

The Transporter

Mobility Updates for Community Leaders



Zenobia L. Fields | New Jersey Department of Transportation

A Mileage-Based User Fee Pilot Program

The fuel tax paid at the pump is largely responsible for funding a well-functioning transportation system that gets road users where they need to go—delivering packages to their door, and keeping groceries on the shelves.

As fuel efficiency increases and we shift to electric and hybrid vehicles, the fuel consumption and the revenue from the fuel tax will decrease, making it harder to maintain our transportation system. One option could be a Mileage-Based User Fee (MBUF), where drivers pay based on the miles they travel instead of the fuel they buy.

NJDOT has joined with the Eastern Transportation Coalition, a partnership of 17 states and Washington D.C., to conduct a Mileage-Based User Fee Pilot Program (MBUF) to determine if a MBUF would be a more equitable and financially sustainable approach.

Your participation is essential and it's easy:

- **Enroll** – Fill out the enrollment form by clicking the link on the website.
- **Insert** – Plug a small device into your vehicle to record mileage.
- **Drive** – Then drive as you usually do.
- **Return** – After a few months, mail back the device.

For more information, visit NewJerseyMBUFpilot.com or call 609-293-7800. The last day to sign up for the Pilot is July 31.



Avnish Gupta | EZ Ride

School Districts to Receive Federal Funds to Buy Electric Buses

In May, the Environmental Protection Agency announced it is **taking applications** for **\$500 million** in grants it plans to award this year to help school districts buy electric buses. The EPA will be doling out much more as the Infrastructure Investment, and Jobs Act set aside **\$5 billion over five years** to help schools move toward electric buses.

In New Jersey, more than **86,000** or about 50 percent of all students from K-12 use one of the estimated **16,700 school buses** to go to school.

Getting priority for the money under the law are school districts in communities, where 20% of the students live in poverty or are in rural or tribal areas, said the EPA, which has released a **preliminary list** of thousands of districts that qualify. It includes 51 of the 599 **school districts in New Jersey**. Replacing older vehicles will result in **healthier air** for children who rely on school buses, many of whom live in overburdened and underserved communities.

No more worries about oil changes and gas prices. And EZ Ride can help you with your fleet transition plans. For the rest, it is primarily walking or biking safely to school. Last year, the EZ Ride **Bike & Pedestrian Program** team hosted more than 450 events to promote safe and biking. Approximately 40,000 students from 300 communities attended that.



- NHTSA plans new push against speeding: **US News**
- Study: Men Three Times More Likely to Die In Distracted Driving Accidents: **Newsweek**
- NSC to release new report: Mobility, technology and Safety: The Next 20 years **NSC**
- Uber rides are getting safer, but the roads are deadlier than ever: **The Verge**
- Europe Now Requires All New Cars To Have Anti-Speeding Monitors: **The Drive**
- Tesla vehicles are now scanning for potholes and rough roads to help avoid them: **Elektrek**
- New Jersey's "Safe Passing" law to protect bikers, pedestrians faces education

challenge: [NJ.com](#)

- Democratic senators urge action to curb motor vehicle fatalities: [Transportation Today](#)
- Portland and Seattle Will Coordinate “Slow the Flock Down” Traffic Safety Campaign: [wwweek.com](#)
- Newly Released Estimates Show Traffic Fatalities Reached a 16-Year High in 2021: [NHTSA](#)
- UPS tests tiny battery-powered cycles in congested cities: [AP News](#)

Land Use & Economic Development



Scott Bogren | Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)

Tackling new transit challenges

A year ago, as the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) came into focus, it seemed the unprecedented increases in federal transit funding (23% for rural, 29% for urban) within the new law would be, as many deemed them, “generational.” Today, the post-COVID economy and recovery have thrown a dose of cold reality.

[Labor shortages](#) continue to plague transportation providers of all sizes. [Energy prices](#) have spiked to record levels — whether diesel, electric, or CNG —blasting holes in budgets. Bus and vehicle replacements continue to lag, too. In some cases, two and three-year waits to take delivery of new rolling stock. And the price for that long-delayed vehicle has reached record levels, too. The increases in federal funding are being reduced by our increased labor, energy, and capital costs.

