



SSDA News

Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades

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SSDA-AT MEETS IN LAS VEGAS

By Roy Littlefield



On November 8th, SSDA-AT hosted its annual meeting in Las Vegas in conjunction with the SEMA show.

At the meeting, several important topics were discussed including: Training, Future Technology, License Beer and Wine in C-stores, Future Technology- Right to Repair Telematics, Member Recruitment, Communications to members, Operator Training, and Magnuson Moss. In addition to a lengthy discussions on State

Legislation, Federal Legislation, and Regulatory Issues.

SSDA-AT also discussed the upcoming events for 2020 which include a Lobby Day, Environmental Summit, and an International Summit. SSDA-AT will be taking on leadership roles at each event.

We will plan to hold the next meeting by conference call.

More information to come!

Thanks again to all who attended



The Online Edge – What Your Business Needs to Thrive



By: Stephanie Santore, Net Driven

Does your business have an online presence? If so, are you doing all you can to ensure its virtual success? If not, what are you waiting for? Let's take a sneak peek at some statistical findings from the Pew Research Center. According to their most recent studies on the use of internet and technology it was found that:

- Roughly three-quarters of Americans, or 77%, now own a smartphone, which nearly doubles the former findings since the Center began its research in 2011.
- As of November 2016, nearly three-quarters, or 73% of Americans indicate that they have broadband service at home.
- Nearly seven-in-ten Americans now use social media. When the Center started tracking social media adoption in 2005, just 5% of Americans said they used these platforms. Today, 69% of U.S. adults are social media users.
- Half the public now owns a tablet computer. When the Center first began tracking tablet ownership in 2010, just 3% of Americans owned a tablet of some kind.

As you can see, now more than ever before, an online presence for your business is significant. And not just any online presence, but a quality one that provides a sense of credibility and legitimacy, turning its visitors into leads and sales, and contributing to the success of your business.

First impressions matter. If your business has a website, rest assured that internet users are navigating to it to formulate their opinion, to see what other people have to say about you, and to “screen” shop your services and products, which is much like window shopping, but with the ease of never having to actually visit your business’s location.

Your business can now be accessible to the masses thanks to technology. Therefore, it’s vital to have a way for potential clients to find you with the swipe of their fingertip and also to ensure you have a website that makes a good impression.

So, how do you go about trying to meet your customers’ needs online?

Let’s Talk Internet Marketing Best Practices

There are several factors that play into the creation of a well-made website that will help your business’s online presence generate traffic and rank effectively:

Design & Layout

Visual presentation plays an important role in the functionality of a website. A high-performing website will provide a positive user experience. It helps to have a responsive web design. What makes a website responsive? Responsive design helps to generate leads and sales without any limitations based on user devices. So, customers can find your automotive service site on their tablet, smartphone, smart watch, etc., viewing your website efficiently from any screen size.

Content

Content is the reason why visitors come to a site. They are seeking information about your business and its services. The key is to provide relevant content that is easy for visitors to digest. Too much or too little and your visitors might go elsewhere to find what they’re looking for. Check out what Moz has to say about content regarding search engine ranking. By providing unique content that moves beyond self-promotion and is easily digestible to the user, your website offers valuable information.

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NET DRIVEN

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Calls to Action

Calls to action within a site's content and design come in the form of clickable links or custom buttons. It entices a visitor to take action beyond the page they are on, an action like submitting a form, requesting a quote, purchasing a product, or even just clicking a link that leads to another page with relevant information.

Through a CTA, a user moves to take a specific action that will benefit your business. And action is what it's all about.

Credibility

A business with an online footprint is a business that can be found, recognized, and confided in.

From building a solid and consistent brand across all channels, to maintaining an active social media presence, gaining positive reviews, managing your online reputation with products like Net Driven's Reputation Management.

Mobile Viewability

More and more people are looking at your site from a mobile phone or web enabled device. It seems like anything with a screen and a microchip in it is capable of getting on the internet these days.

Make sure your site is viewable on a mobile internet enabled device.

Search Engine Optimization

At Net Driven, we drive the traffic that drives your business! It begins with a website that keeps local search in mind. A strong SEO foundation puts proven strategies to work and improves your ability to get found.

