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SID SAAB, DISTRICT 33

KATHY SZELIGA, DISTRICT 7

BRENDA J. THIAM, DISTRICT 2B

WILLIAM J. WIVELL, DISTRICT 2A

May 24, 2022

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor of Maryland
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of the Senate
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan, Madam Speaker, and Mr. President:

On behalf of all Marylanders, we are writing to urge you to call a Special Session of the Maryland General Assembly with the limited focus of suspending Maryland's gas tax for up to 90 days and preventing the inflationary increase to Maryland's gas tax that will occur on July 1, 2022.

With the average price of regular gasoline quickly approaching \$5 per gallon, Maryland families are struggling. When the gas tax holiday was instituted on March 18, 2022, the average price of regular gasoline was approximately \$4.18 per gallon. The average price of regular gasoline in Maryland now sits at \$4.61 per gallon. This price is a historic high according to AAA MidAtlantic. Gas prices in Maryland are now 11% higher than they were when the gas tax holiday was imposed, and prices have increased by 14 cents in the last week. We cannot say where the ceiling is, but it does not look like we are there yet. Marylanders need our help.

Given the global nature of gas prices, Maryland has limited options to help our citizens. While limited, the necessary actions are very clear. We must reinstate a gas tax holiday to help offset the burden of high gas prices. We must also stop the automatic gas tax increase that will come in July due to the gas tax being indexed to inflation. To do anything less at a time of historic prices and economic turmoil is immoral.

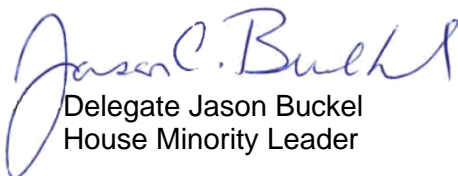
During the 2022 Legislative Session, members of our Caucus tried to extend the gas tax holiday. This effort was rejected by our colleagues in the House who cited fears for the future of transportation projects should the gas tax holiday be continued. This ignores the fact that Maryland has enjoyed and is projected to continue to see historic budget surpluses for the next several years and record amounts of federal infrastructure spending (largely for transportation-related projects) will be flowing into Maryland's coffers in the next budget cycle. Just as budget actions were taken to offset revenue losses in the Transportation Trust Fund for the last gas tax holiday, similar actions can be taken again.

Members of our Caucus also tried multiple times during the 2022 Legislative Session to end the inflationary gas tax increases. These efforts were rejected. If the General Assembly does not act, Maryland's gas tax will increase by 6.6 cents – more than 18% – on July 1, 2022. Automatic tax increases fail to consider the real-time economic consequences of such a tax increase and also allow elected officials to avoid accountability by claiming nothing can be done. The Maryland General Assembly has the power to stop this tax increase, and we owe it to the citizens of Maryland to do what is right.

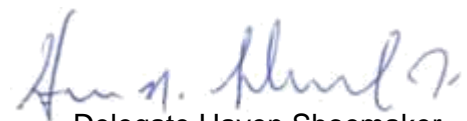
Few things impact the lives and livelihoods of most Marylanders the way gas prices do. For Maryland families it is not only a matter of affording to take vacations; is a matter of being able to afford to drive to work, to the grocery store, or the doctor's office. For Maryland's small businesses, it is a matter of affording to deliver their products without passing on too much overhead to their customers.

If the Maryland General Assembly does not act now to mitigate gas prices, we have failed the citizens of Maryland. We urge you to call a limited Special Session of the Maryland General Assembly in June to establish another gas tax holiday *and* stop the automatic gas tax increase.

