

TABLE 16.—RETAIL MOTOR GASOLINE AND ON-HIGHWAY DIESEL FUEL PRICES, 1995 TO PRESENT—Continued
[Cents per gallon, including taxes]

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
RFG Areas	117.7	117.8	122.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Regular	109.0	108.9	113.7	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Conventional Areas	107.2	107.0	112.0	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Oxygenated Areas	115.2	115.2	119.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
OPRG Areas	118.4	118.1	119.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
RFG Areas	112.2	112.3	116.8	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Midgrade	117.9	117.9	122.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Conventional Areas	115.8	115.6	120.6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Oxygenated Areas	123.4	123.8	128.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
OPRG Areas	131.3	131.5	132.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
RFG Areas	122.3	122.5	126.3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Premium	127.6	127.4	132.0	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Conventional Areas	125.1	124.8	129.8	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Oxygenated Areas	134.6	134.9	138.8	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
OPRG Areas	140.0	139.4	140.6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
RFG Areas	130.5	130.7	134.7	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
On-Highway Diesel Fuel	114.5	114.5	118.3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1996	2/5	2/12	2/19	2/26	3/4	3/11	3/18	3/25	4/1	4/8	4/15	4/22
Motor Gasoline	113.0	112.8	113.3	115.3	117.0	117.1	118.1	121.0	122.3	124.8	128.7	130.1
Conventional Areas	110.7	110.4	111.0	113.4	115.1	115.0	116.2	119.2	120.5	122.8	126.9	127.4
Oxygenated Areas	118.7	117.8	120.1	119.9	122.3	122.6	122.9	128.1	127.0	131.4	133.2	136.8
OPRG Areas	127.3	127.0	126.7	126.7	127.5	127.7	127.7	129.1	130.9	132.2	136.0	138.0
RFG Areas	117.4	117.1	117.4	119.2	120.7	121.3	122.0	124.3	126.0	128.7	133.1	137.0
Regular	108.3	108.0	108.7	110.7	112.4	112.5	113.5	116.4	117.8	120.4	124.2	125.6
Conventional Areas	106.3	106.1	106.6	109.0	110.7	110.5	111.9	114.9	116.2	118.5	122.5	123.0
Oxygenated Areas	114.9	113.9	116.0	116.0	116.1	118.6	118.8	122.2	123.2	127.5	129.3	132.8
OPRG Areas	118.9	118.1	117.9	117.8	118.6	118.8	118.8	120.2	122.2	123.7	127.6	129.9
RFG Areas	111.9	111.5	112.0	113.8	115.4	116.1	116.8	119.0	120.8	123.6	128.0	132.3
Midgrade	117.2	116.9	117.7	119.7	121.3	121.3	122.2	125.0	125.3	128.9	132.9	134.1
Conventional Areas	114.9	114.6	115.4	117.7	119.3	119.3	120.4	123.2	124.5	126.9	131.0	131.6
Oxygenated Areas	123.2	122.0	125.0	124.9	128.2	127.3	127.4	131.1	131.6	136.4	138.0	141.5
OPRG Areas	131.8	131.6	131.4	131.3	132.1	132.1	132.1	133.8	135.2	136.6	140.1	141.9
RFG Areas	122.2	121.8	122.1	123.8	125.1	125.3	126.2	128.6	130.1	132.7	137.2	140.3
Premium	126.9	125.5	127.1	129.1	130.8	130.8	131.7	134.5	135.7	138.1	142.2	143.8
Conventional Areas	124.2	123.8	124.4	126.8	128.6	128.4	129.6	132.5	133.7	136.0	140.2	140.9
Oxygenated Areas	134.4	133.8	136.0	135.4	138.0	137.9	138.2	141.1	141.6	146.4	148.6	152.4
OPRG Areas	139.8	139.5	139.0	139.3	140.8	140.3	140.2	141.7	143.2	144.2	147.9	149.5
RFG Areas	130.4	130.1	130.2	132.1	133.3	133.8	134.6	137.0	138.4	140.8	145.3	148.9
On-Highway Diesel fuel	113.0	113.4	115.1	116.4	117.5	117.3	117.2	121.0	122.2	124.9	130.5	130.4

NA-Not available.