From understanding searcher behavior to using tested best practices, the SEO team at Net Driven works hard to ensure that your site has all of the key ingredients for SEO success. Look to us for:

- Keyword research performed for your business and target geographic

- Optimized meta tags for click through success
- Relevant industry content
- Local directory management
- SEO-friendly site architecture
- and more!

Don't have a website yet?

What are you waiting for?!

Talk to a representative from Net Driven today and ask about how we can help you create a website that not only generates traffic, but turns your traffic into leads and sales!

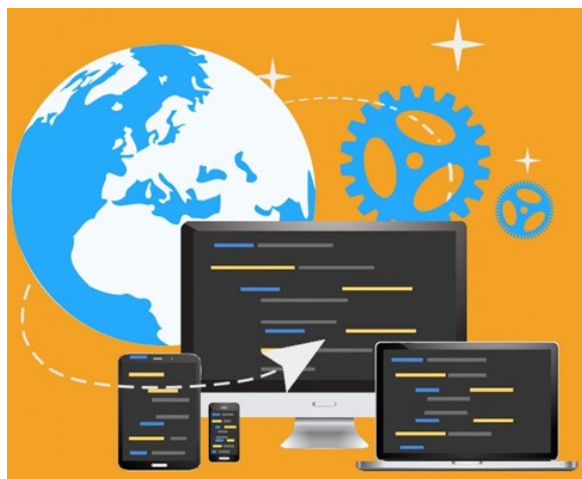
Net Driven should be your choice for all your automotive internet marketing needs. [Contact us today!](#)

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SEMA Show Highlights



Reminder: Final EPA Rule Released: E15 Tanks

Last month EPA released its final rule (EPA released its final rule) to allow sales of gasoline blended with up to 15% ethanol (E15) year round. In light of this development the Office of Underground Storage Tanks is issuing a Compliance Advisory to remind owners and operators of their compatibility regulatory require-

ments. This advisory is posted on our web site at:

<https://www.epa.gov/ust/compliance-advisory-about-2015-underground-storage-tank-regulation>

US House Members Propose Reforms to Infrastructure Construction Process

Legislation that seeks to advance infrastructure projects through innovative and open competition among suppliers was recently introduced by a bipartisan group of policymakers in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Under the Sustainable Municipal Access to Resilient Technology (SMART) Infrastructure Act, reforms to the procurement process would be supported to ensure efficient and sensible rebuilding of projects aided by federal funding.

The legislation also would establish an inter-agency task force that would prepare a report about the procurement process as well as the open competition for construction materials. Currently, a number of municipalities adhere to myriad regulations pertaining to the types of materials they may use for infrastructure projects, the legislation's sponsors explained.

The bill is "capitalism at work — encouraging open competition and removing burdensome regulations while saving American taxpayers billions of dollars," Rep. Harley Rouda (D-Calif.) said Oct. 16. He is a member of the influential Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. "As the federal government continues to fund critical infrastructure projects and members on both sides of the aisle seek to increase that investment across the country, we should encourage modern, resilient solutions that use taxpayer dollars responsibly."

"This bill makes a simple, but critical, reform to our federally funded procurement and project-development process by returning authority and responsibility to the construction professionals who know best," added Rep. Brian Babin (R-Texas), also a sponsor and a member on the transportation panel alongside Rouda.

The legislation was referred to the committee of jurisdiction for consideration in the 116th Congress. It is unclear when the panel's leadership will schedule a debate on the legislation. Other co-sponsors of the bill include Reps. Grace Napolitano (D-Calif.), a member of the transportation panel, and Ralph Norman (R-S.C.), who sits on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

"Ensuring open and fair competition in the acquisition of materials for infrastructure projects is critically important," Napolitano said, in a statement provided by Rouda's office. "It increases jobs in our districts by allowing innovative businesses to compete fairly with traditional materials, and it lowers costs for taxpayers by creating additional supply in the bidding process. I am proud to join Reps. Rouda, Babin and Norman in supporting this bipartisan legislation for our communities."

"From the federal standpoint, two of the best things Congress can do to facilitate these much-needed improvements are to encourage competition and remove unnecessary regulations," Norman added.

Several stakeholders have expressed support for the legislation, emphasizing an impetus to enhance freight and commuter connectivity at cities and municipalities.



