



# GREAT PLAINS INSTITUTE

July 7, 2021

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm  
United States Secretary of Energy  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Madam Secretary:

Congratulations on your recent appointment as U.S. Secretary of Energy and for your leadership to date as Governor and Attorney General of Michigan as well as serving as a thought leader in the energy sector. We are grateful for your leadership in the nonprofit sector, supporting clean energy technologies and policies that further our nation's transportation sector, climate, health, and equity goals.

We write to you as the participants in the Midcontinent Transportation Electrification Collaborative (MTEC) to propose collaboration on transportation policy proposals that will help the Biden-Harris administration meet 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 Energy on these climate and transportation policies.

MTEC is composed of representatives from automakers, state governments, electric utilities and cooperatives, electric vehicle (EV) charging companies, environmental organizations, and others. 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. As you know well, 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). EVs save money for consumers, including individuals and fleet operators. They can also help support strategic investments in electric utility infrastructure and offer cost savings for all utility customers, not just EV drivers. Targeted federal investments in charging infrastructure will attract significant private investment and public-private partnerships and create tens of thousands of jobs throughout the Midwest and Gulf Coast regions.

There are several barriers to EV adoption that MTEC seeks to overcome, which could be addressed in part through federal investments as part of a federal economic recovery program, ranging from battery costs to manufacturing scale-up challenges to lack of charging infrastructure and vehicle availability. The programs described below could be enacted quickly, leading to rapid economic impact in support of the recovery agenda, putting American ingenuity to work toward a paradigm shift in transport fueling.





## **Keep the automotive supply chain in the U.S. by supporting EV and EV component manufacturing and supporting the growth of a robust and diverse domestic EV market.**

- Provide low- or no- interest loans for EV manufacturing by supplying additional funding for the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loan Program and expand this program to include medium- and heavy-duty EVs.
- Provide more funding to retool manufacturing plants that are closed or at risk of closing to convert them to produce EVs and their components by reviving the 48C tax credit for the manufacturing of light-duty, medium-duty, and heavy-duty EVs.
- Provide funding for EISA Section 132 Domestic Manufacturing Conversion Grant programs to offer grants to EV manufacturers and others in the EV supply chain to encourage domestic manufacturing of vehicles, components, and infrastructure.
- Support the purchase of electric school buses, as included in the “Clean School Bus Act” and the “Clean Commute for Kids Act.”
- Support the Clean Cities Coalition’s automotive dealer education efforts and outreach/education to consumers (individuals and fleets).

## **Advance EV infrastructure and demonstrate EVs in real-world conditions through EV innovation.**

- Support increased investment to states to build out EV charging infrastructure to enable travel throughout the region.
- Provide additional funding for EV research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) projects through the Department of Energy Offices of Vehicle Technologies and Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies to support the following areas:
  - The Department should support research to unlock new breakthroughs in energy density to achieve longer-range, lower-cost batteries.
  - The Department should support zero-emission truck demonstrations in real-world applications and communities of different sizes for medium- and heavy-duty vehicle demonstrations, including Class 8 long-haul and regional-haul vehicles in tandem with depot and corridor infrastructure build-out. This investment will drive fleet integration of zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in the goods movement space, drive hardware and soft cost reduction, and will provide necessary operational data to inform future RD&D investments.
- The Department should provide technical assistance to states, state regulators, and utilities in planning EV charging infrastructure and support the private-sector build-out of regional EV charging corridors. The Department should ensure that funding is available to municipalities and businesses through the above programs to provide EV supply equipment outside the select EV corridors for low-income and disadvantaged communities, rural areas, and multi-unit dwellings.
- Support direct-to-consumer rebates for EV charging equipment at multifamily, workplace, and commercial locations, such as those proposed by Representative Tonko (H.R. 5530, “Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Rebate Act”).

Stakeholders in the Midwest and Gulf Coast regions are enthusiastic about working collaboratively to spur new investments in the EV sector. We would like to request a meeting to further elaborate on the aforementioned initiatives and help explore synergies between MTEC and the DOE on these climate and transportation policies.





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*MTEC is facilitated by the Great Plains Institute (GPI). A nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, GPI works across the U.S. to transform the energy system to benefit the economy and environment. Learn more at [www.betterenergy.org](http://www.betterenergy.org).*

