

March 2, 2018

Dear Mayor Langfelder and Aldermen,

On behalf of the members and Board of Directors of The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, we are writing to express our opposition to a new 4% natural gas tax to fill the City of Springfield's budget shortfall. Those most impacted by the 4% natural gas tax will be our businesses and job creators.

When faced with a shortfall, the private sector must and does make decisions to reduce expenses to balance their budgets. Every day private sector businesses and organizations make difficult decisions regarding the cost of products lines, goods and services, and yes, often times even personnel. Private sector businesses cannot regularly raise their prices to address a hole in their budgets, they carefully make decisions on cost reductions and any price increases.

It has been reported that even with the various tax increases in the 2017 and 2018 budgets, as well as the proposed natural gas tax, the city projects it will face another shortfall next year. Tax increases typically do not fix a budget problem in the long run, in fact, they can make it worse by contributing to the trend of more people and businesses (and the revenue they provide) leaving Springfield, Sangamon County and Illinois. This kind of climate certainly does not encourage existing businesses to expand or prospective businesses to consider our community as a place for a new home.

On behalf of our members and the Board of Directors, we are opposed to a new 4% natural gas tax to fill the city's budget shortfall.

Sincerely,



Chris Hembrough
President & CEO
The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce