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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Biden asks Congress to pause gas tax to help lower record pump prices

WASHINGTON, June 22 (Reuters) - U.S. President Joe Biden on Wednesday called on Congress to pass a three-month suspension of the federal gasoline tax to help combat record pump prices, but opposition from lawmakers within his own party suggests the request is unlikely to be met.

In announcing his support for the suspension, Biden also echoed some of the concerns about its effectiveness, but said American families paying much more for gasoline, caused in part by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, deserve some financial relief.

"I fully understand that a gas tax holiday alone is not going to fix the problem but it will provide families some immediate relief, just a little bit of breathing room, as we continue working on bringing down prices for the long haul," Biden said.

The president also urged states to temporarily suspend state fuel taxes, which are often higher than federal rates. He is asking major oil companies to suggest ideas on how to bring back idled refining capacity when they meet with Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm on Thursday. [read more](#)

Biden and his advisers have been discussing the issue for months amid increasing pressure to act as record-high gas prices weigh down the president's opinion poll ratings and cast doubt on Democrats' chances of retaining congressional power in November's elections.

A suspension of the 18.4 cents per gallon federal gasoline tax and 24.4 cent diesel tax would require congressional approval, likely making Biden's pitch largely symbolic. [read more](#)

LAWMAKERS OPPOSED

Lawmakers in both parties have expressed resistance to suspending the tax, with some Democrats, including House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, worried the move could have limited effect on prices if oil companies and retailers pocket much of the savings.

Peter DeFazio, a Democrat and the chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, said on Wednesday a federal gas tax holiday would provide "miniscule relief" while blowing a budget hole in a Highway Trust Fund needed to fix crumbling bridges and build a modern infrastructure system."

Biden asked Congress to suspend the fuel tax through September, a move that will cost the Highway Trust Fund roughly \$10 billion in foregone revenue but could be made up from other areas of a budget that is seeing revenue grow and deficits shrink as the United States emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Some states, such as New York and Connecticut, have already paused state fuel taxes, while others have floated ideas such as consumer rebates and direct relief.

Refiners are struggling to meet global demand for diesel and gasoline, exacerbating high prices and aggravating shortages. [read more](#)

"Pausing the federal gas tax will certainly provide near-term relief for U.S. drivers, but it won't solve the root of the issue - the imbalance in supply and demand for petroleum products," a spokesperson for the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers industry group said.

Longer-term policies are still needed to boost U.S. energy production, it said.

U.S. pump prices are averaging near \$5 a gallon as soaring demand for motor fuels coincides with the loss of about 1 million barrels per day of processing capacity. In the last three years many plants were closed when fuel demand cratered at the height of the pandemic. [read more](#)

Biden said he understands the politics around Republicans seizing on high gas prices ahead of the elections, but he asked his rivals whether they instead would've chosen not to support Ukraine.

Gas prices over the \$8.00 mark are advertised at a Chevron Station in Los Angeles, California, U.S., May 30, 2022. REUTERS/Lucy Nicholson/File Photo

"So for all those Republicans in Congress criticizing me today for high gas prices in America: Are you now saying we were wrong to support Ukraine? Are you saying we were wrong to stand up to Putin? Are you saying that we would rather have lower gas prices in America and Putin's iron fist in Europe? I don't believe that," Biden said.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

06/21/2022

Texas Republicans Approve A Far-Right Platform

The Texas Republican Party adopted a party platform last week that rejects the results of the 2020 presidential election, calls homosexuality an abnormal lifestyle choice and rebukes senators who recently negotiated a gun agreement.

In the 40 pages and 270 resolutions of their party platform, the Texas Republican Party stated that they believe the election of Joe Biden as the 46th president of the United States

violated the U.S. Constitution and that there was substantial evidence of election fraud in key metropolitan areas.

Despite evidence to the contrary, the Texas GOP still believes and still holds that acting President Joe Biden was not legitimately elected by the people of the United States.

We are very worried about the Texas Republican Party's resolution which once again reflects the claim that the two



major parties in the United States are continuing to split.

The hearing on the attack on the Capitol on January 6 of last year now being held on Capitol Hill has shown how former President Trump manipulated the uprising to overthrow the election results. This is also an opportunity for the Democratic Party to warn voters to not vote for Republicans again.

Over the last several years, most Texans have voted for the Republican Party due to the abundance of oil and gas which has become a major

economic resource in Texas. Unfortunately, after Biden took office, he did not hesitate to quickly cut down the transitional oil production in order to change to green energy, thus cutting off the financial path of many Texans.

With the future election coming soon, the Democrat and Republican parties will inevitably have two very different views of our national agenda. For our ordinary people, to have a safe job and decent living is more important than any political matters.