Sincerely yours,



Delegate Jason Buckel
House Minority Leader




Delegate Haven Shoemaker
House Minority Whip



Delegate April Rose
Assistant Minority Leader



Delegate Wayne Hartman
Chief Deputy Minority Whip



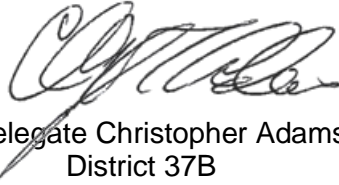
Delegate Brian Chisholm
Assistant Minority Whip



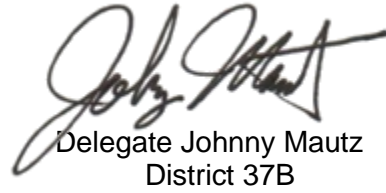
Delegate Nino Mangione
District 42B



Delegate Nic Kipke
District 31B



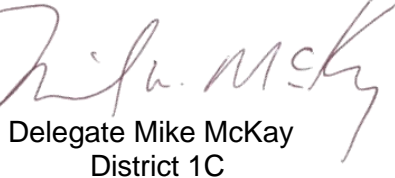
Delegate Christopher Adams
District 37B



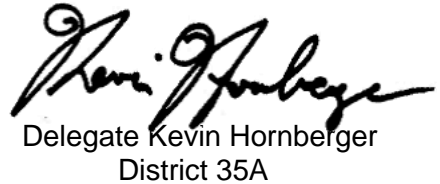
Delegate Johnny Mautz
District 37B



Delegate Matt Morgan
District 29A



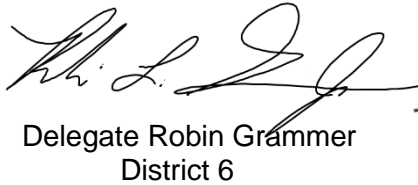
Delegate Mike McKay
District 1C



Delegate Kevin Hornberger
District 35A



Delegate Ric Metzgar
District 6



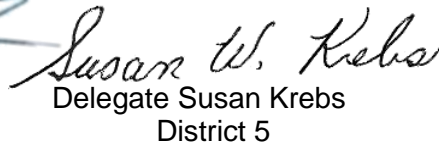
Delegate Robin Grammer
District 6



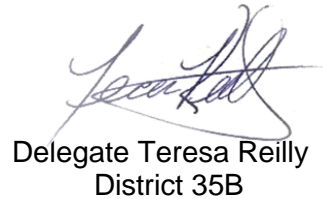
Delegate Steve Arentz
District 36



Delegate Jeff Ghrist
District 36



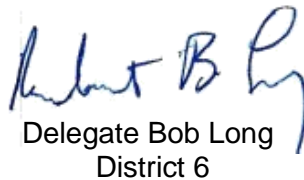
Delegate Susan Krebs
District 5



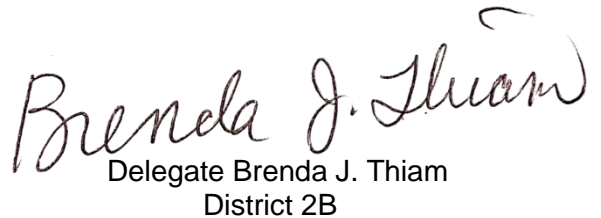
Delegate Teresa Reilly
District 35B



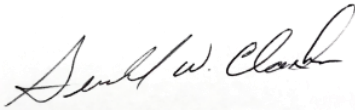
Delegate Mike Griffith
District 35B



Delegate Bob Long
District 6



Delegate Brenda J. Thiam
District 2B



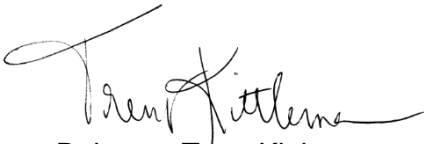
Delegate Jerry Clark
District 29C



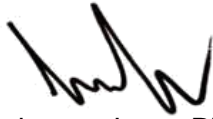
Delegate Lauren Arikan
District 7



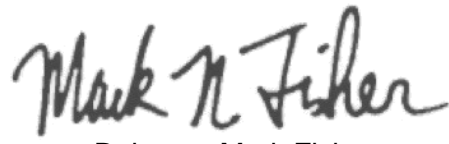
Delegate Kathy Szeliga
District 7



Delegate Trent Kittleman
District 9A



Delegate Jesse Pippy
District 4



Delegate Mark Fisher
District 27C



Delegate Seth Howard
District 30B



Delegate Reid Novotny
District 9A



Delegate William Wivell
District 2A



Delegate Susan McComas
District 34B



Delegate Charles Otto
District 38A



Delegate Rick Impallaria
District 7



Delegate Joe Boteler
District 8