

CBS47 Investigation: Gov. Newsom redirects gas tax money. It won't fund highways, railway system

CBS47 INVESTIGATES

by: [Erik Rosales](#)

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With a stroke of his pen, California Governor Gavin Newsom has redirected part of the money you pay at the pump with the state's gas tax to the railway system and other projects.

Governor Newsom signed [Executive Order N-19-19](#).

It calls for leveraging billion in annual state transportation funds to reduce green house gases and emissions.

The order directs money away from fixing local highways, stalling important projects here in the valley.

Valley Assemblyman Jim Patterson (R)-Fresno, is upset and wants Republicans and Democrats in the state to speak out.

Assemblyman Patterson says, "One of the very first things Governor Newsom decides to do, is put forward an executive order and his people at Caltrans have decided they are going to terminate addition north and south freeway lanes on Highway 99 in Tulare and Madera County. I'm almost speechless with response to this."

[According to the Caltrans report](#), the projects cost a total of 17-million dollars.

But that is not all.

The report also states some \$61-million in uncommitted funds will be held in reserve for priority rail projects and other priorities aligned with Executive Order N-19-19.

Assemblyman Patterson says, "When you pay for gas and you pay a gas tax, a railroad is not a highway. This is bait and switch. This is saying one thing and doing something else. I just think all who represent California both Democrats

and Republicans have better step up and stand up and say Mr. Governor you can't do this."

CBS47 reached out to Caltrans about its report to delete the widening projects on Highway 99. A spokesperson said she hadn't seen the report.

California State Transportation Agency released a statement regarding this report:

"The state is confronting the climate crisis head on. In doing so, Caltrans will use available transportation dollars to prioritize projects that manage congestion and reduce vehicle miles traveled in order to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Those who claim the state is canceling projects funded by gas tax dollars are incorrect. Aligning climate goals with transportation goals requires new thinking, not obstructionism. With the long lead time to plan, design, and construct transportation projects, we must act now to achieve our climate goals."

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY DAVID S. KIM

CBS47 also reached out to Governor Newsom's office, at the time of this report no one got back to us.