

NEBRASKA

Lawmaker Opposes Fuel Tax Hike

BY NELSON LAMPE

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — A construction industry group and others who think Nebraska must maintain, improve and expand its highway system are pushing for higher fuel taxes, a new fee or anything fiscally sound that might raise the millions needed.

They fear that neglecting the concrete paths for trade and travel would be too costly for Nebraska's economic future.

"Nebraska's future rides on its roads," said Curt Smith to the *Kearney Hub*. He's executive director of the Nebraska Chapter of the Associated General Contractors. He's suggested an increase of 10 cents a gallon atop the state's current variable rate of 27.1 cents a gallon.

But a key state legislator said Friday that tax increases are not the answer.

"I don't like the idea," said Sen. Deb Fischer, of Valentine. "I live in rural Nebraska. To make a big increase like that in one year, I

just don't think that's feasible."

Department of Roads director Monty Fredrickson told state legislators earlier this month that over the next 20 years, Nebraska must spend \$9.2 billion for state highways — a figure that could climb to \$13.2 billion with inflation.

In December last year, a legislative report said the state only may be able to cover about \$6.4 billion.

The 60-page report said Nebraska's heavy reliance on the fuel tax has created a fiscal crisis because the revenue declines in part because people are driving less and vehicles are getting miserly with fuel.

The report came from Sen. Fischer's Transportation and Telecommunications Committee and included outlines of \$1 tax and fee hikes Nebraskans suggested during a series of public hearings.

Fischer has promised to introduce legislation this coming session to address the revenue problem.

That plan won't include tax increases, she said Friday.

"I don't believe that the gas tax is sustainable any longer to build our roads," she said, again citing Nebraskans' drops in miles driven and increases in the fuel efficiency of their vehicles.

The state needs a large source of revenue if its leaders are "truly going to address the state's highway needs," Fischer said.

"If we as a state are not going to fulfill a core responsibility of government, then we need to be honest about it," the senator said. She intends to lay out her plans before the legislative session begins in January, but she would give no hint of what they might contain.

The backdrop for that unveiling will be red with projected revenue deficits. The state economic forecasting board has forecast a \$1.4 billion budget gap starting next summer, through mid-2013.

Lakota Language Gets A Boost In S.D.

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Officials at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion and Sitting Bull College in Fort Yates, N.D., are developing bachelor's-degree programs to train teachers of Lakota as a second language.

The Department of Education has awarded the two schools a four-year, \$2.4 million grant to institute the programs beginning next year.

They hope to educate 30 new

Lakota language teachers within the initial four years.

Tipizwin Young of Fort Yates wants to become one of those teachers.

Young tells *The Argus Leader* that there is beauty and power in Lakota prayers, songs and words, and they can be very healing.

The education grant will pay for one instructor at each school — a Lakota linguistics expert for USD and, at Sitting Bull, an

instructor specializing in second language methodology.

The grant also will allow 16 Native American students at USD and 14 at Sitting Bull College to receive \$2,000 a month for two years to pay their tuition, fees and living expenses.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime shot to build an important teaching force in the state," said Wil Meya, executive director of the Lakota Language Consortium, an

Indiana-based collaboration among tribal leaders, linguistic experts and second-language education officials to revitalize the Lakota language.

Meya, whose consortium helped put the grant request together and works on everything from teacher training to textbook creation, said there are more than 120,000 potential Lakota speakers in the Northern Plains.

Illinois Man Believed To Be Brain Dead Wakes Up

WEST BURLINGTON, Iowa (AP) — An Illinois man who was believed brain dead after he had an aortic aneurism woke up and began talking, his daughter said.

Gene Stotts, 84, of Okquawka, Ill., suffered the aneurism on Nov. 15 and was taken to Great River Medical Center in West Burlington, where he underwent surgery, *The Hawk Eye* in Burlington reported. Stotts remained sedated afterward and tests showed the only part of his brain that was active was the portion that controlled breathing.

His daughters, Peggy Link and

Shirley Martinez, said the decision was made Tuesday to remove him from the ventilator that helped him breathe. Not wanting to hear their father gasp for air, they left the room, only to have a nurse come get them to tell them their father woke up and was talking.