Note: See Glossary for definitions of abbreviations. See Technical Note 1, page 40, for more information about the data in this table.

Sources: See page 34. Weekly Petroleum Status Report/Energy Information Administration.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I am going to sit down in just a moment. I know my good friend from North Dakota, Senator DORGAN, is now on the floor. But you are going to hear an awful lot now because it is 1996—it is an even-numbered year—it is getting ready to be the last election of this century, and it is going to be a hum-dinger. It is going to be the one that we are going to tell our grandchildren and great-grandchildren about, because it is going to get pretty exciting.

We are going to hear an awful lot about the 1993 economic plan, that it was the biggest tax increase in history, will ruin the country, whatever. I think we might start now setting that record straight. Look at the Wall Street Journal, October 26, 1994. I quote the Wall Street Journal:

Contrary to Republican claims, the 1993 package is not the largest tax increase in history. The 1982 deficit-reduction package of President Reagan and Senator Robert Dole in a GOP controlled Senate was a bigger tax bill, both in 1993 adjusted dollars and as a percentage of the overall economy.

The Wall Street Journal, not exactly a left-wing, Democratic newspaper, Mr. President.

Let us look at the Washington Post, February 1, 1995, recently and I quote:

The biggest tax increase in history did not occur in the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1993. The biggest increase in post-World War II history occurred in 1982, under President Ronald Reagan.

Mr. President, part of Senator DOLE's historic tax increase was in fact a 5-cent gasoline tax.

Let us look at November 3, 1995, Mr. President, not long ago.

It is not true that the \$240 billion tax increase approved by Congress in 1993, at Mr. Clinton's behest, is the largest in American history. When adjusted for inflation—the only way to make comparisons of dollar amounts from different years—a tax increase endorsed by Mr. Dole, in 1982, when he was chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, was larger.

So, Mr. President, as we hear a lot of these statements made on this floor of this great institution, in the U.S. Senate, over the next several months up until the election, I think from time to time it behooves us well to come to this floor and to respond and set the facts out and set the record straight. f

That is the purpose of my visit here this morning. I think as we go forward in the next several weeks, as this debate intensifies, it will be our obligation to come forward and spread the facts as to what the real story is on the record.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are.

THE GAS TAX

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I will add a few comments to the comments offered by Senator PRYOR from Arkansas and the comments offered by Senator DASCHLE, the minority leader. We have this morning seen a work crew of seven U.S. Senators trudge to the floor of the Senate and dutifully describe that all ills in America, present, past and future should be laid at the door-

step of the current President of the United States, President Clinton.

I listened to see if I could find the ultimate charge, maybe that would be that the President is responsible for the Andromeda Galaxy that is racing at 4,500 miles an hour toward the Milky Way, of course, which is where we live. A galaxy three times the size of ours is racing at us 4,500 miles an hour, and most estimate, I think there is no disagreement, that when it hits us it will destroy our galaxy and us in about 4 to 5 billion years. Perish the thought. But if there is a Senate at some point in the future, someone will come and probably try to lay that at the footsteps of the current incumbent President. They did not quite get that far this morning, but close, close enough.

The proposal this morning was we should cut the 4.3-cent gas tax. That may get done. I am not crazy about the gas tax because I come from a State that is a large State with very few people. The gas tax costs us twice as much per person as it costs people who live in New York because they do not drive as far as we do for much of anything. I mentioned the other day I have a friend from New York who described for me once she and her family were going to leave Yonkers, NY, I think, or Brooklyn, or one of those areas, and drive to New Jersey to see an aunt and an uncle. It was 60 or 80 miles, I guess. So they packed an emergency kit for their trunk and put blankets in the trunk, took food along and got all squared away to take the 70 mile drive, because those who live in New York do not drive 70 miles very often. It is a big

drive to see the relatives. In North Dakota, we drive 70 miles at the drop of the hat and think nothing of it.

I am not a big fan of the gas tax. It affects us twice as much as it affects New Yorkers. However, the question seems to me, if we are going to repeal the 4.3 cents, how about repealing the 10-cent previous to that that Senator DOLE had supported? Why not make it 14.3 cents? Or if you repeal the 4.3 cents, ask the question, in whose pockets will the 4.3 cents go? The consumers, taxpayers, the people that drive to the pump to buy gasoline, or in the pockets of the oil industry?

