



Media Alert

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President Obama Talks Gas Prices in One-on-One with AAA

Virginia Beach, V.A., (March 23, 2012) – With prices climbing more than 60 cents a gallon since January 1, President Barack Obama discussed energy and rising gas prices—a top-of-mind issue for motorists across the country including AAA’s more than 53 million members—in a meeting with AAA yesterday.

Following his speech on energy issues in Cushing, Oklahoma, the President spoke to a representative of the nation’s largest auto club that serves one-in-four American households. As an advocate of motorists nationwide, AAA asked the President questions likely to be foremost in the minds of drivers feeling the pain at the pump.

When asked by AAA to comment on the frustration and confusion that U.S motorists are experiencing with rising gas prices, the President said, “I understand what folks are going through because it wasn’t that long ago that I was having to fill up my gas tank and drive to work, shuttle the kids back and forth to school or events. It takes a big bite out of folks’ paychecks.” The President went on to say that the U.S. has experienced cyclical gas prices for decades and stressed the importance of America having more control over its own energy security.

AAA also inquired about the role of the President in addressing prices at the pump given the global forces and political tensions abroad that drive the oil and energy markets. The President elaborated on points from his earlier speech, saying, “The most important thing I can do as the President is not to simply focus on tomorrow. It’s focusing on getting America properly aimed toward our goal of continuing to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.” The President also highlighted the importance of maintaining growth and productivity while further reducing U.S. oil consumption. Mr. Obama noted that pressure on oil prices in the coming two decades will be difficult to reverse.

Even as a 110-year old organization whose origins date to the earliest days of the motor vehicle, AAA continues to explore new vehicle technologies to offer enhanced and improved services to members. Responding to member interest, AAA began testing a roadside service vehicle capable of providing charging assistance to electric vehicles. As to public acceptance of new technologies, the President said, “People need to feel confident that when they get into an electric car they’re not going to get stuck. To the extent that we start having both more efficient batteries and distribution capacity, people can feel confident that they’re never going to get stuck, or at least not any more stuck than they do when they forget to fill up and then call AAA.”

The President also shared insight about the role of alternative-fuel vehicles as a possible solution to current high fuel costs. Mr. Obama noted that fuel efficiency standards for cars and trucks have doubled, which will result in fewer trips to the gas station and a savings for the average family of about \$8,000 over the life of the car. As to the future, Mr. Obama is optimistic.

“If we unleash American creativity, if we properly incentivize people to think about fuel economy as part of overall design, Americans can make great cars.”

While Mr. Obama is no longer able to do his own driving, AAA couldn't pass up the opportunity to ask President Obama about his first car. Noting he had been AAA member for years, he said, “I have to confess, my first car was my grandfather's car, which was a Ford Granada. It rattled and it shook, and I don't think the girls were particularly impressed when I came to pick them up in a Ford Granada. But you know what? It moved, and so I have fond memories of the fact that it got me to where I needed to go.”

AAA is a non-partisan organization providing unbiased reporting of gas prices through its popular weekly Fuel Gauge Report, and supports the national dialogue on gas prices by offering objective and accurate perspective to the media and motorists year-round.

As part of North America's largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA Tidewater Virginia provides its more than 325,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding AAA Tidewater Virginia has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. For more information, visit AAA.com and follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AAATWnews](https://twitter.com/AAATWnews).

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