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# Lawmakers urge Gov. Abbott to call special session to suspend Texas gas tax

 **Dug Begley, Staff writer**  
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Gas pumps are lined up, Wednesday, June 15, 2022, in Houston.  
Mark Mulligan, Houston Chronicle / Staff photographer

Democratic lawmakers on Tuesday sought a suspension of Texas' gasoline tax, citing the

burden high pump prices are placing on families and the state's ample economic reserves.

Twenty state representatives, many from the Houston area, signed the letter to Gov. Greg Abbott, urging him to call a special session so the legislature can use its authority to halt collection of the state's 20-cent tax on every gallon of gasoline.

"This plan is about sharing the wealth of Texas's natural resources with working families by giving relief to drivers who have seen the price of gasoline nearly double in the past year," said state Rep. Penny Morales Shaw, D-Houston.

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PENNY MORALES SHAW

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • DISTRICT 148

June 28, 2022

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor of Texas  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Abbott,

We write to you today to respectfully request that you convene the Legislature so that we may authorize a temporary suspension of the state's 20-cent-per-gallon motor fuels tax, as well as assess the long term direction of gas prices and what steps should be taken accordingly.

The price of gas is at record levels here and throughout the country, having nearly doubled since last year. Compounding this with soaring inflation across other critical consumer goods and the challenging post-pandemic economic recovery ahead, our constituents across Texas are facing a terrible burden. Whether it's families with children trying to make mortgage or rent payments, seniors on fixed incomes, or small businesses dealing with surging operating budgets, we need the State of Texas to take action on behalf of working families.

As of the writing of this letter, several other states have already taken steps to implement a gas tax holiday. Texas should follow suit. We can afford to do this by drawing on the state's large – and growing – surplus to offset reductions in revenue incurred by a temporary suspension of the motor fuels tax. As of the Comptroller's stated estimate last week, the state treasury is projected to have an end-of-year balance of \$15 billion to \$16 billion, while the state's "Rainy Day Fund" is projected to have a \$13.5 billion balance. With tax revenues for this year set to far exceed expectations, thanks in large part to increases in the price of oil and natural gas, it is critical that the wealth from Texas's natural resources redound to Texans.

We appreciate your willingness to consider this request and look forward to working with you to support the millions of Texas households and businesses that have been struggling in the face of this crisis.

In the Houston region, regular unleaded gasoline averaged \$4.52 per gallon, a 10-cent decrease from last week, but \$1.79 more than drivers paid at the pump one year ago.

Meanwhile, the state's economic stabilization fund, also called the rainy day fund, has \$13.5 billion according to state officials.

“With tax revenues for this year set to far exceed expectations, thanks in large part to increases in the price of oil and natural gas, it is critical that the wealth from Texas's natural resources redound to Texans,” the lawmakers said.

dug.begley@chron.com

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Written By  
**Dug Begley**

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Dug Begley is the transportation writer for the Houston Chronicle.