



April 24, 2023

Chair Marty and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

The Coalition for Clean Transportation strongly supports these specific provisions included in the omnibus transportation finance and policy bill:

Authorization and funding to implement the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program

Electric vehicles (EVs) benefit all Minnesotans by improving air quality, mitigating climate and health impacts, and promoting a sustainable and resilient future for our state. Reducing transportation-related emissions is a necessary safeguard for Minnesotans and our climate. Transportation is the largest contributor to climate change pollution in Minnesota and in the United States, accounting for approximately 25% of total emissions in our state. Transportation-related air pollution is a significant contributor to cardiopulmonary deaths— playing a role in 10% of deaths in the Twin Cities metro area ([State of Minnesota's "Life and Breath" report](#)), disproportionately impacting BIPOC and under-resourced communities where residents live near highways. Additionally, transitioning towards cleaner and renewable energy sources can create job opportunities and stimulate economic growth.

Minnesota will receive \$68 million in federal funds over the course of five years through the NEVI Program. This funding will enable Minnesota to strategically deploy EV charging infrastructure through the establishment of a connected network of publicly accessible DC Fast Chargers. This network must meet rigorous reliability standards to ensure that charging is available when it is needed. This network of DC Fast Chargers will increase public access to this critical EV infrastructure, which will accelerate EV adoption in Minnesota. A connected, reliable, publicly accessible EV charging network will reduce range anxiety on longer trips, which is identified by consumers as the leading barrier to EV adoption.

EVs are gaining in popularity, but cost concerns and limited access to charging infrastructure are significant barriers for Minnesotans interested in purchasing EVs, particularly those in low-income communities and communities of color that are already disproportionately feeling the negative impacts from transportation pollution. Charging stations are largely concentrated in affluent areas, while “charging deserts”— areas without public access to EV charging—are generally located in rural and low-income areas. While charging at home is the most affordable way to charge EVs today, it is not an equally viable option for everyone, particularly for renters and people living in multi-family homes. Support is needed for safe, accessible charging infrastructure for non-single-family homeowners. Along with granting MnDOT authorization to implement the NEVI Program, we want to express thanks to the Chair and the committee for providing the required state match to ensure that Minnesota can take full advantage of the program.

Electric Bike Tax Credit

The credit would allow any Minnesota resident who buys an e-bike from an in-state retailer to claim a credit equal to 75% of the purchase price of an e-bike plus accessories like helmets, locks, bags and reflective clothing. A couple filing their taxes jointly could each take advantage of the credit.

The value of the credit steps down at incomes higher than \$50,000 for a married couple, \$25,000 for a single tax filer until it reaches 50%. The e-bike credit is central to the state's priority of reducing emissions by funding and creating incentives for electrification. [This study](#) found that if 15% of vehicle trips were made by e-bike, emissions would drop by 12%. [Another study](#) found that 46% of e-bike commute trips replaced an automobile commute. The e-bike credit can provide numerous benefits such as promoting a cleaner environment by reducing climate change pollution, encouraging healthier lifestyles by promoting physical activity, and reducing transportation costs for Minnesota families.

Technical Assistance

This appropriation will expand organizational capacity for urban, rural, and tribal communities navigating federal grant applications for critical infrastructure and transportation projects. Investing in technical assistance ensures Minnesota is maximizing historic federal infrastructure investments and addresses systemic and administrative barriers boosting the ability of underinvested communities to navigate and access federal funding.

Metro Sales Tax for Transit, Walking, and Bicycling

This investment results in about \$314 million in new revenue per year for transit after closing the operating deficit. A 1/2 cent sales tax drastically decreases the proposed revenue dedicated to public transit. A 3/4 cent investment is critical to quickly build out and maintain the transit system we all need. While one-time funding can pay for capital projects, long-term funding is needed to operate and maintain those projects. Stable, long-term, dedicated funding means transit providers can hire enough drivers to deliver high-frequency, high-quality transit and improve our transit networks without setting up another fiscal cliff. A strong transit system can significantly contribute to the decarbonization of the transportation system by reducing the number of single-occupancy vehicles on the road, which are major sources of greenhouse gas emissions.

Investing in a frequent and accessible public transit system will help address transportation disparities in BIPOC and low-income communities and for people with disabilities with lower levels of car ownership — connecting these community members to opportunity and critical services like jobs, education, and healthcare. By providing a reliable and accessible alternative to driving, transit systems can encourage people to choose more sustainable modes of transportation, such as walking, biking, or using public transportation. This, in turn, can help to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, while also promoting more efficient land use and reducing energy consumption. Ultimately, a strong transit system is a critical component of a sustainable and decarbonized transportation system, and can help to create a more livable and equitable community for all.

Sincerely,

Coalition for Clean Transportation member organizations

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The Coalition for Clean Transportation works to eliminate Minnesota's transportation-related climate emissions through the increased adoption and availability of sustainable and equitable electrification options, centering BIPOC and under-resourced communities who disproportionately bear the impact of climate change, air pollution, and experience high rates of mobility injustice. CCT envisions a future where all Minnesotans, from urban to suburban to rural, have equitable access to clean transportation options that promote health and connection for all.