When we vote on whatever this proposal will be, and we may pass a 4.3-cent gas cut—we may do that—we also will vote on an amendment that I offered that says let us guarantee, if we will do this, guarantee that this goes in the right pocket. There is a big pocket and there are small pockets, high pockets and low pockets. Make sure it goes in the right pocket.

I can see what could happen and you can too, I am sure. You cut the gas tax 4.3 cents a gallon, drive to the gas pump to fill up your car, and the price is the same. What happened? The oil companies pocketed the difference. Anything wrong with that? No, they can do that under the current circumstance. It does not matter what the gas tax is. They can price gas the way they want to price tax. If we are going to do that and do this because we decide we do not want to build roads or improve bridges or reduce the deficit, if we are going to do it, make sure the money goes in the right pocket. We will have a chance to vote on an amendment and see whether we are doing it to put it in the right pocket or whether some do it and not care which pocket it goes in.

This is not an idle issue. I do not blame anyone who wants to come to the floor and talk about taxes. It would be nice if taxes were lower for everyone at all times. I have some disagreement with a Senator who came to the floor yesterday to say until the day I was free of paying taxes I am not doing anything for myself. I have some problem with that because what does he think he is doing with the money he is paying to send his kids to school? Part of his tax bill is to build the school and pay the teacher and help send his kids to get educated. Is that not an investment for him and his family? Part of the tax is to pay for the captains, cruisers, jet airplanes and others in the Defense Department to protect the country. Is that not an investment in himself or this country? Part of his investment is in Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid.

I just described the four biggest areas of public spending: Education, Medicare, Medicaid, health care, and defense. The four biggest areas of public spending. The question is, how much of each do you want? How much do you want to spend on defense? How much are you willing to spend and do you

want to spend on Medicare and Medicaid? How much do you want to spend to have a Social Security system that works? That is the question for Members of Congress to answer. Should we try to minimize the tax burden at all times? Absolutely. Should we reconcile the amount of money we have with our appetite to spend it? Yes. It is one thing to say stand up here and talk of cutting taxes, but another thing to talk about what the taxes are being used for and what we want the Federal deficit to be.

Now, if they propose to cut the gas tax, the first step would be to make sure it does not increase the Federal deficit. I think all of us believe that we ought to keep ratcheting down the Federal deficit, and it has come down for whatever reason one might want to ascribe to that. The Federal deficit has decreased rather dramatically in the last 3 years. We ought to keep it going in the same direction.

Some will say, the President ought to get the blame for everything that is wrong but not get the credit for something that is right. That is probably not a fair assessment of what should happen to a President. The fact is, the deficit has come down and some of that is to the credit of this President and to those in Congress who in 1993 voted to both cut spending and raise some additional revenue in order to bring that deficit down.

If someone now proposes that we should have a tax cut of one type or another, then it seems to me we ought to make sure that tax cut does not increase the Federal deficit, first of all. Maybe that can be done. Second, we ought to make sure that the benefit of a tax cut goes to those that we talk about here on the floor of the Senate.

It is interesting, we talk about middle-income people, a lot of folks talk about the people at the bottom of the economic ladder, the folks in the middle, middle-income Americans. I brought to the floor a discussion about middle income that I thought was the most interesting discussion last year. We were talking about safety nets and investments and spending programs and education and all the things, and how it affects various groups, and who is proposing to cut taxes and who benefits from that.

A Member of the House of Representatives, in a newspaper said the following about middle-class, and his salary of \$135,000 plus the \$50,000 he gets in a police pension, "does not make me rich, that doesn't make me middle class. In my opinion, that makes me lower middle class." This is a GOP Congressman from over in the House. He said, "When I see someone who is making anywhere from \$300,000 to \$750,000 a year, that's middle class. When I see anyone above that I think that is upper middle class." So, I read this, I scratch my head, and I think, here is someone serving in Congress that defines middle class as someone who makes between \$300,000 and

\$750,000 a year. Then I understand why the policies this person proposed, he can claim are to benefit the middle class. I guess they are policies to benefit those who make from between \$300,000 and \$750,000 a year.

