

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 4, 2011

President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Rising energy prices and the negative effect that they have on consumers, job creators, and the greater economy are of grave concern to all Americans. During these tough economic times, it is important that we do everything we can to mitigate the impact of high energy prices and avoid additional increases. With that in mind, we write today to express concern with the proposed \$435 billion in revenue contained in your budget request for Fiscal Year 2012, labeled as the “Bipartisan financing for Transportation Trust Fund.” Specifically, we request that you make clear to the American people and Congress how this \$435 billion will be financed.

You have provided in your Fiscal Year 2012 budget specific, year-by-year totals of the amount of revenue projected to be raised by a “Bipartisan financing for Transportation Trust Fund.” For example, according to your budget, this fund would provide \$26 billion next year alone. However, your budget submitted to Congress contains no details on how this revenue would be raised. Furthermore, in its recent re-estimate of your budget proposal, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office noted that “the absence of any information about the nature of the taxes or fees that might be used to produce revenues [for this fund] did not allow an assessment of the potential budgetary effects.” Also, while your budget states that you have not assumed an increase in gas taxes, it goes on to state that the new revenues “have the general characteristics of an excise tax.” This language is contradictory.

To communicate to our constituents whether or not the \$435 billion trust fund represents a large gas tax increase, we respectfully request details on how the Administration calculated the amount of revenue it envisions for the “Bipartisan financing for Transportation Trust Fund.” More specifically, given the exact numbers provided in your budget, we request information as to what revenue stream the Administration assumed would fund this new transportation trust fund in the coming year.

As energy prices continue to increase, we are hopeful that this new revenue stream proposed by the Administration would not be a new gas tax on American consumers. We appreciate your clarification on an issue that affects the everyday lives of our constituents.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to your prompt response.

Respectfully,

Mark

Tom Carls

John Thum

Mike Johnson

Sayby Claubkin

Jan E. Riel

[Signature]

John McTier

Kay Bailey Hutchison

Kelly Ayotte

Tom Wilson

[Signature]

Allyson S. [Signature]

John Ericson

John Boozman

John Cornyn

Richard Shelby

Scott P. Brown

Jon Kyl

Chuck Grassley

John Barrasso

Mike Lee

Clark Kent