Right to Repair – Round 2



In 2012 the Auto Care Association and Coalition for Auto Repair Equality (which included the Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades, the Tire Industry Association, WMDA/CAR, the New England Service Station Association, and the New England Tire and Service Association) successfully moved the “Right to Repair” law through the Massachusetts legislature.

Once the bill was signed into law, in 2013 the Coalition was successful in developing the Right to Repair Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that “required equal access for independent repairers to the same service information, tolls, and software that manufacturers provide to their franchised dealers.”

The legislation and subsequent Memorandum of Understanding were major victories for the independent automotive repair industry. The results have been relatively successful for the independent service station and repair community.

The coalition now is preparing for round 2 in this ongoing challenging effort. New challenges, as daunting, are quickly surfacing. The new challenge you face is that automobile manufacturers are attempting to lock down access to the onboard diagnostics in the name of “cybersecurity.”

According to coalition advocate Tom Tucker, an example of the problem independent repairers face is the Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA). Its model year 2018 requires shops, the technicians, and the tools to be authorized by Chrysler before anyone can access the OBD system for many bi-directional repairs.

Other manufacturers are contemplating following Chrysler’s lead. Some are developing their own approach to cybersecurity. All of these developments could force independent repair facilities to access diagnostic data through the manufacturer’s “cloud.”

Using “security” issues as an excuse, we could see in a relatively short period of time the inability of a technician to plug into the data necessary to fix the car.

Automobile manufacturers are arguing that a secure vehicle requires a locked down port. Repairers are keenly aware that the control of the data is market power.

Beyond the repair facility sector, this security strategy would give the manufacturers the power to control data

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Right to Repair – Round 2

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on customers such as fleet owners, car rental companies, and insurance companies. These larger customers could become beholden to the automaker for the data they would need for their operations.

Imagine a fleet of vehicles forced to rely on the carmaker to obtain the logistics and health data for the vehicle they own.

Yes, cybersecurity clearly is an important issue. But the independent repair community must unite to stop manufacturers from controlling their access to that vehicle for the life of the vehicle.

The Coalition of Auto Repair Equality asserts that the issue of cybersecurity be addressed in a manner that is standards-based and insures that the control of data necessary for repair is with the owner of the vehicle.

The Auto Care Association believes that this can be done through the Secure Vehicle Interface (SVI). SVI has a common language and set of interfaces for communicating car information to third parties. For more information on SVI, check the Auto Care Association website.

The Auto Care Association, the Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades, the Tire Industry Association, and other members of the Coalition for Auto Repair Equality are now working with the Massachusetts Right to Repair coalition (including the SSSA-AT and TIA member and regional as-

sociations) to introduce legislation in Massachusetts that would amend the right to repair law to require that the vehicle owner has a right to control where the repair data on the car would be sent.

The proposed legislation will also challenge the FCA actions to lock down the OBD port by prohibiting automakers from restricting access to the onboard diagnostic system unless access is standardized across all makes and models, and that control over access is independent of the auto manufacturer.

It is crucial that we get these assurances for the independent automotive sector. Access to this information will be crucial to allow our members to continue serving the motoring public.

The legislative battle is on to block manufacturers from controlling a vehicle's repair data needed to access onboard diagnostic systems to do what you have always done best: provide effective, professional, reliable, convenient automobile repairs at an honest, fair, and affordable rate.

Like right to repair, access to vehicle data is a battle for the independent repair industry's future.



Trump Administration Promises Biofuel Boost to Farmers, Angering Big Oil



The Trump administration unveiled a plan to boost U.S. biofuels consumption starting next year to help struggling farmers, a move that cheered the agriculture industry but triggered a backlash from Big Oil.

The plan would require an unspecified increase in the amount of ethanol that oil refiners must add to their fuel in 2020, and would also aim to remove further barriers to the sale of higher ethanol blends of gasoline like E15, the Environmental Protection Agency said in a statement.

“President Trump’s leadership has led to an agreement that continues to promote domestic ethanol and biodiesel production, supporting our nation’s farmers and providing greater energy security,” EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler said.

The deal is widely seen as an attempt by President Donald Trump to mend fences with the powerful corn lobby, which was outraged by the EPA’s decision in August

to exempt 31 oil refineries here from their obligations under the RFS. This freed the refineries from the requirement to blend biofuels or buy credits from those who do.

