MISSISSIPPI

Transportation Funding Initiative

Legislative Session: This bill was introduced on January 14, 2013.

Type of Legislation: House Bill 265

Sponsor of Legislation: Representative Robert Johnson (D-Natchez)

Summary of Legislation: This bill would not have changed Mississippi’s fuel tax. However, it would have added a 6% tax to gasoline’s wholesale price, and this tax would be adjusted and recalculated every 6 months.

Status of Legislation: The bill died in Committee on February 27, 2013. HB 265 was sent to both the House Transportation Committee and to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Main Issues

- Lack of Political Will To Act.

Lieutenant Governor Tate Reeves (R) told reporters that state legislators would not likely pass this proposal given the unpopularity of tax increases in general. Although HB 265 initially passed out of the Transportation Committee, the bill eventually died in committee in February 2013. Representative Johnson said he would pursue a referendum if the bill did not pass. At this point, it is unclear about Johnson’s future plans for statewide referendum.

- Lack of Media Attention.

- Lack of Outside Organizational Support/Mobilization.

- Lack of Strong Support from State Leadership and/or the Governor.

Proponents

- House Transportation Chairman Robert Johnson: “We haven’t done anything in 20 years…how do you justify that?” (“Johnson: Road Tax Hike Justified; Not Likely”).

- Republican Dick Hall, State Transportation Commissioner

- Senator Willie Simmons (Cleveland): “To sit here and let that deteriorate would be absolutely stupid” (Wagster).

Opposition

- American Motorcyclist Association
- Lieutenant Governor Tate Reeves (R)
Text of Legislation


References

http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2013/pdf/history/HB/HB0265.xml


http://blog.gulflive.com/mississippi-press-news/2013/03/house_transportation_chairman.html

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http://mpbonline.org/News/article/time_to_raise_the_state_gas_tax


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