

NATIONAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION REPORT AND CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT:

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES

There are significant differences between the Chairman's Statement and the report issued by nine members of the commission, as well as areas where they agree. Below is a comparison of those positions.

Chairman's Statement:

- No tax increases. We're spending billions today and doing far too little to address congestion. The federal government should focus on truly national priorities, provide incentives to state and local officials to tackle congestion and explore alternative financial approaches.
- Reduce federal regulatory impediments to state and local decisions.
- Give states added flexibility to finance and manage transportation facilities through public-private partnerships and other innovative forms of procurement.
- Eliminate earmarks and reduce Congress' ability to spend money on special interest projects.
- Federal spending levels should be driven not by an artificial, politically driven percentage, but rather a focus on making cost beneficial, high priority national investments. Flexibility for transit operators to structure their own fares.
- Place greater emphasis on state performance in connection with federal grants and streamline decision-making process requirements.

ISSUE:

Higher gas taxes

Transportation governance

Role of Private Sector

Earmarking

Federal share of overall highways and transit investments

Performance versus Process

Commission Report:

- If implemented, would represent the largest gas tax hike in U.S. history that would continue increasing every year. Drivers would pay up to 40 cents more per gallon within five years, rising to up to 91 cents in 20 years when adjusted for inflation.
- Create a new, unaccountable, federal bureaucracy outside both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch that would assume a variety of central planning functions.
- Impose new federal regulations on the ability of state governments to contract with and attract investment from the private sector.
- Eliminate earmarks while tempting Congress with billions more in federal transportation revenue.
- Maintain historic federal share at 40 percent. Brand new transit ticket tax.
- Place greater emphasis on state performance in connection with federal grants and streamline decision-making process requirements.