Biofuel companies, farmers and Midwest lawmakers complained that the waivers undercut demand for corn, which is already slumping due to the U.S. trade war with China. Oil refiners say the waivers protect blue-collar jobs and have no real impact on ethanol use.

Senators from Iowa, the nation’s biggest ethanol producing state, welcomed the move.

“The President heard that message and has acted on it” Republican Senator Joni Ernst said in a statement. “Our message was clear: uphold the RFS —15 billion means 15 billion,” Ernst, who was instrumental in putting together the deal, said.

The rules, which will be finalized after a period of public comment, would “ensure that more than 15 billion gallons of conventional ethanol be blended into the nation’s fuel supply beginning in 2020,” the EPA said, without giving an exact number. Any changes to blending volume mandates for 2020 under the U.S. biofuel law, the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), must be finalized by Nov. 30.

Before the proposal, the EPA had called for the refining industry to add 20.04 billion gallons of biofuels, including 15 billion

Trump Administration Promises Biofuel Boost to Farmers, Angering Big Oil

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gallons of ethanol, into their fuel in 2020. The Trump administration had also already provided a boost to E15 earlier this year here by lifting an Obama-era ban on its sale during summer months.

While the move was largely welcome by biofuel groups, some industry players said they were concerned that the EPA declined to provide an exact figure for the 2020 blending quotas. A brief EPA call with reporters offered little insight, with an agency official saying only that the mandates will be based on a calculation of waived volumes over the previous three years.

Tim Gannon, a farmer from Iowa and a former official with the Department of Agriculture was skeptical.

“It is very much in question whether this gets done by 2020,” he said. “Every time the President makes a promise on the RFS, his EPA administrator manages to roll it back for Big Oil... The question now is will this time be any different?”

OIL INDUSTRY UPSET

Oil companies have consistently resisted measures to expand the biofuels market, which they view as a competitor. Refiners have vehemently complained that the requirements under the RFS cost them a fortune. Their weeks-long efforts to include oil-friendly measures in the final deal announced Friday failed.

“We are deeply concerned about the Administration’s decision to, once again, play politics with our fuel system by increasing an already onerous biofuel mandate, placing greater strain on the U.S. manufacturers he promised to protect and threatening higher costs for consumers,” the American Petroleum Institute and the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers industry groups said in a joint statement.

Trump waded into the issue early in his presidency after representatives of the refining industry complained about the high costs of compliance, seeking to tap into his administration’s support for rolling back regulation.

Trump’s EPA had since vastly expanded here its use of the provision allowing small refining facilities to seek waivers if they can prove compliance would cause them disproportionate financial hardship.

Reuters has reported here that small facilities owned by oil majors such as Exxon Mobil (XOM.N) and Chevron Corp (CVX.N) have been among the facilities securing recent exemptions.



Letter to the Editor

Dear SSDA-AT,

The U.S. natural gas and oil industry is laser-focused on tackling the dual challenge of delivering energy for all and protecting our planet, keeping pace with record demand for affordable fuels while reducing emissions every step of the way. By investing in innovative technologies, developing state-of-the-art standards and supporting smart regulations that reduce methane and other emissions, our industry is improving sustainability, particularly for the production of cleaner-burning natural gas.

The Environmental Protection Agency's recent efforts to reconsider its New Source Performance Standards serve as an example of regulatory efficiencies that advance both industry performance and environmental protections. The proposal, which realigns with boundaries established by the Clean Air Act, regulates volatile organic compounds from common energy production sources – and continues to effectively reduce methane emissions as an important co-benefit. Actions that streamline state and federal programs, and offer greater certainty for compliance, allow the industry to deliver reliable energy and drive climate progress.

The U.S. leads the world in producing natural gas and oil while simultaneously reducing emissions relative to production. For example, in the Permian Basin, energy production grew 100% between 2011-2017, and methane emissions relative to that production fell nearly 40% – and basins across the country have achieved similar results. With industry-led initiatives like The Environmental Partnership, natural gas and oil companies are developing shared environmental goals and creating pathways for new technologies to reduce our footprint while still delivering vital energy resources to American families and businesses.

