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Two Gas Tax Repeal Efforts Compete To Make California's 2018 Ballot

by [Chris Nichols](#)Monday, November 6, 2017 | Sacramento, CA | [Permalink](#)*Mike Mozart / Flickr*

Californians frustrated over the state's recent gas tax hike could have two options to eliminate it next year.

Separate campaigns are working to qualify repeal initiatives for the November 2018 ballot.

One is backed by Orange County state Asm. Travis Allen, a Republican candidate for governor. It would simply get rid of the increase.

The other is supported by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer's Association and John Cox, also a Republican candidate for governor. It would eliminate this year's gas tax increase and require voter approval on all future proposals to raise the gas tax.

This year's increase went into effect on Nov. 1 following approvals by the Legislature and Gov. Jerry Brown in April.

It includes an initial 12-cent-per-gallon gas tax increase; a diesel tax hike; and a new "transportation improvement fee" ranging from \$25 to \$175 per year, depending on the value of one's vehicle. It's expected to raise billions for backlogged state highway and bridge repairs.

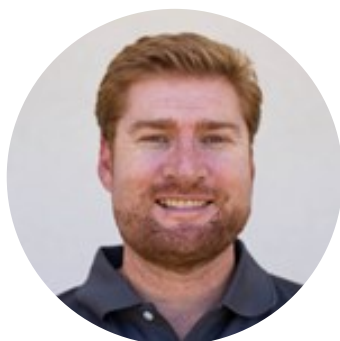
Sacramento State Associate Political Science Professor Wesley Hussey said having two competing plans could harm the overall repeal effort.

"It does confuse voters," Hussey said. "It requires an extra bit of information that voters need to seek out to figure out the difference between them. And that can oftentimes lead to an increased amount of no votes on both initiatives."

Of the two campaigns, Hussey said the one backed by the taxpayer's association was the most likely to succeed because it will likely receive more funding.

He said the repeal effort will face strong opposition from groups who are benefitting from the gas tax increase.

"I imagine there would be a lot of money spent to defeat this initiative," Hussey said, "by the trade unions and manufacturers that benefit from the extra money for road construction. There could be a big coalition that does not want this initiative to pass. And there could be a sizeable coalition of conservative and anti-tax groups that would like it to pass."

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Chris Nichols

PolitiFact Reporter



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