



121 S. Pinckney St., Suite 300
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
Phone (608) 256-7555
Toll-Free (888) 856-7555
Fax (608) 256-7666
www.wpmca.org

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Contact: Matt Hauser, President
Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association
608-256-7555

Flawed Oil Franchise Tax Moves Forward

Pleased Some Committee Members Recognize Fixes Are Needed

Madison, Wis. (May 29, 2009) – Matt Hauser, President, Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association says that Governor Jim Doyle’s proposed oil company franchise tax will do nothing to tap the profits of “Big Oil” and could end up costing Wisconsin consumers millions of dollars in increased taxes at the pump.

“We’re pleased some committee members recognize the Governor’s proposal needs fixing. Most legal experts agree the anti-pass-thru language will be found unconstitutional. No state has ever successfully blocked oil companies from passing these fees on to retailers. Once the anti-pass-thru is removed, all that remains is a hidden tax that increases every time the price of gas goes up, causing additional pain at the pump for both retailers and consumers,” said Hauser.

A coalition of independent businesses presented several viable solutions to address the growing road and infrastructure funding issue, including a much smaller, but more dependable gas tax increase. Under the Governor’s proposal, the tax would be approximately six cents per gallon at today’s prices, rather than a straight-forward two or three cents per gallon tax that would stay the same no matter where the price of gasoline goes.

WPMCA believes that transportation infrastructure development is absolutely critical to growing Wisconsin’s economy. We are hopeful the State Legislature will follow the lead of some committee members and work together to craft a better funding alternative.

WPMCA represents over 2000 independent petroleum marketers, convenience store owners, truck stop and travel plaza operators, automotive oil change outlets and other automotive service providers throughout Wisconsin. These companies sell over 80 percent of the motor fuel and nearly all of the farm fuel and heating oil sold in Wisconsin.