Today, U.S. carbon dioxide emissions are at their lowest levels in a generation, largely due to the increased use of natural gas, evidence that energy and climate progress can co-exist. Through continued development of sustainable energy resources and collective action toward emissions reduction, the natural gas and oil industry will continue leading efforts to improve our environment.

Sincerely,



Mike Sommers
President and CEO
API



AMERICAN PETROLEUM INSTITUTE

Trump Nominates Deputy Energy Secretary to Replace Rick Perry

President Trump announced recently that he plans to nominate Deputy Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette to replace outgoing Energy Secretary Rick Perry.

In a series of tweets, Trump described Brouillette as a "total professional" and said his experience in the energy sector is "unparalleled." Trump also praised Perry for doing an "outstanding job" and said he would leave at the end of the year.

"I want to thank Secretary of Energy Rick Perry for the outstanding job he has done. He will be leaving at the end of the year to pursue other interests. Rick was a great Governor of Texas and a great Secretary of Energy," Trump tweeted.

"He is also my friend! At the same time, I am pleased to nominate Deputy Secretary Dan Brouillette to be the new Secretary of Energy. Dan's experience in the sector is unparalleled. A total professional, I have no doubt that Dan will do a great job!" the president wrote.

Trump had announced Perry's plans to resign days earlier.

Brouillette served in the Energy Department during the George W. Bush administration. He was nominated by Trump to the No. 2 role and easily confirmed by the Senate in a 79-17 vote in August 2017.

He served as an Energy Department assistant secretary between 2001 and 2003 and also worked as chief of staff to the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Before joining the Trump administration, Brouillette served as senior vice president and head of public policy for USAA, a financial services firm. He also worked as a vice president at Ford Motor Co. prior to that.

Once he is formally nominated, Brouillette will need to participate in a confirmation hearing before the full Senate votes on his nomination. He is unlikely to be a particularly controversial nominee given the ease of his first confirmation.

News of the selection for the top Energy Department post came a day after Trump announced that Perry would be leaving the administration by the end of the year.

Trump confirmed Perry's forthcoming exit after multiple reports surfaced that the Cabinet secretary had notified the president he would be stepping down.

Perry has been with Trump since the early days of his administration, having been confirmed in March 2017.

"A very good friend of mine who's been with me right from the beginning, and somebody that's going to be going, I guess, at the end of the year," Trump said of Perry while touring a factory in Alvarado, Texas. "I'm going to miss you so much."

Perry is stepping down from his post amid controversy surrounding his role in the Trump administration's Ukraine policy.

Trump's dealings with Ukraine are the focus of an impeachment inquiry in the House, and Democrats have sought documentation from the Trump Cabinet member about his involvement in the president's efforts focused on Ukraine.

Perry denied in an interview with Fox News on Friday that the Ukraine revelations had anything to do with his decision to step down, and that he wants to return to Texas to spend time with his family.

"It has absolutely nothing to do with Ukraine," Perry said. "For the last eight or nine months, I have been looking back to Texas on a pretty regular basis."

Perry said he is looking at "going onto the next adventure in life."



Infrastructure Funding

On November 8, SSDA-AT affiliate leaders met in the Las Vegas Convention Center for the Annual SSDA-AT Meeting and unanimously agreed on a position to strongly supporting President Trump's national infrastructure proposal so long as it is financed with fair and reasonable funding levels. SSDA-AT members were attending the SEMA, GTE, and APPEX automotive aftermarket conventions and trade shows.

Currently there are two infrastructure proposals on Capitol Hill, with over 40 bills introduced on how to fund them.

Bills are being considered in the Senate and the House of Representatives to address the pending insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund. The Fund which provides the financing structure for the nation's roads, bridges, and transit projects, will run out of money by the end of 2020. The Highway Trust Fund finances about 25 percent of the nations spending. Because the Federal motor fuel tax has not been raised since 1993 and gasoline revenues may dwindle with a changing fleet makeup, lawmakers have struggled to achieve a consensus for long-term funding sources.

The bipartisan America's Transportation Infrastructure Act would direct the largest amount of money of funding for the nation's highways, bridges, and mass transit in history. HR 3904 would authorize \$287 billion over 5 years. No taxes have been raised under this bill. The additional revenue would come from the General Fund.