"It had to be a miracle," Link told *The Hawk Eye* on Thursday. Stotts was able to speak and identify his daughters. Link said she thought she was dreaming at first.

"He asked me for an ice cream cone," she said.

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OBITUARIES

Mercedes

Hoebelheinrich

Mercedes L. Hoebelheinrich, age 84, of Crofton, Nebraska passed away peacefully on Thursday, November 25, 2010 at the Avera Majestic Bluffs Sister James Care Center in Yankton, South Dakota.

Mass of Christian Burial will be on Monday, November 29, 2010 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Crofton with Rev. Timothy Lange officiating. Burial will be in the St. Rose of Lima Cemetery.

Visitation will be on Sunday from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. with a rosary at 4:00 p.m. and a vigil service at 7:00 p.m. at the Wintz Funeral Home in Crofton.

To view her video tribute or to send an online sympathy message, please visit wintzrayfuneralhome.com.

Pallbearers are Kenneth, Chad, Donovan, Dale and Arlan Hoebelheinrich, Thomas



Hoebelheinrich

Mary (Paltz) Becker. She grew up in St. Helena, NE and graduated from Mount Marty High School in Yankton, SD. She married Clarence John Hoebelheinrich on September 21, 1948 in St. Helena, NE. They farmed in rural Crofton, NE. She worked at Gurney's Seed and Nursery in Yankton, SD for 25 years until September 29, 1989, all while raising her family of seven children. She enjoyed cooking and baking for her family as well as gardening, canning, needle work and taking care of her cats. Her favorite pastimes were watching Twins baseball and Husker football and working on word search

Hunhoff and Paul Fuhrer. Honorary pallbearers are her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mercedes was born on February 16, 1926 at St. Helena, Nebraska

to Marcus and

Hoebelheinrich, Yankton, SD,

daughter-in-law, Rosanne

Hoebelheinrich, Crofton, NE,

Rose (Paul) Fuhrer, Omaha, NE,

Donavon (Beverly)

Hoebelheinrich, Yankton, SD,

Lois (Thomas) Hunhoff,

Yankton, SD, Dale (Mary Ann)

Hoebelheinrich, Yankton, SD,

and Arlan (Angie)

Hoebelheinrich, Crofton, NE; 16

grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren; sisters, Rita Vornhagen,

Niobrara, NE, Rose Marie Paulson,

Emerson, NE, Genevieve Schulte, Emerson, NE,

and Charlotte (Alan) Wiebelhaus,

Omaha, NE; brothers,

Florence (Charlene) Becker,

puzzles. Mercedes enjoyed taking part in the activities while at Majestic Bluffs where she was always grateful for the loving care she received. She was a member of St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, the St. Rose Guild and the Christian Mothers.

Grateful for the love

Mercedes shared are her children; Kenneth (Lalonnne)

Hoebelheinrich, Yankton, SD,

daughter-in-law, Rosanne

Hoebelheinrich, Crofton, NE,

Rose (Paul) Fuhrer, Omaha, NE,

Donavon (Beverly)

Hoebelheinrich, Yankton, SD,

Lois (Thomas) Hunhoff,

Yankton, SD, Dale (Mary Ann)

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and Arlan (Angie)

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Niobrara, NE, Rose Marie Paulson,

Emerson, NE, Genevieve Schulte, Emerson, NE,

and Charlotte (Alan) Wiebelhaus,

Omaha, NE; brothers,

Florence (Charlene) Becker,

Forest Lake, MN and Wilford Becker, Omaha, NE; sisters-in-law, Germaine Becker, Hartington, NE and Anita Hoebelheinrich, Rupert, ID; brother-in-law, Reynold (Elizabeth) Hoebelheinrich, Menominee, NE and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Clarence on October 31, 1994 at the age of 77; her son, James on October 13, 2004; her parents; her brother, Donald Becker; sister-in-law, Sharon Becker; brothers-in-law, Ray Vornhagen and Orville Paulson.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
November 27, 2010

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MIDWEST DIGEST

Fremont Mayor Resigns, Citing Health

FREMONT, Neb. (AP) — The mayor of Fremont is citing health concerns as he steps down from the post he's held since 1988.

