

Given the increased affordability and range of electric vehicles (EV) many have seen an increase in the prevalence of these vehicles on the road. EVs are seen as a smart move for many buyers especially those who have access to home or workplace charging and see the potential to save money at the gas station and on annual maintenance. EVs do not require any petroleum to drive. Therefore, they do not contribute to the annual fuel tax revenue – money used to fund road construction and maintenance at the state and national level.

Lacking infrastructure funding has recently been attributed by some to the rise of EVs but given that in 2018 AutoAlliance.org reported the market share of EVs being only .20 % and the national fuel tax having not been updated since 1993, and only once in Oklahoma since 1987 those claims seem ill-founded. This issue more so displays our need to develop a new revenue generating structure to fund construction projects going forward. The gas and diesel taxes simply have not kept pace with rising construction costs and the increased fuel efficiency of vehicles.

Although different programs have been discussed, no real efforts have been made on behalf of any alternatives in the state until this current legislative session. House Bill 1712 – Creation of Road User Charge Program Task Force was introduced for the purpose of developing pilots to secure new and efficient revenue generators for Oklahoma roads and bridges.

Devon Westbrook graduated from Ardmore High School in 2015 and is currently a graduate student in the Regional and City Planning Program at OU.

Your Turn

Devon Westbrook

Guest columnist

CITATION (TURABIAN STYLE)

"GUEST COLUMN - Paying for Oklahoma's Roads: Updates Needed." *Daily Ardmoreite, The (Ardmore, OK)*, March 14, 2021: B8. *NewsBank: Access World News*. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&docref=news/18137A9DE0B6C950>.