline at the pump includes federal, state, and local taxes. In total, the taxes and fees on a gallon of gas include a Federal Excise Tax, the NYS Petroleum Business Tax, the NYS Spill Tax, the NYS Petroleum Testing Fee, a NYS Excise Tax, a NYS Sales tax and Erie County Sales Tax. According to the Erie County Comptroller's Gas Tax Calculator, at \$4.362 cents per gallon, the average cost per gallon of regular fuel in New York State creates \$0.78 per gallon in taxes; and

WHEREAS, in total, New York State collects nearly \$2.8 billion a year in revenue from the collection of the state gas taxes. These taxes are intended to provide funding for infrastructure maintenance and repairs. Despite the importance of infrastructure expenditures, New York State will see an influx in federal infrastructure money in 2022 so it is also an ideal time to pass relief on to our residents; and

WHEREAS, with ineffective public transit and a sprawling metro area, fuel costs are a significant expense in the everyday life of residents in Erie County. Heightened levels of inflation over the past year have already eaten away at the relative purchasing power of county residents and the excessive and swift hikes in the price of gasoline have made that even worse; and

WHEREAS, members of the New York State Senate leadership have proposed a suspension of the collection of some of the gas taxes that, if approved, would be in effect from May 1 through December 31, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Senate proposal would suspend the collection of nearly 16 cents per gallon in sales and motor fuel taxes, or roughly one-third of all taxes collected for each gallon of gasoline; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Assembly Speaker, Carl Heastie, has indicated a willingness to hold discussions on the proposal and Governor Hochul has also hinted at her interest in the topic; and

WHEREAS, Maryland and Georgia have already enacted similar temporary gas tax caps for their states, with Maryland drivers saving \$0.36 cents per gallon of regular gas and Georgia residents saving \$0.29 cents per gallon of regular grade gasoline; and

WHEREAS, Erie County residents would benefit from a decrease in the amount of taxes imposed on daily life.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this honorable body hereby urges the Governor of New York and the entire New York State Legislature to act on behalf of Erie County residents to provide immediate relief from oppressive fuel prices; and, be it further

RESOLVED, this body further supports a temporary suspension in the collection of New York State's gas tax and urges the entire New York State Senate, the New York State Assembly and Governor Hochul to join in that support by including it in the coming New York State Budget; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this honorable body hereby urges the Governor and Legislature to go further and permanently suspend all New York State Gas Taxes whenever pre-tax gas prices exceed \$3.50 per gallon; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Kathy Hochul's Office, the Western New York Delegation for the New York State Senate and New York State Assembly, and any other party deemed necessary and proper.

Fiscal Impact: None for resolution