



February 18, 2021

Dear Governor Walz, Commissioner Bishop, and Members of the Minnesota General Assembly:

As employers and businesses with operations and investments in Minnesota, we write today to express our support for policies to accelerate the state's transition to low-emission and zero-emission vehicles. Clean vehicle standards are proven tools for strengthening the market for clean cars and ensuring consumers have access to clean vehicles at dealerships throughout the state. During a time of unprecedented health and economic crises, adoption of clean vehicle standards presents an opportunity for Minnesota to curb harmful vehicle pollutant emissions and provide much-needed financial savings for households and businesses.

The Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) program has been adopted or is in the process of being adopted by 17 states and the District of Columbia. The full ACC Program includes **Low-Emission Vehicle (LEV) standards**, which reduce greenhouse gas and smog-forming pollutant emissions from light-duty vehicles and the **Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEV) program**, which requires auto manufacturers to offer a proportion of clean cars, such as battery electric, plug-in hybrid, and fuel cell vehicles, for sale. The ZEV program has been proven to drive electric vehicle sales and availability: states that have adopted the ZEV program represent nearly [63% of all U.S. electric vehicle sales](#) despite constituting under [30% of the total market](#) for light-duty vehicles. Meanwhile, in Minnesota, electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles combined make up only [1.1% of all vehicle sales](#). By increasing the availability and development of more efficient as well as electric vehicles in Minnesota, the ACC program would enable a more competitive marketplace and provide greater consumer choice and access to clean, cost-saving vehicles for the benefit of all Minnesotans. With businesses responsible for more than half of the vehicles on the road today, these cleaner, more fuel-efficient vehicles would not only support the state's efforts to meet the bipartisan emissions reduction targets of the Next Generation Energy Act, but also enable businesses to realize cost savings.

More efficient vehicles save money. In fact, federal fuel economy standards saved Minnesota \$650 million through 2017 and were on track to provide as much as [\\$5.6 billion](#) more in savings by 2035. Given the recent weakening of these standards at the federal level, these are cost-saving opportunities that our employees and drivers will miss out on unless Minnesota adopts clean vehicle standards of its own. Even if the federal standards are restored for later model years, adopting the ACC program enables states to lock in greater near-term fuel cost savings and clean vehicle choices for consumers as well as necessary reductions in GHG emissions and other pollutants.

Clean vehicle standards are an important tool for businesses like ours to reduce operating costs while making progress toward goals to reduce our carbon footprints. Vehicle fleets are often a major expense and source of greenhouse gas emissions. The deployment of low- or zero-emission vehicles allows businesses to cut costs and minimize the risks associated with fuel

price, maintenance downtime, and supply volatility.¹ These benefits also extend to our employees by reducing their commuting costs as well as their exposure to harmful tailpipe emissions. However, we need clean vehicles to be available in greater numbers and with greater predictability. Adopting the ACC Program would enable automakers to plan ahead to offer clean vehicle options while providing companies and investors with policy certainty to make long-term in-state investments and catalyzing the development of new technologies and associated local jobs.

In addition to the significant and far-reaching economic benefits of clean vehicles, the public health benefits from adopting clean vehicle standards are immediate and tangible. The ACC program would put cleaner vehicles on the road—thereby improving local air quality, reducing healthcare costs, and tackling Minnesota’s top source of greenhouse gas emissions. Air pollution disproportionately impacts low-income and minority communities, where respiratory illness is correlated with higher exposure to gas- and diesel-powered vehicle pollutant emissions. A [recent nationwide study](#) found that coronavirus is more likely to be fatal for patients in areas with higher levels of air pollution than patients in cleaner parts of the country—heightening the imperative for action.

We applaud Governor Walz’s early leadership to advance clean vehicle standards in Minnesota, and we recognize the advantages that clean vehicles offer to public health, the economy, and consumers while addressing the urgent threat of climate change. That is why we support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s rulemaking -- to maximize opportunities for cost savings, emissions reductions, choice in the marketplace, and public health benefits that all Minnesotans can enjoy.

Sincerely,

Clif Bar & Company
IKEA Retail U.S.
JLL
Lime
Lyft
Uber Technologies Inc.

For questions on this letter or to contact any of the signatories, please contact Deana Dennis at ddennis@ceres.org.

¹ Electric vehicles, in particular, are estimated to save \$1,000 on fuel costs per vehicle per year and, as mechanically simpler vehicles, require less maintenance, thereby reducing vehicle down-time and generating additional savings.