

Legislative Report
May 2019
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1. Legislation. SUCCESS!! Rt. 81. Funding for repairs, improvements, safety re-designs and adjustments for future budgets to handle the needs of our highways and transportation assets. These bills and reforms are MAJOR accomplishments due to the effective bipartisanship by the Governor and the State Legislators and their Staffs. We should enthusiastically applaud their efforts. Here are a few of the provisions: A I-81 committee is established to monitor the conditions of these assets; a 2.1 gas tax will be levied on certain regional high volume sections of I-81(all of this tax will be deposited in a new I-81 improvement fund);effective July 1,2021 an additional 2.3% tax on diesel fuels. In some cases, some of these fees would not apply to farm vehicles. In my report last month I listed three states who were considering gas tax increases from 4 cents per gallon to 45 cents per gallon--here are a few more states who are also considering such tax increases (Ariz, Hawaii, Mich, Minn, N.M. Ohio, Vt) If you need more info on these subjects request Va. House Bill#2718 and/or Va. Senate Bill#1716 from your State official.

2. Legislation. Lowering the high costs of drug prices. A high degree of effort continues but some historical practices and some legislators are making the job much more difficult. For example a practice of "spread pricing" where benefit managers can charge one amount to health plans and then turn around and charge a higher price to others to increase profits; also some legislators are advising some not to share critical information with those conducting studies about business practices in their company. Some Federal bills on reduced prices has been approved at the sub-committee level with full review at the Federal level scheduled for May 2019.

3. Scams, Hoaxes, Disinformation. To write this column I always use multiple sources to cross check my reported information. One subject that upsets me greatly is the continued abuse of seniors which seem to increase from year to year. Kiplinger Magazine recently published (April 2019, p. 9) a list of Red Flags of Fraud which included some frauds I have not considered: withdrawals and/or closing accounts without regard to penalties and frequently appearing at the bank with new/unknown friends. Frequently question what you encounter!!