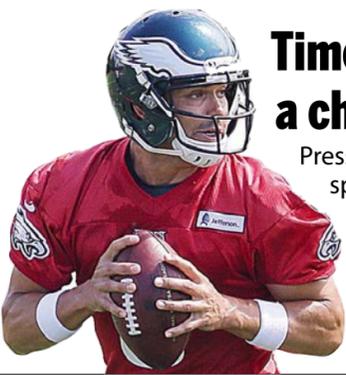


THE PRESS OF ATLANTIC CITY



Time for a change

Press sports writer David Weinberg says Mark Sanchez should be the Eagles' starting quarterback against the Jets. **B1**

Look for  Today on C3

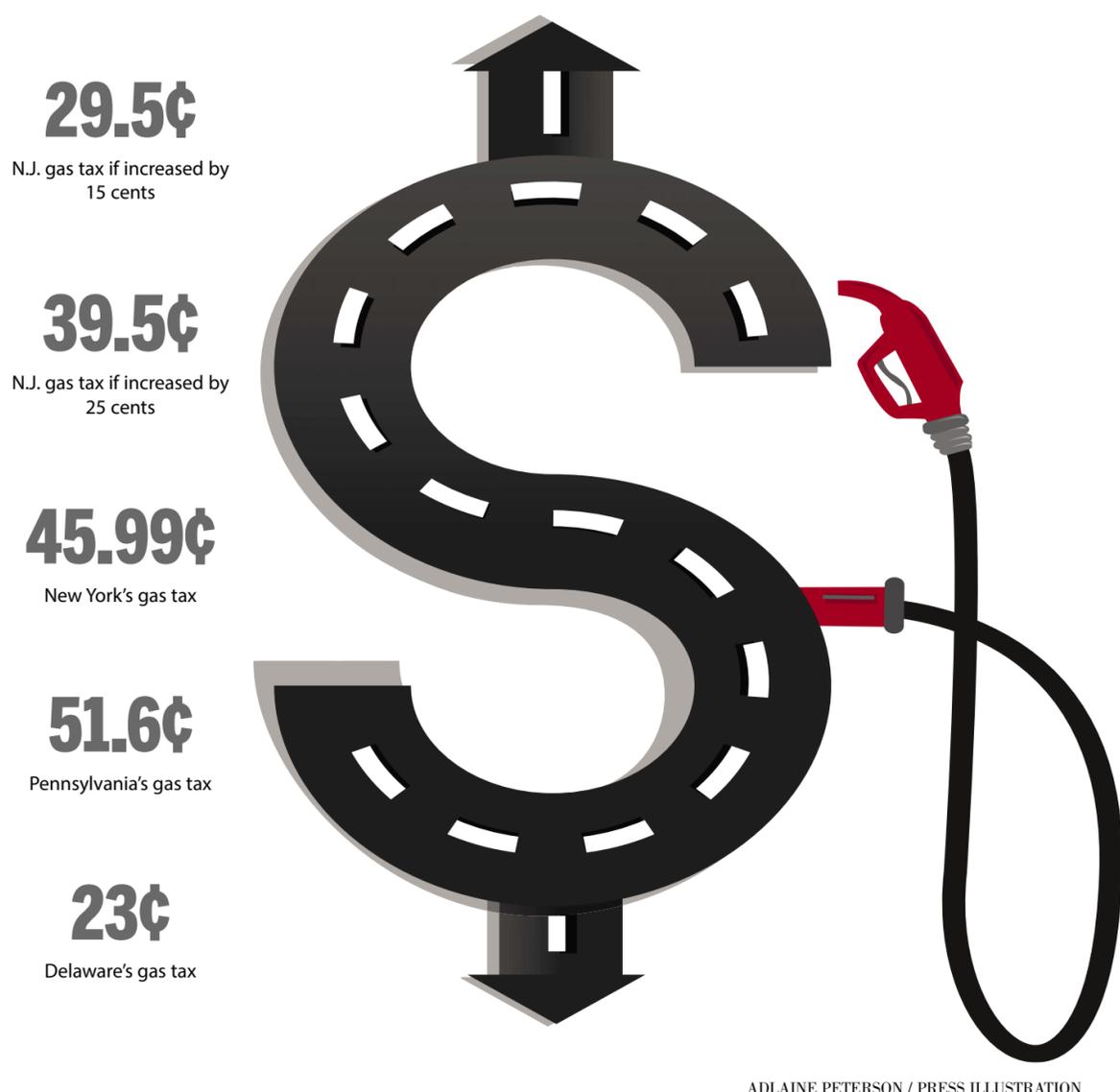
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An \$8.2 million Center for Workforce & Economic Development is expected to open within weeks. **D1**

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Gas tax rise on table



ADLAINE PETERSON / PRESS ILLUSTRATION

N.J. man cited as Muslim U.S. hero

Senator: Carson should stop his hateful rhetoric

DONNA WEAVER
Staff Writer

A Muslim soldier from Ocean County who was killed in Iraq caught the nation's attention this weekend, after Republican presidential contender Ben Carson said he wouldn't want a Muslim as president.

Carson told NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday: "I would not advocate that we put a Muslim in charge of this nation."

Carson "unilaterally disqualified every Muslim-American from becoming president of the United States," U.S. Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid retorted.

Reid, D-Nevada, later posted on his Facebook page that Carson's comments "denigrated" U.S. soldier Kareem Khan and "all Muslim-Americans." Reid said Carson "questioned Muslim-Americans' devotion

See **KHAN**, A2

14.5-cent per gallon levy could more than double

CHRISTIAN HETRICK
Staff Writer

Enjoy the cheap gas while you still can.

A depleted Transportation Trust Fund — which finances capital projects such as paving highways and building bridges — has state lawmakers considering the idea of doing something that hasn't been done in 25 years: increasing the gasoline tax.

The current state gas tax of 14.5 cents per gallon is the second lowest in the nation. It includes a 10.5-cent motor fuels tax and a 4-cent petroleum products tax.

Department of Transportation Commissioner Jamie Fox described the state's roads and bridges in April as "old, crumbling and getting worse every day." Lawmakers say something needs to be done to replenish the fund.



VERNON OGRONEK / MULTIMEDIA EDITOR
One legislator says the cost of a gas tax increase would be offset by a decrease in vehicle repairs made necessary by poor roads.

SHOULD N.J. RAISE THE GAS TAX?
Take our poll at PressofAC.com.

The \$1.2 billion fund faces about \$28 billion in debt service payments over the next 30 years. There's no plan to pay for its debt and capital projects in the next fiscal year. About \$200 million annually of the Transportation Trust Fund goes to the state's counties and municipalities to help pay for local road and bridge projects. Local transportation aid was frozen earlier this year while debate continues on plans for renewing the fund.

"If we don't do anything, we're asking for a disaster," said Sen. Raymond J. Lesniak, D-Union, who authored a 2014 bill that would raise the motor fuels tax 5 cents per year over three years.

The dire situation may lead to compromise in the Democrat-controlled Legislature. Assembly

See **GAS TAX**, A13

A.C. says no tax hike in budget

LYNDA COHEN & NICHOLAS HUBA
Staff Writers

ATLANTIC CITY — The city's taxpayers finally got some good news Tuesday: No tax increase.

The state Local Finance Board, which oversees the city's finances, unanimously approved the city's \$262 million budget, which relies on multimillion-dollar grants, transitional aid and a \$33.5 million line item titled "Casino Redirected Anticipated Payment" to keep taxes level. The budget was also balanced by deferring more than \$38.9 million in employee health-benefit and pension contributions.

See **BUDGET**, A12

Naturalized citizens say process need not be feared

MICHELLE BRUNETTI POST
Staff Writer

Rodrigo Londono had a successful career as a journalist and media personality in Colombia when the United States accepted him; his wife, Gloria; and their two young children as permanent residents.

The family, now living in Egg Harbor Township, had been on the waiting list with Immigration and Naturalization for 15 years, he said.

COULD YOU PASS THE TEST?

Try some sample questions from the U.S. naturalization test. **A2**

WHAT IT TAKES TO BECOME A CITIZEN

Learn the requirements and what classes are available locally. **A2**

Gloria's sister had petitioned first on Gloria's behalf, then added Rodrigo after they married, and the two kids after their births.

Even though their situation was



LONDONO

good in their home country — Rodrigo was also head of communications for Colombia's national soccer tournament, and Gloria was a teacher — they felt the family would be safer and have more options in the United States.

Living in Medellin, the capital

See **CITIZENSHIP**, A2

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BRIGHT, STILL BRISK
HIGH: 77 **LOW:** 56
See Dan Skeldon's weather forecast, **D8**



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