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## **MITA: To Fund Road Fixes, Look Beyond Increasing Gas Tax**

Increasing fuel taxes may not be the best way to secure funding to bring roads up to standard, a leading road advocacy group said Tuesday.

In a presentation to the [House Transportation, Mobility and Infrastructure Committee](#), Lance Binoniemi, vice president of government affairs for the Michigan Infrastructure and Transportation Association, said the state currently needs another \$3.9 billion a year to bring 90 percent of its roads in "good or fair" condition.

According to most recent evaluations by the American Society of Civil Engineers, Michigan's roadways received a "D" grade and ranked 47th in the nation in road and infrastructure spending.

"The citizens of Michigan should look at this and be ashamed that we are having these poor conditions in our infrastructure," Binoniemi said. "It's not a real question why — we have under invested in our infrastructure for decades."

However, rather than helping to pay for roads by increasing fuel taxes for Michiganders at the pump, Binoniemi said it could be time for alternative fundraising methods like toll roads or per-mile fees for drivers.

"The [Growing Michigan Together] Council expressed the need to transfer away from a gas tax funded system and examine alternative dedicated funding sources to maintain Michigan's roads infrastructure," Binoniemi said. "We are a bit behind in Michigan when it comes to a road usage charge model or vehicle miles traveled model, and we believe that this is the direction that most states will end up going."

Some committee members voiced openness to implementing new funding options, while others were wary of rising costs for drivers. [Rep.](#)

[Pat Outman](#) (R-Six Lakes) said any sort of tax increase would be a "nonstarter" in his district.

"I can't sell this in my district," Outman said. "I think we can achieve what [MITA] want to achieve without going through all these things, raising the gas tax, raising registration fees, some of those methods of increasing taxes."

—By Lily Guiney

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