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## Politics blog: Doyle open to gas tax as alternative to oil company tax

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April 20, 2009

Gov. Jim Doyle said he's open to a 3-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax increase as an alternative to his proposed tax on oil company profits.

Doyle wants to pay for roads by raising taxes on oil companies by \$272 million over two years and then requiring the firms not to pass the tax on to consumers.

But some business groups have been pushing an increase to the state's gasoline tax instead, saying it wouldn't face the potential legal challenge that the oil tax would. Doyle said Monday he preferred his tax as he proposed it but would consider the other proposal.

"I give them credit. They've really worked to come up with a proposal and I think it's one that's worthy of consideration," Doyle said of the gasoline tax supporters.

Erin Roth, executive director of the Wisconsin Petroleum Council, said the plan put forward by his group and others would include \$306 million in new money for the state's road fund raised through the 3-cent tax and added fees.

Wisconsin's motor fuels tax is now 30.9 cents per gallon, which as of January made it the second highest in the nation. Wisconsin also adds 2 cents per gallon for an environmental cleanup fund.

Doyle spoke to a conference of United Auto Worker representatives in Madison just days before the General Motors plant in Janesville is scheduled to shut down. Speaking to reporters after the event, Doyle said he continues to speak with GM officials about the slim chance of reopening the plant.

"They have repeated to me even as recently as in the last couple of weeks that Janesville continues to be something they're looking at," Doyle said. "But I don't want anybody to draw any false hope from that."

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