

Fuel Retailers, Truckstops and Travel Plazas Oppose House Committee Surface Transportation Bill, 'INVEST In America Act'



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ALEXANDRIA, Va., June 17, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- NATSO, representing the nation's truckstops and travel plazas, the National Association of Convenience Stores and the Society of Independent Gasoline Marketers of America, today encouraged members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to oppose the INVEST in America Act.

The groups specifically expressed concern with two provisions that will discourage private businesses from investing in electric vehicle charging and stifle the market's transition to electric vehicles.

Specifically, NATSO, NACS and SIGMA expressed concern with:

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services at rest areas. The ban on commercial activities at Interstate rest areas has been essential to incentivizing businesses to invest in fuel stations just off of America's highways for as long as the Interstate system has existed. Against this market and policy backdrop, drivers of gasoline-powered cars do not suffer from range anxiety.

2. A provision in Section 1303 that would allow investor-owned utilities to "double-dip," receiving federal grants even if they have already raised rates on all of their customers to underwrite electric vehicle charging infrastructure investments. This policy would discourage private investment. Fuel retailers will not invest in a technology where they have to pay for their own infrastructure -- and recover those costs -- while utilities have all of their investments covered by unwilling underwriters.

"This is the first time in NATSO's 60-year history that we have opposed a federal highway bill," said NATSO President and CEO Lisa Mullings. "We want to see smart policies to incentivize our members to invest in electric vehicle charging infrastructure. That is why we must oppose this bill." Mullings emphasized that NATSO wants to work with lawmakers to expand alternative fuels, including EV charging.

The three trade groups, representing approximately 90 percent of retail sales of motor fuel in the United States, sent a letter to the Transportation Committee members today stating that the INVEST Act will undoubtedly stifle the market's transition to EVs.

The groups said that the highway reauthorization bill passed last summer by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, which was supported by NATSO, "creates a regulatory framework that is far more compatible with increasing investment in EV charging infrastructure than the INVEST Act." The Senate EPW bill included grants for EV charging infrastructure along highway corridors similar to the INVEST Act, but does not commercialize rest areas or encourage utilities to double-dip.

"For decades, we've invested in new infrastructure to meet our customers' evolving fueling needs," Mullings said. "Our industry invested in diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) infrastructure when

market before, and private businesses have always stepped up."

NATSO announced earlier this year that it formed the National Highway Charging Collaborative with North America's largest electric vehicle charging vendor, ChargePoint, to add electric vehicle charging to more than 4,000 travel plazas in the next decade. "The INVEST Act threatens that goal," Mullings said.

To view the full letter, click here:

https://www.natso.com/resources/resources/view/document/823?_zs=eqGHR&_zl=Avp82

About NATSO, NACS, and SIGMA

NATSO is the trade association of America's travel plaza and truckstop industry. Founded in 1960, NATSO represents the industry on legislative and regulatory matters; serves as the official source of information on the diverse travel plaza and truckstop industry; provides education to its members; conducts an annual convention and trade show; and supports efforts to generally improve the business climate in which its members operate. Contact: Tiffany Wlazlowski Neuman, Vice President, Public Affairs. 703-739-8578

NACS advances the role of convenience stores as positive economic, social and philanthropic contributors to the communities they serve. The U.S. convenience store industry, with more than 153,000 stores nationwide selling fuel, food and merchandise, serves 165 million customers daily—half of the U.S. population—and has sales that are 10.8% of total U.S. retail and foodservice sales. NACS has 1,900 retailer and 1,800 supplier members from more than 50 countries.

SIGMA represents a diverse membership of approximately 260 independent chain retailers and marketers of motor fuel. While 67 percent are involved in gasoline retailing, 83 percent are involved in wholesaling, 56 percent transport product, 39 percent have bulk plant operations,

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