

A SAFER ROAD TO TOMORROW

January 2020

Two New Road Usage Fee Bills Proposed in House

The 2020 legislative session has produced two new bills regarding a road usage fee to help raise revenue for state infrastructure. One will be the latest iteration of Representative Norm Major's concept of an annual fee based on miles per gallon (MPG) and vehicle miles traveled (VMT), while the other is a new proposal for a road usage registration fee based on vehicle weight and miles traveled.

Representative Major's latest proposal, House Bill 1649, addresses the issue of hybrid or electric vehicles paying little to nothing in fuel taxes, forcing gasoline vehicles to carry the brunt of road and bridge maintenance and construction costs. The annual fee as outlined in HB 1649 is included in the chart on the right.

MPG Range	Fee
20 or less	\$10.00
Greater than 20 to 30	\$25.00
Greater than 30 to 40	\$50.00
Greater than 40 to 50	\$75.00
Greater than 50	\$100.00
No gasoline	\$125.00

The formula is based on a vehicle that travels 12,000 miles per year and averages 20 MPG. Such a base vehicle would use 600 gallons of fuel and pay \$132.20 per year in road toll. A similar 2019 bill was passed by the Public Works Committee after the formula was adjusted to the figures listed above, but it was ultimately tabled by the full House earlier this month. Representative Major has been fine-tuning his road usage fee concept since 2015, but every iteration of the bill so far has been sent to study.

The other bill, HB 1650, proposed by Representative Peter Somssich provides an annually adjustable motor vehicle registration fee based on vehicle weight and miles traveled according to the odometer readings already collected by the state from the annual safety inspection. The fees proposed in the bill's latest amendment are included in the chart below, using a VMT rate of 12,000 as a base.

Unlike Representative Major's proposal, this bill includes two formulas to determine a vehicle's fee for each year, meaning the fee could fluctuate depending on the amount of miles traveled that year. The bill also allows an annual increase of 2.4% of the weight-based fee to compensate for fuel-efficiency increases in the future.

Vehicle Weight	Fee
0-3,000 lbs.	\$30.00
3,001-4,000 lbs.	\$41.76
4,001-5,000 lbs.	\$53.52
5,001-6,000 lbs.	\$65.40
6,001-8,000 lbs.	\$83.52



A SAFER ROAD
TO TOMORROW
Safety • Quality of Life • Economic Development

Safer Road Partners

Associated General Contractors of New Hampshire

The Associated General Contractors is a non-profit trade organization of general contractors, subcontractors, and industry professionals dedicated to improving industry standards.

NH Good Roads Association

NH Good Roads Association is a non-profit trade organization established to encourage the development of a safe, efficient and environmentally sound highway transportation system.

Safety and Health Council of Northern New England

The Council's mission is to educate and promote safety & health policies, practices and procedures that prevent and mitigate human economic losses arising from unintended causes.

NH Association of Chiefs of Police

The Association secures a close relationship among commanding officers all over the state, to encourage a cooperative relationship among all police officials.

NH Lodging & Restaurant Association

The Association is a non-partisan organization to promote, protect and educate the food service and lodging industries and to ensure positive business growth for our members.

Business & Industry Association

The Association is NH's leading business trade association. It advocates for business interests with state and federal legislators and regulators.

NH DOT Project Awards Increased in 2019

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) has released its Final Report of the FY 2019 Advertising Schedule, showing a sizable increase in awards throughout 2019. The total for FY 2019 is \$222.9M, a \$62M increase compared to last year's totals and the highest amount since 2016.

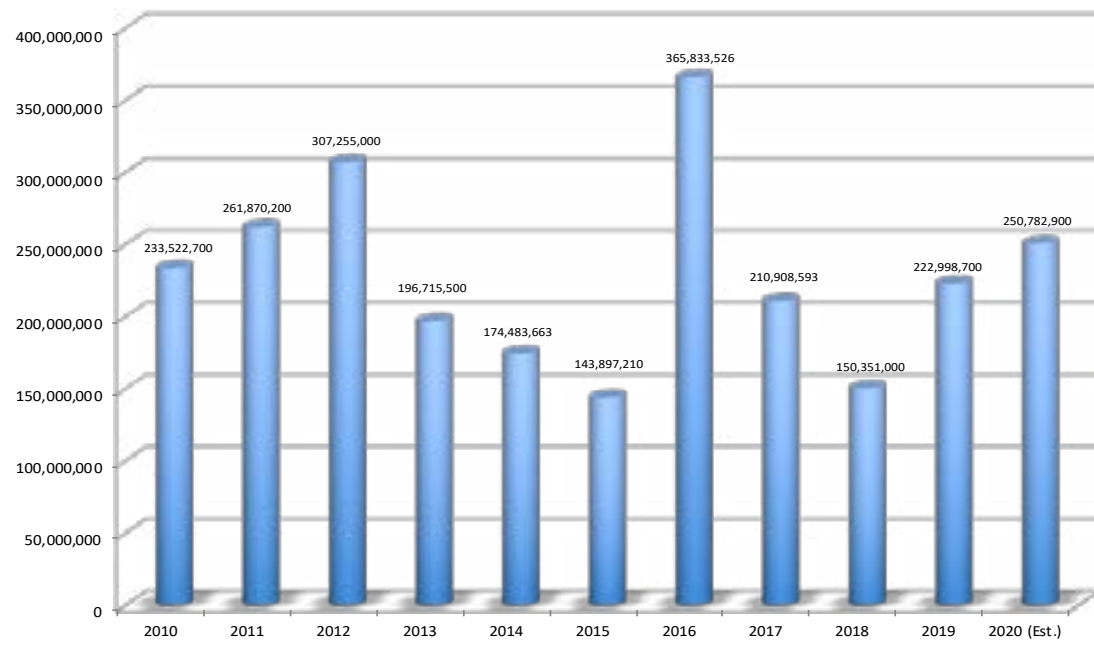
The fourth quarter of FY 2019 saw the highest award amount of the year at just over \$79M. Last year's highest quarter only saw \$66M. Some of the biggest project awards of 2019 included the I-93 Salem-Manchester project (\$19M), the I-89 pavement rehabilitation in Warner (\$13M), and the US 2 bridge replacement in Lancaster/Guildhall (\$10M). Of the 87 projects awarded this fiscal year, 44 were in the \$1M to \$5M range, while 37 were under \$1M.

