



July 7, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
United States Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write to you as the participants in the Midcontinent Transportation Electrification Collaborative (MTEC) to support the Biden-Harris administration in meeting its goals of a net-zero emissions economy by 2050.

We respectfully request a meeting to elaborate on the following initiatives and explore synergies between MTEC and the Department of Transportation on these climate and transportation policies.

MTEC is composed of representatives from automakers, state governments, electric utilities and cooperatives, electric vehicle (EV) charging companies, and environmental organizations. MTEC coordinates regionally in the Midwest and Gulf Coast regions to increase EV use, reduce transportation emissions, improve air quality, offer equitable economic benefits, improve electric system efficiency, provide a great consumer experience, and build infrastructure to support EV travel throughout the region.

Transportation electrification is an economic opportunity for the Midwest and Gulf Coast regions. Our region is the heart of automotive manufacturing, and major investments are being made to produce all types of EVs, including light-duty, medium-duty, and heavy-duty (e.g., delivery trucks, school and transit buses, and semi-trucks).

MTEC would like to partner with the Department of Transportation and give shape to the “Build Back Better” economic and infrastructure plan. The programs described below could be enacted quickly, leading to rapid economic impact, and help achieve the administration’s climate goals.

### **Support American sales of EVs and the growth of a robust and diverse domestic EV market**

- Incentivize purchase of electric transit buses by transit fleet operators through increased funding of the Low or No Emissions Vehicle Program (or Zero Emission Bus Grants) to recognize that demand for the program far exceeds transit budgets.
- Create a federal point-of-sale voucher incentive for zero-emission trucks.
  - Use a carve out under the Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ). CMAQ funds are currently used in some states for the purchase of zero-emission buses and in select jurisdictions for the purchase of zero-emission trucks. However, the program is underfunded and underutilized in state-level efforts to electrify the movement of goods and people.





- Encourage public and private fleets to adopt EVs by supporting vehicle charging or refueling infrastructure and related equipment through the same incentive mechanism.

## **Support investments in EV charging infrastructure**

- Provide funding to states through the CMAQ Program designated for investments in EV charging.
- Provide public-private funding through a competitive grant program to accelerate investment in EV charging infrastructure and other alternative fuel infrastructure along highways, including EV charging corridor investments under the Federal Highway Administration Alternative Fuel Corridor Program.
  - Prioritize high-impact investments in medium- and heavy-duty vehicle infrastructure where highway corridor charging and refueling infrastructure build-out provides the greatest equity and environmental benefits.
  - Increase charging or zero-emission refueling options along corridors overlapping with congested areas, regional freight hubs, ports and inland ports, and established freight corridors to ensure that funding is available to municipalities and businesses through the above programs. This will help provide EV supply equipment outside the select EV corridors for low-income and disadvantaged communities, rural areas, and multi-unit dwellings.

## **Support EV research and development**

- Prioritize low- and no-emission transit bus research activities through Federal Transit Administration's Research, Demonstration, and Innovation Program.
- Include investment across a wide range of critical technologies, including but not limited to innovations in HVAC systems for use in extremely cold and hot climates, automation, integration of transit buses and micro-mobility, and hydrogen fuel cell and storage technologies.
- Provide technical assistance to transit operators for the evaluation of and transition to new, cleaner technologies and for implementing such technologies.
- Encourage partnerships between transit operators, fleet suppliers, and qualified nonprofit entities for effective, accelerated adoption of low- and no-emission buses.

We believe supporting these initiatives will lead to immediate jobs and economic impacts—for electricians, manufacturing workers, consumers, and for other parts of the economy through direct and indirect impacts.

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