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Governor Bill Walker
STATE OF ALASKA

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Mike Chenault
Speaker of the House
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Speaker Chenault:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to the taxation of motor fuels.

The bill would raise the tax rates on the four categories of motor fuel currently taxed under AS 43.40.010 (motor fuel tax), but would not amend the refined fuel surcharge levied under AS 43.40.005 and passed last session. Instead, the bill would increase the currently outdated tax rates on all motor fuels including all motor fuel sold or transferred within the state, aviation gasoline, and motor fuel used on watercraft. The bill increases highway fuel from \$0.08 to \$0.16 per gallon; aviation fuel from \$0.047 to \$0.10 per gallon; marine fuel from \$0.05 to \$0.10 per gallon; jet fuel from \$0.032 to \$0.10 per gallon; gasohol from \$0.08 to \$0.16 per gallon; and also increases the credit for off road use from \$0.06 to \$0.12 per gallon. The bill would generate approximately \$49,000,000 annually in increased revenue.

While this may at first appear to represent a significant increase, the tax rates on motor fuel sold or transferred within the state have not been raised in many years; for example, the tax on highway fuel has remained at eight cents a gallon since 1970. This bill would bring Alaska's tax rate on highway fuel closer to the current national average of 25 cents a gallon.

To increase administrative efficiency for the Department of Revenue and state taxpayers, the bill would require the electronic submission of tax returns with an exemption available upon request.

The bill is an integral component of the New Sustainable Alaska Plan to provide a balanced and sustainable budget for Alaska's long-term fiscal stability.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Walker".

Bill Walker
Governor

Enclosure