In 2008 Mayor Donald "Skip" Edwards broke the City Council's 4-4 tie vote on a proposed ordinance barring the hiring of illegal immigrants or renting them any housing in town. The ordinance would have failed on a tie, but Edwards voted against it anyway.

The ordinance was adopted in 2010 after the city voters approved it, but it is being challenged in court.

In a letter to the City Council, Edwards said Wednesday that his ailments have made it tough to perform his duties. He also says he's looking forward to spending more time with his family.

According to the *Fremont Tribune*, Edwards will be replaced by Council President Scott Getzschman.

Longtime Nebraska Assistant Coach Dies

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Longtime Nebraska assistant football coach Dan Young has died at his Lincoln home.

A spokeswoman for Lincoln Memorial Funeral Home says Young died Wednesday at the age of 69.

The *Lincoln Journal Star* says Young had been struck by an inoperable brain tumor that was first diagnosed in July.

Young was hired at Nebraska in 1983 by then-head coach Tom Osborne, who has since become the school's athletic director. Young joined the Huskers after six seasons coaching at Westside High School in Omaha.

Young spent years coaching Husker punters, kickers and offensive linemen. He retired from the Nebraska program in 2002.

Referring to his dad's death, Jeff Young told the *Journal Star*: "I know a lot of people say this, but he really did go in a peaceful manner."

Mount Rushmore Makes Showing In Parade

RAPID CITY (AP) — South Dakota's Mount Rushmore made a showing Thursday during the 84th annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

A float featuring a depiction of the monument made its way down 7th Avenue with musical group Mannheim Steamroller singing holiday songs at Rushmore's base.

Mount Rushmore's American Pride also featured the Black Hills National Forest, area rivers, pine forests, dinosaur fossils and South Dakota wildlife.

KEVN-TV says the South Dakota float also will appear in the 2011 and 2012 parades.

Woman In S.F. Steals Beer At Gunpoint

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Sioux Falls police are looking for a woman who pulled a gun on a convenience store clerk who tried to stop her from shoplifting a case of beer.

Authorities say no one was hurt in the incident shortly after midnight. The woman fled in a car she had filled up with gas before entering the store.

Groton Child Abuse Offender Sent To Prison

ABERDEEN (AP) — A Groton man who pleaded guilty earlier to a child abuse charge has admitted to violating his probation by purchasing beer for two underage people he met at Alcoholics Anonymous.

Twenty-two-year-old Travis Zerr was sentenced to serve three years in prison. The *Aberdeen American News* says he must serve at least half the time before being eligible for parole.

Authorities say the child abuse conviction stemmed from Zerr breaking an infant's arm in August 2009 when he lifted the child by the arm from the floor to a bed.

Zerr also admitted violating his probation by using marijuana.

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Missing Radioactive Package Found

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — FedEx says they have found radioactive rods used for medical equipment that went missing during shipment between North Dakota and Tennessee.

Memphis-based FedEx spokeswoman Sandra Munoz said Friday afternoon the rods that are used for quality control purposes for CT scans were found at the shipping company's Knoxville facility.

The company had to notify authorities this week after the rods went missing while being sent from Fargo, N.D., to Knoxville, Tenn. But

she noted the rods didn't pose any danger as long as they were not removed from the metal cylinder in which they were stored.

She said the cylinder had apparently separated from the rest of the package during shipping and was identified on Friday.

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You may bring a special ornament with the date and child's name on it to hang in memory of your child, or you may use one which we will have available that evening.

Refreshments and a time for sharing with others will follow the candlelight ceremony.

Avera
Sacred Heart Hospital

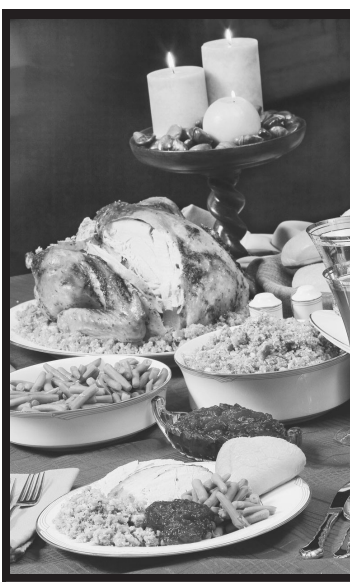
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