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Editor's Choice



A 4-year-old receives a COVID-19 vaccine for children under five years old at Skippack Pharmacy in Schwenksville, Pennsylvania. REUTERS/Hannah Beier



A protester is seen with a treatment for tear gas following a confrontation with security personnel after Ecuador's armed forces warned they would not allow ongoing protests against President Guillermo Lasso's economic policies to damage the country's democracy, in Quito, Ecuador June 21, 2022. REUTERS/Santiago Arcos



A man holds a camera in front of an exhibit displayed during a media preview at the Palace Museum in Hong Kong, China. REUTERS/Lam Yik



Marine Le Pen, French far-right National Rally (Rassemblement National) party leader and member of parliament, poses for a family photo with newly-elected lawmakers from the National Rally party at the National Assembly in Paris, France. REUTERS/Benoit Tessier



Wandrea "Shaye" Moss, former Elections Department employee in Fulton County, Georgia, testifies, as her mother, Georgia election worker Ruby Freeman looks on, during the fourth public hearing of the U.S. House Select Committee to investigate the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol, on Capitol Hill in Washington. Michael Reynolds/Pool via REUTERS



Police officers remove an activist of the "Letzte Generation" (Last Generation) after they spilled black liquid, symbolizing oil, in front of the chancellery to protest under the slogan "Let's stop the fossil madness!" for an end to fossil fuels and against oil drilling in the North Sea, in Berlin, Germany. REUTERS/Christian Mang

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

Triple-Digit Highs On Friday Set Records In Major Population Centers Across The Southwest, Including Houston, San Antonio, Austin, Albuquerque, Las Vegas And Phoenix

Extreme Heat Sets New Records Across Texas, California And The Southwest

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



The Texas power grid will likely hit all-time energy demands in the course of the next several days as temperatures rise across the state.

Scores of high-temperature records were established Friday from Texas to California's Central Valley as a relentless heat wave continued to build.

On Friday, triple-digit highs set records in major population centers across the Southwest, including Houston, San Antonio, Austin, Albuquerque, Las Vegas and Phoenix.

Many of these areas are forecast to be equally hot on Saturday, as the heat begins to expand eastward.

What has been a dry heat in the Southwest will evolve into a more sultry nature east of the Rockies, as moist air is drawn north from the Gulf of Mexico.

Death Valley - home to highest temperatures

ever observed worldwide - soared to a simmering 123 degrees Friday.



In addition to all of these record highs, numerous locations in the region have set records for warm overnight lows.

"With heat waves, the overnight temperatures are the most dangerous, as your body relies on cooler temperatures while its sleeping to recover," wrote the National Weather Service office in Las Vegas in a forecast discussion.

The worst of the heat on Saturday will concentrate from Texas to the Desert Southwest.

"The heat the past few days has already proven to be a major societal impact, and possibly even deadly, and it is not done yet," the Weather Service office in Phoenix wrote.

Phoenix is forecast to hit 114, a record for the date; Las Vegas is predicted to reach 110, also a record.

"Heat safety will be critical this weekend - remaining hydrated, applying sunscreen, checking in on elderly or ill family and friends, and avoiding strenuous activity during the hottest parts of the day can all combat preventable heat-related illnesses," wrote the Weather Service office in Houston.

It will also remain hot in California's Central Valley, but several degrees cooler than Friday. Sacramento hit 104 on Friday; Saturday's forecast high is 101. By Sunday, it's a much more tolerable 85.

California and the Southwest on Sunday and beyond, it will persist in Texas and the Southern Plains and expand eastward.



Monday's hottest weather will focus in the Plains and Midwest. Highs over 100 will expand from Texas to Kansas, while highs from at least 95 to 100 sprawl over much of the Midwest and Southeast.

Human-caused climate change is supercharging heat waves like this one, making them more intense and long-lived.

Power Demand Breaks Record During June Heat Wave In Texas The state's grid operator was able to maintain supply without needing to call for any conservation



A lifeguard watches people at a public pool

in Austin in summer 2020. (Photo/Allie Goulding/The Texas Tribune)

A heat wave caused electricity use in Texas to reach an all-time high on Sunday, but the state's power grid appeared to hold up without major disruption.

But the weekend has been extremely hot even by Texas standards, with much of the state over 100 degrees.

In May, ERCOT asked Texans to conserve power in May during a heat wave that coincided with some power plant outages.

Related June 1 Marked The Official Start Of The Atlantic Hurricane Season, Which Is Predicted To Be Yet Another Overactive One How Bad Will The 2022 Hurricane Season Be? Intense, Experts Say



This NOAA satellite image shows Hurricane Laura moving northwestern in the Gulf of Mexico towards Louisiana on Aug. 26, 2020.

With a warm and humid start to June, the 2022 hurricane season is now in full swing. While we can't know how many storms will spin up from the tropics this year, experts from several institutions are all in agreement.

mark the seventh overactive Atlantic hurricane season in a row.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which oversees the National Hurricane Center (NHC), predicts between 14 and 21 named systems this year.