The President has proposed a major infrastructure/jobs bill to the level of \$1.5 trillion to \$2.5 trillion with money raised from the highway community (by raising existing taxes, increased tolling, and large scale privatization of Federal highways). The President's sweeping infrastructure proposal includes (but is not limited to):

Bridges, Dams, Airports, Trains, Mass Transit

Sewage and drinking water pipes, Transition and distribution power lines, Power plants, Electric grids, Inland waterways, Levees, Local and national parks, Hospitals, Schools, Municipal solid waste systems, Roads and bridges.

Currently 32 percent of the urban roads and 14 percent of the rural roads are determined to be in poor condition.

Thus far, all funding proposals for the wide ranging infrastructure proposal focus on the highway users community. Only a small percentage of these new funds would go to highways.

President Trump supports both a reauthorization to the Highway Trust Fund as well as a new and unique massive infrastructure bill.

Returning to Washington from the GTE/SEMA Show, SSDA-AT representatives took the membership message to Capitol Hill. Last week we met with:

Members of Congress:

Senator Tom Carper (D), Congressman Sam Graves (R-MO), Congressman Garret Graves (R-LA), Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-IL, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR)

Federal, State, and Local Leaders:

Brittney Kohler, Legislative Director, Transportation and Infrastructure, National League of Cities

Jim Tymon, Executive Director, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

Helen Zyblikewcz, Staff Director, Highway and Transit Subcommittee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Richard Russell, Staff Director, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee

Industry Leaders:

Bruce Hamilton, Managing Director, Roadway Safety Foundation

Jeff Davis Senior Fellow and Editor, Eno Transportation Weekly

Dave Schwieter, Interim CEO and President, Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers

Laura Perrotta, President and CEO, American Highway Users Alliance

The Association is supporting the America Transportation Act as it is moving through Congress. We support the goals of the President's infrastructure proposal but we oppose raising all industry taxes, raising significantly the Federal motor fuel taxes, and privatizing the majority of the Federal highways.

Why Tesla Doesn't Scare the Fracking Industry

Midland, Texas, home of the boom in US oil and natural gas production, is more than 300 miles from the nearest Tesla store, but it feels even farther away: The projected growth in electric vehicle sales doesn't worry industry leaders.

"We use about 100 million barrels of oil in the world a day," said Scott Sheffield, CEO of Pioneer Natural Resources, one of the largest players in the oil and gas field known as the Permian Basin. "Roughly 25 million of that is used for gasoline automobiles. If we convert all 25 million barrels a day overnight to electric vehicles, we're still going to need a lot of hydrocarbons." By 2040 more than half of new car sales will be electric vehicles, according to forecasts. But it will take a much longer time before they make up half of cars on the road, as gasoline powered cars slowly wear out and are scrapped.

Much of the world's expanding population is in parts of the world where electric vehicles will have trouble taking hold, Sheffield said.

"In Africa, where a lot of that growth is, they can't go immediately to electric vehicles. They just don't have the infrastructure. It will take a long time for EVs to replace the gasoline engine in my opinion," he said.

Beyond that, much of the electricity that will be used to recharge electric vehicles in the future will come from natural gas being produced by the US industry.

"In the Permian, 40% of our production is natural gas," said Sheffield. "Natural gas will continue to capture [electricity generation] market share."

Much of the growth of natural gas used to generate electricity is due to fracking, which has driven down the cost of gas.

Sheffield's lack of concern about the growth of electric vehicles is echoed by others in the industry.

"When folks talk about energy transitions, these are significant shifts that will take a long period of time," said Frank Macchiarola, vice president

of downstream and industry operations at the American Petroleum Institute, the trade group for both the oil and natural gas industries.

Macchiarola questions whether electric vehicle adoption will take place at the pace of some of the current forecasts. And he agrees that much of the electricity that will be used to charge any electric vehicles will come from natural gas.

"Based on independent analysis, two things are clear," he said. "One: Natural gas will be a significant source of power generation in the United States. Two: Oil will continue to be used a primary source of transportation fuel," he said.

Figures from the US Energy Information Agency back that up.

So far in 2019, nearly 38% of US electricity is generated using natural gas, a record high, and more than any other fuel. That's up 14 percentage points from 10 years ago. Renewable energy sources — wind, solar and hydroelectric — also is producing more electricity. But those sources together only amount to 17% of the market, up only 8 percentage points in the same 10 year span.

