

NTUI NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL TAXPAYERS UNITED OF ILLINOIS

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TAXPAYERS URGE LAWMAKERS TO CUT STATE GAS TAX BY 10¢ PER GALLON

CHICAGO—The president of Illinois' largest taxpayer group today sent a letter to every member of the Illinois General Assembly urging a 10¢ per-gallon cut in the state gasoline tax.

"Illinois taxpayers are struggling with gas prices that are rising higher and higher," said **Jim Tobin**, president of National Taxpayers United of Illinois (NTUI) in the letter faxed to lawmakers today. "Meanwhile ... the Illinois state government's tax revenue is up \$3 billion in the first 10 months of FY2004 over the first 10 months of FY2003- an increase of 7% or more than three times the rate of inflation. Illinois is currently the 13th highest-taxed state in the nation... The extraordinary amount of extra revenue in the state's coffers only confirms that [the legislator's] constituents are overtaxed and in need of relief."

"Obviously, the state can afford to ease the burden on taxpayers by cutting the gas tax," continued Tobin in his letter. "A 10¢ state gas-tax cut will save taxpayers approximately \$635 million. This is less than the \$700 million Gov. Blagojevich has already transferred out of highway funds this year, where the gas tax revenue is deposited. The governor has also pointed out a \$1.7 billion surplus in 'special state funds' that could be tapped in FY2005."

"The Illinois gasoline taxes have gone into overdrive," said Tobin, "and it's time to put on the brakes. If the politicians in Springfield decide to sit on a \$3 billion revenue increase while their constituents struggle just to fill up their gas tanks, you can bet a lot of incumbents will be driven right out of office in November."

According to the Illinois Taxpayer Education Foundation (ITEF), which collected data straight from the Illinois Comptroller's website (www.ioc.state.il.us), the \$3 billion state revenue increase includes a \$1.7 billion increase in revenue from the largest state tax revenue sources, and excludes \$36 billion in funds double-counted by the state. In addition to the 19¢ state gas tax, Illinois taxpayers also pay the state 1.1¢ per gallon in environmental taxes and a 6% state sales tax on gasoline, as well as county and municipal gas taxes and an 18.4¢-per-gallon federal gas tax.

More information on ITEF's study of the \$3 billion increase in FY2004 state revenue is available online at www.ntui.org.

Founded in 1976, NTUI is the largest taxpayer organization in Illinois with over 10,000 members and affiliation with more than 200 local taxpayer groups.

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