CTAA has signed a [letter](#) to members of Congress asking for fuel cost flexibility that would result in savings for our members. We are raising the issue of temporary [Buy America](#) waivers and transit chassis set-asides as ways to help our members get the buses and vehicles they need more quickly and inexpensively.

It is imperative for transportation providers like [EZ Ride](#) to talk to their stakeholders about the unique challenges we’re facing right now, how they can best assist us in serving our passengers, and ensure they know the value of our service. For all transit service providers, it is a time to focus on the value of their operations, rather than the volume of trips.



- Even With Record-High Gas Prices, Transit's Recovery Has Stalled: **Masstransitmag.com**
- Without Commuters, US Transit Agencies Are Running Out of Options: **Bloomberg**
- Inflation taking bite out of new infrastructure projects: **AP News**
- Biden's incredible shrinking infrastructure plan: **Politico**
- Turnpike Authority Approves \$28 M Widening Project for Parkway Service Areas: **NJ.com**
- Greens driving opposition to Turnpike Expansion: **PoliticoPRO**
- For Vibrant U.S. Cities, Invest In Multi-Modal Transportation: **Clean Technica**
- Mayors are wielding free transit to draw people back downtown. It's not that easy. **Politico**
- Toronto wants to kill the smart city for ever: **MIT Technology Review**
- New York office occupancy hits Pandemic era milestone at more than 40% full: **The City**

Energy & Environment



Krishna Murthy | EZ Ride

Commuting – it is getting pricey out there.

It's an electric future, alright, and it is not cheap. **Record high gas prices** hovering around \$5 has people considering an electric vehicle. The **average price paid for an electric vehicle** in May was up 22% from a year earlier, at about \$54,000, according to J.D. Power.

Meanwhile, in Europe, BMW has started selling **subscriptions** for some of its in-car features, such as heated seats and automatic headlight beam management, using over-the-air technology to permit drivers to pay for the products.

New Jerseyans who buy electric cars receive a lovely gift from the state, up to **\$5,000 off the purchase or lease**, besides not having to pay sales tax. The *Asbury Park Press* reports that funding may vanish by mid-September if the Legislature doesn't throw more money into the \$35 million program.

For now, commuters could take advantage of the free carpool program at njrideshare.com. If public transit is an option, the federal government allows a **pre-tax commuter benefit** of \$280 per month to save you \$900/ year by not paying federal income tax on that salary. And if you need to pay for parking to take transit, you can also fund the parking fees with pre-tax dollars for an additional \$280/ month. You could also use the pre-tax commuter benefit to participate in a **vanpool program**. And take advantage of N.J. Transit's **Vanpool subsidy program** that pays \$175/month for each vanpool and an additional \$150/ month for vanpools using the HOV lane on the New Jersey Turnpike.



- IKEA has launched an international carpool trial: **FleetEurope.com**
- Electric vehicles won't help the spike in gas prices: **Axios**
- How supply chain turmoil is remaking the car industry: **The Economist**
- Tesla, Ford and GM Raise EV Prices as Costs, Demand Grow: **WSJ**
- High gas prices have some consumers looking to electric vehicles – but supply chains lag behind demand: **PostGazette.com**
- Biden considering a gas tax holiday: **NY Times**
- Why New Jerseyans face a “hot summer at the pump”: **NJBIZ**
- Biden's EV charging standards still need cash to back them up: **Protocol**

About EZ Ride



At EZ Ride we believe that a safe, affordable & reliable transportation system is vital to maintaining our quality of life and promoting the economic growth of the region. Transportation is a daily concern for commuters who cannot afford to drive to work, for older adults who do not drive a car, and for businesses whose employees and customers may not have easy access to public transportation.

For almost 40 years, we have helped people overcome transportation barriers by partnering with businesses and governments to implement transportation programs and services like carpools, vanpools, shuttles, biking & walking programs and even transportation with companies like Lyft and Uber.

EZ Ride is a non-profit organization and in 2013, was recognized for excellence in serving the needs of the community and named the Urban Community Transportation System of the Year by the Community Transportation Association of America. Whatever your transportation needs, EZ Ride is here to help.

Download Our Capabilities



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