That growth of electricity generated by natural gas is expected to continue to grow, even if electricity from renewable energy expands at a faster clip in coming decades. The latest projections from the EIA show the amount of electricity produced by natural gas is to increase by 64% overall between 2017 and 2050.

It's easier to see sources of renewable energy around Midland than it is to see Teslas or other electric vehicles. Here in the heart of the oil patch, giant wind turbines are common. Texas is by far the largest producers of wind energy in the country, responsible for nearly 30% of the wind-generated electricity. That's more than is produced by any other region of the country. Even with the growing use of wind and other renewable energy, natural gas should be the primary source of US electricity for decades to come, according to EIA.

SSDA-AT Legislative Update

SSDA-AT has remained active in discussions centered around safety inspections and working to preserve the programs left in the United States. This year there were 23 bills around the country introduced to eliminate safety inspections.

Luckily, they were all defeated. Thanks to our grassroots efforts and partnering with other state associations.

In Texas, 5 bills were introduced to alter or eliminate the program. In Hawaii, 8 bills were introduced and the only one that ended up passing was the one that called for a study to be done on the impact of safety inspections. Hawaii plans to model the Texas study.

And California for the first time in a long time, is now considering adding a safety inspection. There is question in the state right now over who would have the authority to run the program. It is clear that in most cases, safety inspections remain under attack as only a handful of states even have a program left. SSDA-AT has advocated for national safety inspections and we plan to explore this topic for our 2020 lobby day.

Recently, SSDA-AT participated in an SBLC (Small Business Legislative Council) meeting. There was lengthy discussion on Online Sales Simplicity and Small Business Act with Robert Henson, Economic Legislative Assistant to Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). This bill prohibits states from imposing a sales tax collection duty on certain remote sellers. A "remote seller" is a person without a physical presence in a state who makes a sale in the state. A state may impose a sales tax collection duty on a remote seller only for a sale that occurs after January 1, 2019.

In the case of a small business remote seller (no more than \$10 million in gross annual receipts in the United States), a state may not impose a sales tax collection duty on any person other than the

purchaser if the sale is made (1) on or after June 21, 2018; and (2) before the date that is 30 days after the states develop and Congress approves an interstate compact, applicable to the state and sale, governing the imposition of tax collection duties on remote sellers. We are currently gathering feedback from members on this proposal. Please share with us your thoughts.

Last month, SSDA-AT also attended a Family Business coalition meeting. At the meeting we discussed the latest with the estate tax, tax extenders, technical corrections, tax proposals put forward by Congressional Democrats, and wealth taxes. Bernie Sanders has called for an 8% wealth tax on the richest Americans.

SSDA-AT was one of 151 groups that signed the Family Business Coalition letter supporting the Death Tax Repeal Act. The House legislation (H.R. 218) now has 116 cosponsors including 2 Democrats and the Senate bill (S. 215) has 33 cosponsors.

We also participated in an SBLC webinar titled "Understanding the Newest Final Overtime Regulations." We plan to share the information provided in the webinar to you as you prepare to comply with the new rules which will take effect on January 1, 2020.

In October, Senators Richard Burr (R-NC) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) introduced S. 2602, Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports (RPM) Act, which preserves American motorsports by stopping regulatory overreach by the federal government.

Senators Richard Burr (R-NC) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) today introduced S. 2602, Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports (RPM) Act, which preserves American motorsports by stopping regulatory overreach by the federal government.

SSDA-AT Legislative Update

Continued from page 14

American motorsports began with amateur racers converting regular vehicles into racecars, a legacy that continues to this day. In 2015, however, the Obama Administration proposed a rule that would let the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) fine amateur motorsports enthusiasts for converting their personal vehicles into racecars. The rule ran counter to nearly half a century of Congressional intent under the Clean Air Act. While the EPA removed this problematic language from its final rulemaking, the agency still maintains that vehicle modification for motorsports is unlawful.

“American racing runs on traditions,” said Senator Burr. “For more than 50 years, motorsports enthusiasts have purchased cars and modified them to race, off of public roads. However, this tradition was threatened when the Obama EPA attempted to make these modifications illegal. This legislation upholds Congress’ intent of the Clean Air Act and protects motorsports, for professionals and amateurs alike, for years to come. I’m proud to work with my colleagues on this bipartisan legislation, and I look forward to seeing it move through the Senate.”