FY 2020-2021 Projections

The department estimates FY 2020 to see a total of \$250.7M in awards. This figure will include the I-93 Exit 4A project, which is scheduled to be rebid in April of 2020 at \$56.9M. The project was originally set to be bid this year at \$28.6M. The \$37M I-89 project in Lebanon-Hartford was originally advertised this past September but will be rebid in January 2020. Other major projects scheduled for the upcoming year include a bridge reconstruction in Hindsdale-Brattleboro, VT (\$37M), and a lane-widening turnpike project in Nashua-Merrimack (\$16M).

The reports can be found in full on NH DOT's website here: <https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/documents.htm#financial>.

The chart below compares end-of-year project awards from 2011 finals to 2020 estimates.



GACIT Requests More Funds Be Included in 10-Year Highway Plan

In a transmittal letter dated November 25, the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT), executive councilors offered their recommendations to the Governor regarding the 10-Year Plan. Once the governor reviews the recommendations, he will submit it to the legislature. According to the letter, GACIT held 20 public hearings throughout the state in September and October and collected comments through November 12. Out of over 400 comments received during the hearing process, the need to expand travel options (transit, bicycle, pedestrian, etc.) was heard the most, and the need to address infrastructure conditions, including pavements, bridges, safety, and congestions were important themes.

GACIT also concurred with NHDOT's recommendations in updating the 10-Year Plan. The letter states that the modified plan includes \$78M in additional GARVEE bonds to be issued to bring the total new issuance to \$158M. This will allow the department to accelerate the construction of existing red list bridge project and increase funding for projects that were identified as being underfunded. GACIT also directed the department to utilize \$44M in General Obligation 10-year bonds issued in SFY22 to advance construction of 36 municipal bridge projects.

The letter lists additional items that GACIT recommends the governor address, including:

- Advocate for NH's fair share of existing federal funding. Encourage the Governor, Legislature, and Federal Delegation to continue advocating Washington for NH to receive its fair share of Federal Surface Transportation Funding, as NH receives the lowest total amount nationally. In FY2020, NH is scheduled to receive \$41.5M and \$58.9M less in federal formula apportionment than fellow New England states Vermont and Rhode Island, respectively.
- Advocate for additional state funding in 2026 to close the revenue gap created by the sunset of TIFIA rural roads and bridges pledge. Encourage the Legislature to identify a new revenue source to replace \$23M in SB 367 funding allocated annually to the TIFIA State Owned Rural Roads and Bridges pledge that will sunset in state fiscal year 2025. This investment has contributed to the improved conditions of rural roads and bridges on the state system. Continuing this level of investment will assist in minimizing the number of red list bridges and maintaining Tier 3 and 4 roads in good or fair condition, of which 1100 miles are ineligible for federal aid.
- Address inequity that some communities face when traveling on certain portions of the Turnpike system. Due to the location of toll plazas, certain commuters travel through multiple toll plazas traveling to and from work. The Governor and Legislature should collaborate to review the rates, location of toll plazas, and commuter discount programs in the next version of the Ten-Year Plan and consider, in the interim, legislative responses that may be put in place more timely. Revenue implications must also be considered.
- Ensure timely progression of the Capital Corridor Rail Project. With the passage of SB 241, the next phase of the capital rail corridor has been included in the Draft Ten Year Plan. Timely progression and completion of the project development phase will identify a preferred alternative, complete the environmental assessment and provide a detailed financial plan. GACIT considers the timely development of the Capital Corridor Rail Project an important part of the Draft Ten Year Plan.



A Safer Road to Tomorrow
 48 Grandview Road
 Bow, NH 03304

Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes

The New Hampshire Department of Safety Division of Motor Vehicles has released a report on motor vehicle fatalities in the state. The January 21, 2020 report showed overall crashes and fatalities decreased in 2019. Deaths involving commercial vehicles have also decreased, while motorcycle operator deaths stayed the same. The chart on the right is an excerpt of the data included in the year-end report as well as the January 21st report, which included two additional fatalities from crashes in December.

Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes	2018 Totals	2019 Totals
Crashes from 1/15/19 to 12/30/19	134	90
All Persons Killed	147	101
Fatal Involving Commercial Vehicles	14	7
Motorcycle Operators Killed	27	27
Moped Operators Killed	0	0
Snowmobile Operators Killed	0	0
Bicyclists Killed	2	2
Pedestrians Killed	12	11

Brought to you by the Safer Roads Partners:

