

President Obama, he offered.  
A year or two ago, visiting Americans often said yes to such requests. But times are different

trip last week to meet local leaders in southern

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# Parking fines easy cash for cities

## But bills' extra bite may leave tourists with bitter taste

By Andrew Seaman  
Special for USA TODAY

Municipalities across the USA are turning to more aggressive parking enforcement and higher parking fines to shore up declining revenue.

"Cities are looking for as many avenues as they can to alleviate these budget shortfalls," says Martin Stein, president of the National Parking Association, which represents more than 1,200 companies and municipalities.

Justin McNaul, AAA director of state relations, says fines provide a real temptation for enthusiastic enforcement, because they have the benefit of producing revenue for governments. However, he says there are risks associated with it.

"For tourists, strict parking enforcement probably won't keep them away, so much as it will leave them embittered," McNaul says. "For suburbanites, parking tickets might dissuade some of them from going to certain neighborhoods if they fear overzealous parking enforcement officers."

In January, California imposed a \$3 additional fee on municipalities for each parking citation to increase funding for the court facilities construction fund, according to Bruce Gillman, spokesman for the Los Angeles Department of Transportation. The new fee came on top of a \$1.50 state fee, bringing the state's charge to \$4.50 per fine.

### Rising fines

Some municipalities that have raised parking fines this year:

Old	New
Santa Monica, Calif.	\$40
Yonkers, N.Y.	\$50
Berkeley, Calif.	\$35
Newark	\$25
Andover, Mass.	\$15
	\$20

Source: USA TODAY research

By Julie Snider USA TODAY

That spurred several cities to increase their fines this year. Santa Monica increased its parking fines from \$40 to \$50 in June, according to Carol Swindell, the city's director of finance.

Berkeley increased its parking fines in June from \$35 to \$40, says Julie Sinai, the chief of staff for Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates. Sonoma voted to increase its parking fines in June from \$20 to \$40, according to Mayor Ken Brown. Gillman says Los Angeles increased parking tickets from \$40 to \$45 last July.

Elsewhere:

▶ **Yonkers, N.Y.**, increased the parking fines in June to help pay for its \$900 million budget, says David Simpson, a city spokesman. Over-time parking fines will rise to \$50 from \$40, and no-standing fines will increase to \$70 from \$50. The increases should bring in an extra \$1.2 million in revenue, he says.

▶ **Newark** increased parking fines by \$20 to \$45 in June, says Ethelyn Bowers, director of administration for the Newark Parking Authority.

▶ **Andover, Mass.**, increased parking fines this month, said Lt. James Hashem, commander of the Andover Police Department. According to Hashem, most parking fines will increase from \$15 to \$20, which is estimated to bring in an additional \$70,000 in revenue.

▶ **Washington, D.C.**, will install cameras on street-sweeping equipment in order to issue citations to people who do not move their cars, says Erica Stanley, a district spokesman. The district expects the cameras to bring in an additional \$6.8 million after maintenance.

for the August recess. Obama has scheduled a news conference tonight at 8 p.m. ET — his fourth in prime-time — that is expected to focus on health care.

## The speaker, in her own words

Health care, CIA, more. Forum, 9A

"There is a tendency in Washington to accentuate the differences instead of underscoring common ground," Obama said Tuesday from the White House. "But make no mistake: We are closer than ever before to the reform that the American people need, and we're going to get the job done."

House Minority Leader John Boehner of Ohio and other Republicans have criticized a new tax of families earning more than \$350,000 a year that's in the House legislation.

Conservative House Democrats also have raised concerns about long-term costs and the bill's affect on small businesses.

Pelosi said the issues raised by the coalition of moderate Democrats, known as the Blue Dogs, are ones "everybody would identify with."

In response to Republican criticism, she said Democrats are open to bipartisan ideas as long as they expand coverage and drive down costs.

"If you have a better idea as to how to do that, put it on the table," Pelosi said.

The bill, which stalled this week in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, provides government subsidies to help low-income families pay for insurance and requires large employers to provide benefits or face a fine. It also includes a government-run health insurance program that would compete with private insurers.

In response to Pelosi's suggestion that more savings can be found, Rick Pollack, executive vice president of the American Hospital Association, said his members are already doing their part. The group said earlier this month it would identify \$155 billion in savings over the next decade.

"We think that's a substantial contribution," Pollack said. "They ought not to be looking at people who have already made a contribution."

## On video: Reader questions

Speaker Pelosi also answered questions submitted by readers. For her video responses, visit [blogs.usatoday.com/oped](http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped) or fan us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/usatoday](http://www.facebook.com/usatoday).

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