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# Standard Times

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## We're paying more — for lower quality gas

In the May 16 Standard-Times article headlined, "Befuddled by gas prices? Join the club," Tom Kloza of the Oil Price Information Service remarked that "there's not the same compelling sense of urgency" to lower gas prices after oil prices drop. Boy, is that an understatement.

In 2008, a few obscenely rich and greedy corporations and people drove gas prices over \$4 a gallon for unneeded personal profits. Their selfish, unpatriotic actions — along with other stock market/mortgage loan chicanery — almost bankrupted our country and created a Great Recession.

Since then, I hope we all are keeping a better eye on the stock market and oil prices.

Oil reached a high of \$87 a barrel on May 3. Within hours, gas prices leapt to \$2.91 a gallon in San Angelo.

Oil dropped to \$75 on May 7 and \$71 on May 14 and averaged only \$69 from May 18-21. Oil prices dropped 20 percent since May 3. However, gas prices fell a paltry 4 percent to 5 percent from \$2.91 to about \$2.76 (average) on May 21.

In January, when oil cost \$75, gas cost \$2.42. At \$69 for a barrel of oil, gas should cost about \$2.35 per gallon. Concho Valley residents and all American drivers are being seriously overcharged.

For every 10 gallons purchased in the past two weeks, gas stations picked our wallets for an extra \$5. Multiply that across

**GREG  
MAUZ**

the United States and the windfall (for the megarich) becomes billions of dollars.

In addition, we are paying unfair extra for lower quality gas. Most gas — even in Texas — now contains about 10 percent ethanol — alcohol made from corn. Our tax dollars (as usual) fund the corporate corn farms to produce this "alternative energy."

Their self-serving lobby persuades Congress (our money again) to mandate that all U.S. gas contains ethanol. We pay for everything, yet still have no right to choose how to spend our hard-earned money?

Even at a claimed 10 percent ethanol, your mileage will drop at least 5 percent.

**Please see MAUZ, 5D**

### MAUZ from 1D

Hence, you are already paying more for your gas.

While on vacation last summer, our midsize V6 sedan achieved 30 miles per gallon on 100 percent regular unleaded gas. When we were forced to use ethanol blends (10 percent), our mileage dropped to 26 mpg, despite driving 5-10 mph slower. And you can believe the ethanol producers want to increase the percentage to usurp more of our money.

Paradoxically, Congress is mandating higher corporate average fuel economy, or CAFE, standards for new vehicles, while requiring fuel that creates worse mileage in all vehicles.

In addition to costing us twice over, ethanol also wears out engine parts quicker, does not honestly improve air quality and is costing us billions in lost farming/

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ranching jobs along with higher prices for corn, beef, pork etc., as Jerry Lackey noted in his May 6 "Windmill" column in the Standard-Times.

Ethanol laws and unfair gas prices are just two examples, of many, that benefit the ultrarich few at the cost of the rest of us.

Citizen Republicans and Democrats should wise up and quit foolishly fighting each other. Their real enemies are the greedy corporations, their overpaid CEOs, Wall Street speculators and special interests. These people own our

representatives, both Democrat and Republican, through a political campaign finance system that remains nothing less than legalized bribery.

What did our so-called representatives do to punish the corporate criminals who defrauded our country? They gave them billions more of our money (corporate welfare) while still not requiring them to change their unethical behavior.

If we really want our country back, we should demand an end to corporate campaign financing, corporate welfare, corruption and fraud. Maybe, Lord willing, we'll get laws that benefit us. We might even get honest prices for gas — without being forced to purchase inefficient ethanol.

Greg Mauz of Christoval is a traffic safety expert with the Best Highway Safety Practices Institute.