

AFFORDABILITY

Dems re-ask Morrissey to suspend gas tax

By AMELIA FERRELL KNISELY
WEST VIRGINIA WATCH

CHARLESTON — West Virginia House Democrats are again asking Gov. Patrick Morrissey and Republican lawmakers to address high gas prices by suspending the state’s gas tax.

So far this year, the minority party’s attempts to work with Republicans on the fuel tax have been unsuccessful, while West Virginia gas prices now top \$4 per gallon in most areas.

“We’re willing to negotiate. The legislation that we have prepared as a caucus would actually go into effect in November,” said House

Minority Leader Sean Horbuckle, D-Cabell, Tuesday at a press conference.

Kentucky and Ohio recently suspended state tax on gasoline and diesel in response to high prices at the pump. In Ohio, prices fell about 40 cents over the last week after the tax suspension.

Both border states have Republican supermajorities in their legislatures, Del. Kayla Young noted.

“This is not just a Democratic issue. This is something that people want for relief for families in West Virginia,” said Young, D-Kanawha. “We think we need to be suspending the gas tax now.”

The state fuel tax averages about 36 cents per gallon and brings in between \$30 million and \$40 million per month, which supports the state’s road fund.

“Part of that is a fixed cost, 20.5 cents, is fixed. The other portion is variable. It’s 15.2%. That number is going to go up, and the wholesale price of gas is going to get more expensive in West Virginia if we don’t do something,” Young said. “Our caucus is open to negotiating on how we fix this problem.”

Steve Williams is the former mayor of Huntington, who is now running for a House seat in District 24. After managing Huntington’s

operations, Williams explained that soaring gas prices affect city operations across the state.

“It affects law enforcement. It affects road maintenance and construction, as well as universal infrastructure development,” Williams said. “Families and state government operations are being scrubbed on a daily basis to be able to make ends meet.”

The House Democratic caucus has already twice called on Morrissey and their Republican colleagues this year to enter into a special session to suspend the state’s gasoline tax.

The nine House Democrats sent a formal letter to Morrissey on May

6 requesting that the governor call the Legislature into a special session. In West Virginia, the governor can call lawmakers into a special session for a specific issue.

Horbuckle said that Morrissey did not respond to their request in the spring.

“I want to be very clear: this is the most pressing issue right now,” Horbuckle said.

State lawmakers can force a special session with three-fifths of members signing onto a letter to the governor, meaning the Democratic caucus needs a substantial amount of Republicans

SEE GAS, PAGE 4A

FEDERAL GRANTS

Writers get course on grant writing



Patricia Porter speaks at the Grant Expectations Conference on Oct. 13, 2026.

PHOTO BY ESTEBAN FERNANDEZ

By ESTEBAN FERNANDEZ
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Major changes are coming to the federal grant application process.

Patricia Porter, founder of the Grant Expectations conference in Morgantown, is trying to help nonprofits, businesses, municipalities and counties navigate the procedure for applying for a federal grant.

“All the changes that are coming, even though they’re delayed right now, they’re going to happen,” Porter said. “It’s just a matter of time. Those rules they have proposed are so substantial, it’s going to change the way everybody does their job.”

Porter’s Grant Expectations three-day conference kicked off Tuesday morning at the Courtyard by Marriott at University Town Center. Secretary of State Kris Warner delivered the keynote speech for the conference, which is now in its third year.

Porter said the federal government is cracking down on organizations who have mismanaged their grants.

“I don’t want to say that it is, necessarily fraud, although we know they have found some, but sometimes it’s just not having the knowledge to do the management,” she said.

Porter has 31 years of experience working with grants as either a reviewer, writer or compliance administrator. She said after accumulating all that knowledge around the grant writing process, she wants to share it so applicants don’t get caught in a quagmire which may cost their funding.

She said the new regulations which govern grant funding will target misappropriated or mismanaged funds, which will impact everyone. Mismanaged or misappropriated funds aren’t necessarily uncommon, either.

“I can tell you from personal experience with our work so far, every organization we’ve worked with, we’ve had to help them

rebuild internal controls and build their documentation system,” she said. “Once they get that stuff in place, they’re on the right path and keep going forward.”

Counties like Upshur and Lewis are dealing with the aftermath of flooding, Warner said, and government grants will be important in funding their recovery. The state also has its own grant assistance program, in which West Virginia University and Marshall University provide a matching service that lets applicants know what grants they qualify for. All that’s needed is filling out a one to two page form that describes how the grant will be used.

“We have communities that are suffering, they’re just trying to come back from a flood,” Warner said. “It’s about creating jobs. It’s about taking care of families that need the services you sometimes might find in a bigger city. But we’re rural West

SEE GRANTS, PAGE 4A

CAMPAIGN 2026

Candidates weigh in on education

By ESTEBAN FERNANDEZ
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Education received special attention from House of Delegates candidates on Sunday.

The Marion County Chamber of Commerce hosted a candidate forum on Sunday at Fairmont State University. Candidates Guy Ward, Frankie Delapas, Phil Mallow, Linda Longstreth, Jon Dodds and Rick Garcia attended. Candidates answered six questions on topics ranging from data centers, public education funding and the Hope Scholarship, to Flock cameras, job creation and economic development.

Samantha Godbey, director of the Civics Institute and Debate at the university,

SEE EDUCATION, PAGE 4A

Candidates mixed on data centers

By ESTEBAN FERNANDEZ
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Discussion over data centers came down to differences of opinion on local control versus economic benefits at a candidate forum on Sunday.

The Marion County Chamber of Commerce hosted six House of Delegates candidates at Fairmont State University. They answered questions about education, economic development, public safety and technology.

“Data centers are definitely a big topic

SEE TECH, PAGE 4A

INDEX

Advice	3A	Puzzles	3A
Classifieds	3-4B	Sports	1B
Comics	5B	Weather	6A
Legal Notices	3-4B		
Opinion	5A		

REMEMBRANCES

Catherine Marsh

Page 4A

GOOD
MORNING

DORA KAY GRUBB

Thank you for being our customer!

Times West Virginian
Fairmont, WV | Vol. 120, No. 225



For some, a five-star rating is a luxury.
At UHC, it's the standard.

WVU Medicine

UNITED HOSPITAL CENTER