Each meteorological institution pointed to a heavy period of La Niña in the Pacific Ocean, characterized by cooler waters there, as one of many reasons this season could be more intense.



June brings the start of the 2022 hurricane season in the Atlantic basin.

"Sea-surface temperatures are above normal over much of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean and even off the East Coast of the United States," said Dan Kottlowski, head of AccuWeather's team of tropical weather forecasters.

Already by Wednesday, the NHC is monitoring two disturbances in the Atlantic Basin. The first is located in the southern Gulf of Mexico near the Yucatán Peninsula.

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

Record Temperatures Hitting The West Are Not Your Average Heat Wave



Visitors feel the heat in California's Death Valley earlier this week. This record-setting heat wave's remarkable power, reach and unusually early appearance is giving meteorologists yet more cause for concern about extreme weather in an era of climate change.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

It might be tempting to shrug at the scorching weather across large swaths of the West. This just in: It gets hot in the summer. But this record-setting heat wave's remarkable power, size and unusually early appearance is giving meteorologists and climate experts yet more cause for concern.

"It's not only unusual for June, but it is pretty extreme even in absolute terms," says Daniel Swain, climate scientist at the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability.



From the Great Plains to the coast, cities are

setting record temps This heat dome's reach is remarkable, too: It has set record highs stretching from the Great Plains to coastal California.

For example, Palm Springs, Calif., recently hit 123 degrees, equaling its highest recorded temperature.

Las Vegas set a daily record of 114 degrees. Phoenix reached a record 118 degrees, the earliest the city has hit that high a mark.

Sacramento, Calif., set a new daily record of 109 degrees. The National Weather Service just extended its excessive heat warning through Sunday night in the Central Valley

and parts of northern California.



Denver this week hit 100 for three straight days, the earliest date of such a streak on record, tweeted meteorologist Bob Henson.

And in the Plains, several cities including Omaha, Neb., set records, including a daily record high of 105 degrees.

Just last year, several cities in the West also hit record highs. This current heat dome "fits with climate change ideas, global warming, meaning that it's just a little bit warmer than it would have been last year," Bridger says.

The "heat dome" is making droughts even worse

It's also coinciding with and worsening record drought across big parts of the West. These two things, Daniel Swain says, are now making each other worse.

"The drought is leading to extremely low soil moisture, which is making it easier for these high pressure systems to generate extreme heat waves because more of the sun's energy is going into heating the atmosphere rather than evaporating nonexistent water in the soil."

It's more evidence of human-caused climate change The excessive heat and widening drought continues to elevate wildfire risk across much of the West.

The number of new wildfires in the U.S. so far this year is at a 10-year high, signaling a long, potentially dangerous summer and fall for wildfires.



Experts say this current heat dome is yet more evidence of the impact of human-caused climate change. Bridger at San Jose State says while that is most likely the case, "it takes a lot of work to figure that out."

"It's just so clear at this point," says climate scientist Swain, "when it comes to record-breaking heat events, the study has been run for event after event after event in region after region after region in year after year."

And the answer is almost always the same, he says: "There's a crystal clear human fingerprint on extreme heat and extreme heat events ... climate change is making these sorts of things worse."

And what was historically rare is now becoming almost commonplace: Forecasters say there's a chance of yet another heat wave of similar magnitude in the West about 10 days from now.



"That sounds crazy, except that last summer we saw like three to five of these, you know, 'unprecedented events' in different regions of the West," Swain points out.

As Temperatures Soar, California And Texas Urge Power Conservation

June 16 (Reuters) - Searing heat across the U.S. Southwest and soaring electricity demand for air conditioners this week are prompting grid operators in Texas and California to warn consumers about energy conservation to avoid outages.

Grid operators in Texas and California both dealt with rotating outages over the last year to

avoid widespread collapses of their power systems - California due to the heat in August 2020 and Texas in February 2021 after a deep freeze that left millions without heat - some for days.



The California Independent System Operator (ISO), which operates most of the state's electric system, projected demand plus reserves required in case something goes wrong with a generating plant or transmission line, would exceed power supplies for several days this week.

The ISO forecast peak demand in California would rise from 40,858 megawatts (MW) on Wednesday to 43,323 MW on Thursday, compared with the all-time peak of 50,270 MW in July 2006.

On Wednesday, solar power was providing about 30% of California ISO's supply, and the grid warned that it would be unlikely to be able to rely on additional supplies from other states due to the extreme heat hitting much of the Western United States.



ERCOT said demand reached 69,943 MW on Monday and is expected to reach 70,391 MW on June 17. The state's grid is separate from the rest of the country, so it can draw only small amounts of power from other grids to offset greater-than-normal demand.

In Houston, the biggest city in Texas, the mercury is expected to reach the upper 90s on Wednesday and Thursday, about five degrees higher than usual, according to AccuWeather.