“A big part of the fun of motorsports is the tradition of modifying regular cars into racecars,” said Senator Manchin. “This legislation upholds amendments to the Clean Air Act that exempt modified vehicles and racecars from certain environmental regulations, protecting motorsports for years to come. I am proud to be a part of this bipartisan bill and look forward to the boost it will give to motorsports.”

Background:

In 1965, Congress passed the Motor Vehicle Air Pollution Control Act, which defined the term “motor vehicle” as “any self-propelled vehicle designed for transporting persons or property on

a street or highway.” In 1970, Congress clarified that the Clean Air Act’s anti-tampering provision does not apply to vehicles manufactured or modified for racing.

Congress passed the Clean Air Act Amendments in 1990 to again exclude vehicles used solely for competition from the definition of “non-road vehicle,” or a vehicle that is powered by a non-road engine and that is not a motor vehicle or a vehicle used solely for competition. This clarification was instructive as it separates “vehicles used solely for competition” from “motor vehicles.”

After examining the legislative history, it is clear that Congress never intended to provide the EPA with the authority to regulate vehicles used solely for competition, including vehicles modified to be used exclusively for racing.

The Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act simply reaffirms Congress position and further protects amateur motorsports from devastating regulations in the future.

S. 2602 has 24 cosponsors in the Senate, including Senators Thom Tillis (R-NC), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Tim Scott (R-SC), James Risch (R-ID), Mike Crapo (R-ID), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Jon Tester (D-MT), Deb Fischer (R-NE), Mike Braun (R-IN), Todd Young (R-IN), John Barrasso (R-WY), Jim Inhofe (R-OK), Doug Jones (D-AL), Cory Gardner (R-CO), Ron Johnson (R-WI), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Ted Cruz (R-TX), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), John Boozman (R-AR), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Kevin Cramer (R-ND), Jerry Moran (R-KS), and Mike Rounds (R-SD).

We will let you know as things move forward with the RPM Act’s reintroduction in the House. SSDA-AT will be working to find more co-sponsors.

EPA to Require More Ethanol in Fuel Mix

The Trump administration unveiled a plan to boost U.S. biofuels consumption starting next year to help struggling farmers, a move that cheered the agriculture industry but was likely to trigger a backlash from Big Oil.

The plan would require a yet unspecified increase in the amount of ethanol that oil refiners must add to their fuel in 2020, and would also aim to remove further barriers to the sale of higher ethanol blends of gasoline such as E15, the Environmental Protection Agency said in a statement.

The rules, which will be finalized after a period of public comment, would “ensure that more than 15 billion gallons of conventional ethanol be blended into the nation’s fuel supply beginning in 2020,” the EPA said. It did not give an exact number. Any changes to blending volumes mandates for 2020 must be finalized by Nov. 30. The Trump administration had already provided a boost to E15 this year, by lifting Obama-era seasonal restrictions that had banned its sale during summer months.

President Trump in August had promised farmers a “giant package” related to ethanol after his administration angered the powerful corn lobby by exempting 31 oil refineries from their obligations under the renewable fuel standard program.

Social Group Urges Senate to Pass Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation

The Infrastructure Working Group (IWG), a coalition of trade and labor organizations, recently sent a letter to Senate leaders urging bipartisan action to solve long-standing infrastructure deficits.

A robust, long-term, on-time surface transportation bill is necessary to begin to mitigate the nation’s infrastructure deficit and to meet infrastructure needs.

The group urged the Senate to keep up momentum started by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and to pass surface transportation reauthorization before the Sept. 30, 2020, deadline.

IWG also called for a federal infrastructure package that accomplishes six goals: Fixes chronic challenges and reoccurring shortages in the Highway Trust Fund and other federal infrastructure accounts; facilitates opportunities for private investment in U.S. infrastructure; significantly increases direct federal investments in infrastructure; creates efficiencies while continuing to provide environmental protections; complements and strengthens existing tools that deliver infrastructure investments at the federal, state and local levels; and encourages active participation among all levels of government and between public and private sectors.

The letter was sent to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY).



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