



Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

February 3rd, 2022

To: House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee
From: Andrea Lovoll, Legislative Associate, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Re: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

Chair Hornstein and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and its potential for Minnesota transportation. MCEA, a nonprofit organization with almost 50 years of experience using law and science to protect Minnesota's environment, appreciates the Chair's consideration of community interests for ways to spend money coming into the state from the IIJA.

Minnesota has made some progress to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in some sectors, but GHG emissions in other sectors continue to increase or have stayed stagnant. Electricity generation, transportation and land use are the top GHG-emitting sectors in Minnesota.

The Next Generation Energy Act of 2007, which had bipartisan support in the Legislature, requires the state to reduce GHG emissions in the state by 80% between 2005 and 2050. Interim goals were also set: a 15% reduction by 2015, and a 30% reduction by 2025. We are not on track to meet these goals. According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the transportation sector is now the largest source of GHG emissions in Minnesota. Emissions from vehicles have fallen only 7 percent since 2005, and they actually increased slightly from 2015 to 2018.

The IIJA is an opportunity to make significant progress towards goals of which we have fallen critically short. This funding is an opportunity to make transportation investments that make meaningful change in GHG emissions, to improve public health and safety, and as a result of improved health and safety to provide environmental justice to overburdened communities.

MCEA has been researching possible solutions to the climate and equity issues in the Transportation sector by exploring various policy ideas and their impact on GHG reduction using an open-source policy simulator. This policy simulator calculates the measurable difference certain policies will make, and identifies the top policy solutions for meeting GHG reduction goals. Based on what we have discovered in our research, we recommend strongly considering the following solutions:

Policies and programs that will encourage mode shifting from passenger vehicles to bus, rail, and pedestrian modes.

- Funding for pedestrian and bicycle friendly roads.
- Improvements on public transportation infrastructure including adding new bus routes, additional rail transit, improvements on bus stops and rail stations.
- Encouraging denser and mixed-use developments that would require less driving.



Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

Investments in electric vehicle infrastructure.

- Grant funding program to business owners and property owners to install electric vehicle charging stations.
- Grants for education assistance on electric vehicle maintenance for mechanics and repair businesses.
- Funding for electric school buses and electric city buses and charging stations.
- Funding for government fleets to be replaced with electric vehicles.

Please note that every one of these solutions will reduce particulate matter pollution (soot) and NOx pollution along our highways and other road corridors. This significant co-benefit will reduce the burden of toxic and disease-causing air pollution on Minnesota's children, elders, and many environmental justice neighborhoods that are still disproportionately burdened by dirtier air.

Thank you for the opportunity to present an opinion on spending on IIJA spending.

Sincerely,

Andrea Lovoll
Legislative Associate
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
1919 University Ave W, Suite 515
St. Paul, MN, 55104
www.mncenter.org