



To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means
From: Rhett Lawrence, Pacific Northwest Policy Manager
Date: April 14, 2021
RE: Senate Bill 5555 and Recommendations for the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act

Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, and Rayfield and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon, my name is Rhett Lawrence and I am the Pacific Northwest Policy Manager for Forth. We are a nonprofit trade association that advocates for the advancement of electric, hydrogen, shared, smart, connected, and autonomous mobility. Forth has nearly 200 members, including auto manufacturers, electric vehicle charging suppliers, industry partners, utilities, local governments, and non-profit environmental organizations.

As you know, Oregon has ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals and we are already behind in meeting them. And given that the transportation sector is now the biggest component of our state's greenhouse gas emissions, it is critical that we take steps to get those transportation emissions headed down — and quickly. Dramatically increasing the use of electric vehicles is one of the most significant steps we can take to reduce those transportation emissions.

Forth has thus been supportive of policy proposals that would speed up our state's transition to greater EV adoption, including efforts to increase access to EV charging in our homes, workplaces, and other destinations across the state. To that end, we recently submitted 4 proposals to legislative leadership to request funding under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These proposals are focused on counteracting systemic transportation disadvantages in low-to-moderate-income communities and communities of color:

1. TEINA Implementation - \$10 million

ODOT is currently completing a Transportation Electrification Infrastructure Needs Analysis (TEINA) that will produce recommendations on how best to improve state charging infrastructure, particularly in rural and historically underserved communities. Once the study is completed in July 2021, state agencies will require funding to implement its recommendations. Based on TEINA's initial findings, we propose an allocation of \$10 million dollars to begin to close Oregon's most significant gaps in charging infrastructure, to be invested in the following:

- \$4 million in incentives for DC Fast Chargers in rural areas
- \$2M in incentives for chargers at multi-unit dwellings and affordable housing
- \$1M for transit bus charging
- \$2M for medium/heavy duty charging
- \$1M for workplace charging incentives

2. Oregon Clean Vehicle Rebate Program Promotion - \$1 million

Oregon's clean vehicle rebate is a powerful method to expand Oregonians' transportation options and address the state's climate goals. House Bill 2165, currently

under consideration this session, would double the income-qualified Charge Ahead rebate to \$5,000 for both new and used EVs. A \$1 million allocation to DEQ would fund a two-year statewide outreach campaign that would allow DEQ to partner with community-based organizations to raise awareness of the Charge Ahead rebate in communities across the state, with a focus on rural and historically underserved communities.

3. EV Charging Assistance - \$4 million

As noted, we believe that the expansion of Oregon’s income-qualified Charge Ahead EV rebate will benefit Oregon’s rural communities and communities of color. However, Oregonians who are eligible for the Charge Ahead rebate still often don’t have access to charging. This funding would create a pilot program through ODOE to provide information about charging options, direct grants for home and public charging, and assistance with applying for utility and government charging incentives.

- \$4 million funds:
 - Charging assistance for 2,000 qualifying purchases at an approximate cost of \$2k per installation customer and
 - Includes all agency FTE

4. Electric School Bus Pilot Program - \$1.75 million

In addition to being disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, Oregon’s frontline communities are already adversely affected by air pollution and climate change. In order to begin to address the harmful impacts of diesel particulate emissions and other pollutants, particularly on Oregon’s children, this funding would establish a pilot project to fund the procurement of electric school buses in school districts located in historically underserved communities that are disproportionately impacted by diesel emissions. It would also fund a study to be conducted by the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Education Department to provide recommendations for how to transition all Oregon school buses to zero-emission vehicles within ten years

- \$1.75 million funds:
 - 3 buses at \$500k apiece
 - \$250,000 to fund the ODOT/ODE study

We believe that these proposals will aid our rural and underserved communities, foster our State’s transition to zero-emission vehicles, and help to meet Oregon’s climate goals. Thank you for your consideration.

FORTH

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