In my hometown, I guess we do not have any middle class. We do not have anybody that reaches \$300,000 to \$750,000 a year in income. That is not middle class. He knows better than that, I am sure. He said it in the middle of this debate about who you are trying to help. Some of the discussion on the floor of the Senate with respect to the gas tax and others is that we need to make sure that those at the lower end of the economic ladder or those in the middle class are helped. There is anxiety out there, and I understand that. Here is a newspaper clipping that says, "CEO's at Major Corporations Got a 23 Percent Raise in 1995." So we have an economic ladder, and if you reach the top of the economic ladder, apparently, you get to keep floating up, because at the top you get a 23-percent salary increase in 1995. At the bottom of the economic ladder, if you are working for the minimum wage, you are part of 40 percent of the people who work for the minimum wage, and you are the sole income for your family, you have no raise and you did not get 23 percent. You did not get 15 or 10 percent—you did not get 1 percent. You sure did not get the 23 percent that the CEO's of America's corporations got. You got zero.

That is part of the reason some of us have said, "Let us, this year, talk about an adjustment in the minimum wage." Is it not fair for those on the bottom rung of the economic ladder to also have an adjustment of some type? We are not saying make a dramatic wholesale change in the minimum wage. We are saying that when the bottom rung has been frozen for 5 years, without a 1-percent increase, it is time to make a reasonable, thoughtful adjustment for the bottom rung of that ladder.

I mentioned, when I began to discuss the gas tax briefly, that you have some of the same circumstances with respect to the economics of that circumstance. The major oil companies have done really quite well. Chevron had a 34-percent gain from last year; Amoco, up 39 percent; Texaco, up 30 percent, Mobil, up 16 percent. I do not begrudge them that. I want them to do fine. I want them to find more oil, and I want more oil to be available. I want us to be able to have oil prices that are reasonable for drivers in this country. But when you see this, and you see prices spike up at the gas pump by 20 cents, and you see folks busting in the door of the Senate and saying the problem is apparently a gas tax that was applied 3 years ago, it seems to me there is a disconnection. If 4.3 cents is some magic figure because that is what President Clinton proposed in 1993, why not up it another dime and make it 14.3 cents?

That includes President Clinton's and Senator DOLE's gas tax proposals, and what they voted for. Just do the whole 14.3 cents, and while it is being done, make sure of two things: First, do not increase the deficit; and second, make sure it goes in the right pockets.

I am also going to offer another amendment I hope the Senate will accept somewhere along the way. As long as we are going to talk about taxes—it is hard to offer an amendment on taxes because we do not get bills dealing with the revenue code on the floor of the Senate very often. Normally, when you offer it, you have to offer it to something else because you do not have the vehicle. If we are going to have a tax bill on the floor of the Senate, it would be my intention to offer, again, a very, very simple piece of legislation, and that is, let us end deferral in the Tax Code to allow corporations to move their jobs and their plants overseas, make the same product they made while they were here in America, and ship the product back to our country, and in our Tax Code they now have the opportunity to pay zero in income taxes.

In other words, we have in our Tax Code a \$2.3 billion incentive, in 7 years, to say to people and companies, "We will make you a deal. If you will close your American factory, get rid of your American workers, move overseas to a foreign country, make the same product and ship it back to America, we will give you a tax break, we will pay you to do it; we will pay you \$2.3 billion to do it."

Now, if this country cannot take the first baby step in deciding that if there are incentives, there ought to be incentives for providing jobs in this country, and jobs should not be moving from this country to another country, paid for with incentives in our Tax Code that say to companies that if you do it, we will give you a break—if we cannot take a baby step to change that, nobody should dare stand up here on the Senate floor and say, "I am for jobs in America." We ought not to be export neutral where jobs are concerned. You will not find much among academicians or economists on that point. So \$2.3 billion exists as a reward for companies to move their jobs overseas. If we are going to have a tax bill on the floor of the Senate, let us have a tax bill that fixes that problem as well.

I offered that last year on the floor of the Senate while debating another issue. And I lost on a near party line vote. It was 52 to 48, I believe. I indicated then I intended to raise this issue when a tax bill comes to the floor of the Senate, and I will raise this issue again, because I do not think it makes economic sense for our country to pay for moving jobs from America to foreign countries.

