Report Says Montgomery Drivers Are Losing Money On the Roadways

By Jalea Brooks

A possible increase to the Alabama’s gas tax is expected to be a dominant issue when the legislative session starts in March, but it’s already on the minds of Montgomery city and county leaders.

Monday morning the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce, presented a report by a national transportation research group called TRIP that says traffic, potholes and other road hazards are costing Montgomery drivers about $1,339 each year.

The report uses data from 2017 and suggests that driving on Montgomery roads that are deteriorated, congested and lack desirable safety features ultimately cost drivers in lost time, wasted fuel and the financial cost of traffic crashes. According to TRIP, Alabama drivers lose $5.3 billion each year as a result of driving on deficient roads.

Montgomery County and city leaders now say the report is a major reason they are in favor of a gas tax increase, proposed by Governor Kay Ivey, to increase funding for roads bridges and other infrastructure. Alabama’s gas tax hasn’t changed since 1992, some city and county leaders say that’s far too long. “If you just think about it, that 18 cents that got adjusted 27 years ago, is only worth about 10 cents now” said Montgomery Mayor Todd Strange.

“We want the funds to be able to do what we need to do for the people that we represent” explained chairman of the Montgomery County Commission Elton Dean.

Exactly how much more could you be paying at the pump? That won’t be clear until Governor Ivy officially lays out her plan on Wednesday, but it’s already been met with plenty of opposition. The legislative session starts March 5th.