

Leaders in both parties are pushing for a surge of investment in rebuilding American infrastructure as a core piece of economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a bipartisan opportunity that would deliver enormous benefits. The Alliance and its 50x50 Action Network, a diverse group of stakeholders advocating for policies that advance the vision of the [50x50 Commission on Transportation Sector Efficiency](#), have developed key priorities for Congress to consider to help ensure that we rebuild wisely to create a modern transportation and infrastructure system that is more efficient, cost-effective and equitable for all Americans. The Commission worked from 2017–2019 to identify policies to reduce transportation energy consumption by 50% by 2050, relative to a 2016 baseline.

ELECTRIFICATION

An aggressive campaign to build out electrification infrastructure will create jobs while improving our nation’s air quality and health. A transition to an EV-powered transportation system would also mean deep savings for Americans: The Department of Energy finds that, on average, it costs about half as much to fill up an EV than a conventionally-fueled counterpart.¹ But a primary barrier to greater deployments of EVs is the availability of public charging infrastructure: a dilemma often characterized as a ‘chicken-and-egg’ problem. To help kickstart the market, we recommend that Congress:

- **Establish a \$3 billion grant program for the installation of charging equipment along the National Highway System and a grant program for DC fast charging in urban hubs.** See the [Clean Corridors Act of 2019 \(S.674\)](#) as a blueprint for the National Highway System. Where possible, this infrastructure should incorporate smart and connected technologies that enable multi-directional communication with utilities to leverage EV loads to support load flexibility, grid efficiency, and grid reliability.
- **Reinstate and make permanent the Section 30C Alternative Fuel Vehicle Refueling Property Credit.** The credit, which expired on December 31, 2017, provided a 30 percent tax credit for the cost of any qualified alternative fuel vehicle refueling property installed by a business or at a taxpayer’s principal residence. Currently, the 30C tax credit is capped per charging station, not per charge, which poses a challenge for charging providers as stations become larger. The cap should be specifically indicated on a “per charger basis.” The credit should also be made refundable to further incent the installation of EVSE.
- **Adjust the Section 30D Plug-in Electric Vehicle Tax Credit to support greater access to EVs until the market reaches viability.** Remove the 200,000/manufacture cap and convert this incentive into a point-of-sale rebate that can be used by all retail, commercial, and government entities. Sustain the incentive until a meaningful market tipping point is reached.

GRANT PROGRAMS

Key grant programs are extensively oversubscribed; it is critical that these programs have resources and flexibility to support investments in efficient transportation infrastructure. We recommend that Congress:

- **Increase and extend funding for Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grants and expand project eligibility. Establish a new \$300 million BUILD grant program that targets energy efficiency as a key objective.** Program eligibility should be expanded to explicitly include projects that electrify transportation systems, including the installation of advanced vehicle fueling infrastructure for consumers, freight, and public transit. This would provide greater flexibility when the objective requires coordination among multiple sectors and greater incentive for grantees to consider opportunities to reduce transportation energy use and enhance transportation infrastructure. Moreover, appropriations for BUILD have fluctuated since its inception in 2009. Congress should

¹ <https://www.energy.gov/eere/electricvehicles/saving-fuel-and-vehicle-costs>.

increase funding for BUILD grants to \$2 billion annually and maintain that funding level for at least the next five fiscal years.

- **Reauthorize the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program at \$20 billion per year and allocate additional funds.**

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Public transit is a catalyst for job creation and economic growth. For every \$1 billion invested in public transportation, 50,000 jobs are created and sustained across industries. And, every \$1 invested in public transportation generates approximately \$5 in economic returns.² We recommend that Congress increase in funding to the following public transportation programs:

- **Increase funding for the State of Good Repair Program to \$4 billion per year, authorized for at least five years.**
- **Increase funding for the Urbanized Area Formula Program to \$7 billion per year, authorized for at least five years.**
- **Increase funding for the Bus and Bus Facilities Program, to \$2 billion per year, authorized for at least five years.**

PORTS & AIRPORTS

U.S. ports and airports contribute \$4.6 trillion in economic activity – roughly 26% of our economy.³ Improving the efficiency of our nation’s ports and airports will support American competitiveness and job growth, while also reducing harmful particulate matter and carbon emissions. We recommend that Congress:

- **Establish a program to study how ports and intermodal port transfer facilities would benefit from increased opportunities to reduce emissions at ports, including through the electrification of port operations** [See Section 1402 of America’s Transportation Infrastructure Act of 2019]. The program would study emerging technologies and strategies that may help reduce port-related emissions from idling trucks and coordinate and provide funding to test, evaluate, and deploy such projects. The Secretary of Transportation would award grants to fund projects that reduce emissions at ports, including through electrification. Where possible, funding should leverage public-private partnerships.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND TRENDS

R&D on developing and supporting emerging technologies, business models, and behavioral models is a down payment on a more efficient and cost-effective transportation sector. We recommend that Congress:

- **Increase funding to the Office of Research, Development, and Technology at the Department of Transportation to \$20 million.** Given the radical changes occurring in the transportation sector, it is imperative that this office is adequately funded to research how burgeoning trends may affect transportation energy use.
- **Direct the Secretary of Transportation to carry out a program of cooperative research, development, demonstration, and commercial application activities on advanced technologies for medium- to heavy-duty commercial, vocational, recreational, and transit vehicles** [Section 1706, American Energy Innovation Act.]. Experts project that global freight transportation emissions will surpass those from passenger vehicles by 2050.⁴ The largest operating cost for freight companies is fuel.⁵ Increasing R&D on the medium- and heavy-duty sector is a down-payment on freight costs in the future.

² <https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-Recommendations-on-Surface-Transportation-Law-Booklet-03.03.2020.pdf>.

³ <https://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Ports-Final.pdf>.

⁴ <https://www.epa.gov/smartway/learn-about-smartway>.

⁵ <https://www.thetruckersreport.com/infographics/cost-of-trucking/>.