Mr. President, this will be a year in which I assume there will be plenty of rhetoric on the Senate floor about a lot of things—some on our side, some on the majority side. There will be huffing

and puffing on both sides. I understand that. There will be claims and counter-claims. Both sides will build word castles in the air about their particular program and how awful the other side is. The plain fact is that this place will work if we can find a way to sift through some of that and decide that there are things that we will agree on and advance those pieces of legislation.

Last night, we passed an immigration bill. There were a lot of amendments to it. I supported a number of them and opposed others. But we passed it with very close to a unanimous vote. I think only three Members voted against it. We passed an antiterrorist bill a couple of weeks ago. We passed a significant health bill 100 to 0. As all of the positioning and jockeying goes on, there are things we can and should do. I am not coming here today to say that drivers in this country, taxpayers in this country, ought not to be relieved of some of their burdens. That is fine. I would like to find a way to bring the tax bill for all Americans down as far as we can reduce it. I would like to find a way to squeeze every single bit of Government waste out of this system—and there is plenty. I want to make sure that what we do is grounded in good economic sense. I want to make sure that what we do provides as their beneficiaries the American people. There are laws of unintended consequences in this Chamber, where we do a whole series of things that are alleged to accomplish one thing and end up accomplishing something very, very different.

The gas tax is a very simple proposition. I do not know whether it is going to pass or not pass in this Chamber. I do know this: If it does pass, the only merit it has for the American people—passing a reduction of the gas tax—is if it goes in their pocket, not in the pockets of the oil industry. That is something all of us, as we debate this, ought to make certain will occur.

I want to make one final point today. There have been seven speakers on the other side, and I understand that. That is the way the works. Senator DASCHLE and Senator PRYOR and I are not coming to the floor simply to say it is all unfair. These are fair discussions of public issues, and where better to have them discussed than on the floor of the Senate. As we proceed down the road on the issue of trying to put together a budget for fiscal year 1997, I hearken back to the impasse and gridlock we had last year, and the gridlock that some predict will occur this year, and simply observe this. David Gergen, who worked first for Republicans and then Democrats—I think he served in President Reagan's administration, President Bush's administration, and the Clinton administration—wrote a piece for the U.S. News & World Report. In it, he said something I think is very important. I hope all of us can pay some attention to this year in order to avoid the gridlock we had last year. He said: "Ronald Reagan, as President, in-

sisted that there be a safety net, even as we cut Federal spending." He said, "How soon we forget that, as President, Ronald Reagan insisted that seven key programs be in the safety net. Head Start, Medicare, Social Security, veterans, SSI, school lunches, and summer jobs for youth, would not be touched."

"Now," Gergen says, "six of those seven are under the budget knife."

The point is that, as we try to establish priorities, I hope all of us understand, as President Reagan understood, we need a safety net for some people.

Summer jobs for disadvantaged youth. Is that important? Yes, I think it is. Let us measure that against some other things and decide that that is a safety net for vulnerable people.

Head Start. Let us decide not to tell 60,000 Head Start kids that we cannot afford you anymore. Let us be able to tell 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds that there is a place in Head Start for you because we know that program works and improves your lives, and it saves this country money when it invests in young children. Let us take a look at what Ronald Reagan said in the early 1980's about a safety net, as we cut spending and chop spending in some areas where it deserves to be chopped. Let us also make sure that we have the right set of priorities with the people who need some help and need to have the comfort of a safety net because they do not have other opportunities.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor, and I make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAMS). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, much has been reported lately about the situation facing America's farmers and ranchers. Carryover stocks for some grains are at their lowest levels since the 1940's—causing record high grain prices.

I think, in fact, that wheat is up to about \$8 a bushel. There is only one problem. In our State, nobody has very much wheat. In fact, some have none at all. The \$8 price is good, but it does not really reflect that it is going to be benefiting very many producers in the State of Kansas and other States in the Midwest.

Meanwhile, cattle supplies are at a 10-year high causing extremely low cattle prices. Last year, the average FED steer sold for \$80 per hundred-weight, while today's bids are at \$55 per hundredweight.

I have always argued the best farm policy is the marketplace. If farmers received a fair price for their products,