



Climate Section of the 2021 (FY 22) Transportation Bill

Vermont Leadership drastically reducing carbon emissions from the largest source: transportation

Offered by House Committee on Transportation members

Rep. McCormack, Chair (Burlington)

Rep. Burke (Brattleboro)

Rep. McCarthy (St. Albans City)

Rep. Sullivan (Burlington)

Rep. White (Hartford)

In January, members of the House Transportation Committee will be introducing legislation in the 2021 Session of the Legislature to create a Climate Section of the Transportation Program (T-Bill). As the transportation sector makes up nearly half of Vermont's carbon emissions, these key proposals will produce results to immediately begin achieving the requirements of the Global Warming Solutions Act.

Although the threat of the COVID 19 crisis is still evident, Vermont can proactively work on these measures to develop a 21st Century Transportation system that is Clean, Accessible and Affordable. Vermont can ensure that all people and communities can have their transportation needs met while helping the Vermont economy and increasing Vermonters' quality of life. Many of these thirteen solutions can be achieved with reappropriating of existing revenues.

A State with a Majority of Electric Vehicles (EVs)

1. Ensure that Support for Existing EV/Used EV/Vehicle Replacement and Repair Incentive Programs is in Proportion to Meeting the state's Climate Requirements.

Incentives have been successful in increasing the sale of EVs in other states. The Vermont "New EV Incentive Program" that went into effect in December 2019 has already helped 254 EV sales (as of August 25, 2020). As demonstrated in other states and in Europe (in the first half of 2020, 48% of car sales in Norway were fully electric EVs), the most effective things that governments can do is to provide for enough charging stations and incentivize the purchase of EVs.

2. Adequate amount of Level II charging stations in downtowns, schools, park and rides.

While Vermont utilities are offering incentives of providing level II charging equipment, Vermont should consider incentivizing the installation costs and other methods to enable greater access to Level II charging.

3. All New Transit Buses and School Buses are Electric

Transit and school buses last on the road for around 12 years, too long a time to be investing in new fossil fuel powered buses. The time has passed for slow, phase-ins. It is time to act.

4. Require Employers of 50 or more employees to provide Level II Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargers at the workplace.

While presently upwards of 85% of EV charging takes place at home mostly on Level II chargers, availability of Level IIs at workplaces, parking lots and downtowns continues to be sufficiently scant to discourage EV purchases. This State mandate should come with partial funds to install the chargers with the means for the employer to charge the commuter for the charge.

5. Update the Vermont Building Energy Code requirement for EV charging stations for Multi-unit Dwellings to provide Charging stations.

This would apply to new buildings. The state shall also look at requiring that all retrofitted buildings and existing structures reach that goal.

Transportation Demand Management and Public Transit: Increasing Riders

6. Employers of 50+Employees must have Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

As many Vermonters will be returning to in-person work, Vermont employees must adopt a TDM to discourage single occupancy automobile commutes by employees.

7. Continue Providing Fare-Free Transit

The Federal Cares Act funding has allowed all Vermont Transit Operators to provide fare-free transit during the COVID-19 crisis. A continuation of fare-free transit should be continued to protect drivers and passengers while also providing increased transit equity.

8. Support Innovative Micro-transit Solutions to Ensure Last Mile Options are Available for all Vermonters.

Innovative micro transits options, such as the pilot program in Montpelier, should be encouraged in all communities.

To Increase Walking and Bicycling: Roads Must be Made Safe

9. Require Serious Complete Streets

Presently this concept in the law is advisory. Hence, we are not seeing many complete streets even when re-constructing.

10. Bicycle Corridor Priority

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Program lacks a clear goal/strategy to accomplish safe roads in the short term. Even the most highly rated corridors on the VTRANS Bicycle Corridor Priority map are not safe yet, including in heavy traffic urban areas of the state such as in Chittenden and Rutland Counties. Starting with the “High Use Priority” bicycle corridors, these corridors need to be made safe as soon as possible.

11. Roundabout Development

VTRANS should explore building roundabouts state wide.

Sprawl: The Structural Problem

12. Discourage Sprawl Development through Stricter Transportation Criteria

Act 250 reform has been largely stalled in the legislature, with too many communities not only allowing but encouraging sprawl development.

13. Authorize Congestion Pricing for Chittenden County

Like electricity, we have to plan, design and build for the peak demand on highways. If the peak can be reduced instead, there are tremendous savings in dollars, land and pollution, including CO2 emissions.

Rep. McCormack, Chair (Burlington) cmccormack@leg.state.vt.us

Rep. Burke (Brattleboro) mburke@leg.state.vt.us

Rep. McCarthy (St. Albans City) mmccarthy@leg.state.vt.us

Rep. Sullivan (Burlington) msullivan@leg.state.vt.us

Rep. White (Hartford) rwhite@leg.state.vt.us