



February 11, 2021

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations -- a coalition of environmental justice groups, locality-based organizations, and other advocacy groups based in Latino/a/x communities -- we write to outline specific pressing clean transportation priorities for your consideration.

We have been heartened to see your administration's clarity of commitment to investing in clean infrastructure, as well as your early acknowledgement and pledge to take action to address systemic environmental racism. Your Cabinet members have also been clear in their commitment to addressing the disproportionate impacts of pollution and environmental degradation endured by low-income areas and communities of color. We applaud the focus on and explicit naming of the issue at hand.

The fact remains that for decades toxic vehicle emissions and other ambient pollution have created disproportionate negative impacts on the economic vitality, health, and quality of life in Latino/a/x and other frontline communities. The data demonstrating this reality is inarguable.

There is a dire need for a forward-thinking and progressive federal transportation agenda to address this urgent situation. We urge that you address the particularly pressing needs of Latino/a/x and other communities through innovative federal policymaking and sustained, targeted investment.

Today, we are at a critical nexus for clean transportation policy. With the necessity to act and the energy of the current moment in mind, we put forth the following actions:

**Call for a complete phase-out of fossil fuel powered new vehicles sales by 2035.** By establishing 2035 as the target sunset date for the sales of all new fossil fuel powered vehicles, the administration will create unprecedented incentive for innovation and investment in zero-emission vehicles. Piecemeal approaches that create nuanced distinction between vehicle types will not work or be understood as effectively as a single target phase-out date. Radical action is necessary to alleviate damage to Latino/a/x and other frontline communities.

**Create funding streams and technical support to improve and build out comprehensive clean transportation networks.** Mobility is a crucial determinant of access to economic opportunity, healthcare, and social wellbeing. Latino/a/x people are less likely to have access to a car and more likely to rely on public transit. By creating new funding for investment in public

transportation and alternate mode infrastructure (such as protected bike lanes), more people will be reliably and safely connected to jobs, social services, and other resources to help lead successful lives. Fully electrifying public fleets and school buses is a crucial first step toward supporting better health outcomes for our communities.

**Establish clear, effective incentives for reducing emissions from medium and heavy duty vehicles (MHDVs).** MHDVs are responsible for 23% of transportation emissions despite being only 5% of vehicles on the road. Latino/a/x communities suffer disproportionately high rates of asthma and other chronic respiratory disease from exposure to these emissions. Coordination is required across relevant federal agencies, and with state and regional decision-making bodies.

**Develop incentives for manufacture and sales of low- and zero-emission light duty vehicles (LDVs) that make this option accessible and affordable for all.** LDVs account for 59% of transportation greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Passenger cars dominate US roadways, emitting pollutants that denigrate air quality and trigger health issues. Here, again, the impact is disproportionately borne; for example, Latino children are three times more likely than white children to live in counties with low air quality. We call to build upon the legacy of the Obama-Biden standards, directing the EPA to lead implementing aggressive light-duty GHG and multi-pollutant standards that maximize deployment of electric vehicles, while securing and growing auto sector jobs and manufacturing, and ensuring health and economic gains for families and communities.

**Mobilize to electrify all vehicles on the road by 2050.** Direct key agencies to use their regulatory authority, funding, and other programs within their jurisdiction to accelerate adoption, domestic production, and equitable benefits of electric vehicles and charging infrastructure with a goal of ensuring that all vehicles on the road are zero emissions by 2050. Reaching this benchmark is crucial for slowing and eventually stopping the ongoing patterns of environmental destruction that disproportionately harm Latino/a/x and other frontline communities.

**Coordinate clean transportation action across federal agencies and in consultation with communities.** Consistent action by federal agencies is critical in order to remediate the environmental and health consequences that have been created by polluting vehicles and environmentally damaging, inefficient infrastructure in our communities. However, even the best intentioned actions by government agencies will not make the intended impact without meaningful community consultation. Interagency processes must include meaningful and sustained outreach to and collaboration with communities for their input, feedback, and ideas. This work starts with recognition that Latino/a/x and other communities of color consistently experience much higher rates of damaging environmental exposure from vehicles and other transportation sources than their white counterparts. Only through coordinated and continual action that directs federal power and resources to address community needs can decades of environmental racism begin to be mitigated.

We urge this administration to consider the priorities outlined here as you fulfill your promises to address environmental injustice, and look forward to working with you to create cleaner, stronger transportation futures for Latino/a/x and all communities.

Sincerely,

Latino/a/x communities representing organizations:

1. ASPIRA
2. Azul
3. Be The Change-Colorado
4. Call to Action Colorado
5. Casa Quetzalcoatl
6. CleanAirNowKC
7. Coalition for Environment, Equity & Resilience (CEER)
8. Community Nature Connection
9. Corazón Latino
10. Day One
11. EcoRise
12. Green Latinos
13. Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
14. Hispanic Federation
15. Hispanics in Philanthropy
16. Latinas in Cleantech
17. Latino Outdoors
18. League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
19. LINK Houston
20. MANA, A National Latina Organization
21. Mi Familia Vota
22. National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts
23. National Hispanic Medical Association
24. National Latinx Psychological Association
25. Physicians for Social Responsibility - Arizona Chapter
26. Pittsburghers for Public Transit
27. Sachamama
28. Society of Native Nations
29. The CLEO Institute
30. The Last Plastic Straw
31. The Nuestra Tierra Conservation Project
32. Together for Brothers (T4B)
33. Unite North Metro Denver
34. Utah Coalition of La Raza
35. Vidas Viequenses Valen

36. Vote Solar

Additional signing organizations

37. Coltura
38. Cornell University
39. Cottonwood Institute
40. Earth Action
41. Earth Ethics, Inc.
42. Endangered Species Coalition
43. GreenFaith
44. Mothers Out Front - Colorado
45. North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)
46. NYU School of Medicine
47. Ocean Futures Society
48. Ohio Environmental Council
49. Pomona College
50. San Jose State University
51. Sierra Club
52. Solar United Neighbors
53. Union of Concerned Scientists
54. WildEarth Guardians
55. Yale School of the Environment