

Clean, Low-Emission, Affordable, New Transportation Efficiency Act (CLEAN-TEA)

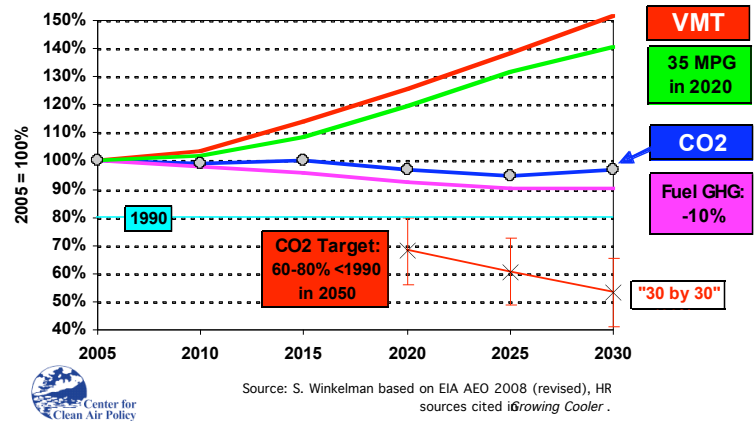
*S. 575 introduced by Senators Carper (D-DE) and Specter (D-PA), and
H.R. 1329 Introduced by Representatives Blumenauer (D-OR, 3rd), Tauscher (D-CA, 10th)
and LaTourette (R-OH, 14th)*

The Problem:

The transportation sector is the second largest and fastest-growing contributor to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in the U.S., in large part due to steadily rising trends in the number of miles that cars and trucks travel each year. Despite some stagnation in the last year because of the economy, driving—or vehicle miles traveled rates—have grown by three times the rate of population growth over the past 15 years and is expected to grow by

50% by 2030, largely because we've designed the vast majority of our communities in ways that give people no other option but to drive everywhere. While there has been a federal focus on increasing fuel economy of vehicles and decreasing carbon content in fuels, these strategies alone will not be enough to slow and reverse overall GHG emissions from the transportation sector. **The number of miles that vehicles travel is the critical, but often forgotten, 'third leg' of the transportation stool.**

VMT Growth Projected to Offset gains from CAFE and Low-GHG Fuels



The Solution:

Transportation alternatives, paired with more efficient land use, are critical tools if we are serious about addressing climate change. These strategies can significantly reduce global warming emissions, AND they help reduce our dependence on oil, save people money at the gas pump, save communities money on infrastructure costs, and deliver the kind of vibrant, walkable places that are in demand. For instance, a short, four-mile round trip by bicycle keeps about 15 pounds of pollutants out of the air we breathe while helping Americans stay fit and healthy.

Research has shown that compact development patterns reduce carbon emissions from automobiles by up to 10 percent, compared to typical sprawl-type developments. Public transportation in the U.S. already saves an estimated 6.9 MMT of carbon each year.

This isn't just a solution for big cities—many smaller towns across the country are using smart growth solutions to help revitalize their main streets and help people live closer to their jobs and places they need to run errands.

To co-sponsor CLEAN-TEA, contact Paul Schmid in Senator Carper's office or Janine Benner in Representative Blumenauer's office.

For more information, contact Stephanie Potts of Smart Growth America:
spotts@smartgrowthamerica.org or 202-207-3355 x125.

What the Bill Does:

The Clean, Low-Emission, Affordable, New Transportation Efficiency Act (CLEAN-TEA) would lower emissions from the transportation sector by setting aside 10% of funds generated from the auction of carbon emissions allowances from a future cap and trade climate bill to fund a Low Greenhouse Gas Transportation Fund.

The bill would require States and regional and local governments with a population over 200,000 to establish a goal of reducing emissions from the transportation sector and develop a transportation greenhouse gas reduction plan, with a prioritized list of projects within that plan, to meet the emissions goal. The plan would be integrated into existing state and regional transportation plans and approved by the USDOT and EPA.

Funds in the Low Greenhouse Gas Transportation Fund would be distributed based on a formula determined by EPA and USDOT to states and regional and local governments based on which plans are expected to have the most reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and other criteria. Projects that could be funded include: transit, passenger and freight rail, biking and pedestrian improvements, travel demand management such as vanpools and telecommuting and intelligent transportation systems, as well as land use changes that would help make communities more walkable. Regional and local governments with a population under 200,000 could voluntarily develop a plan to become eligible for funding.

The bill also includes a provision to improve research, data collection, and tools to measure and evaluate the greenhouse gas impacts of transportation projects and plans.

The Benefits:

Unlike many vehicle and fuel technologies, the “technology” to create compact, walkable communities and enhance public transportation exists today. Communities like Arlington, Virginia and Portland, Oregon have been doing this for years with proven results. Portland, Oregon, with a reputation as a livable, healthy, and prosperous city, saved the equivalent of \$2.6 billion annually in gasoline and time because of measures they implemented to reduce the need for residents to drive, according to a CEO for Cities report. Per capita VMT in Portland is 20% lower than the national average for other large metro areas.

People don't want to spend as much time in their cars. Not only does it take time away from family and friends but has a major impact on the household budget. The average American who lives in an area that's walkable and has transit spends only 9% of their income on transportation, while a person living in an area that requires driving spends more than 25% of their income each month on transportation.

People want to live in communities where they can walk. In every survey the National Association of Realtors has done, more than half of the respondents say they want to live in walkable places that have good public transportation access. Yet few places in the U.S. provide these options—which is why they're so desirable and as a result, increasingly expensive.

Using smart growth strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is a win for the environment, the economy, and the quality of life for Americans.

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