



ARLINGTON
VIRGINIA

Blacksburg TOWN OF
VIRGINIA

January 25, 2021

RE: Supporting policy which expands access to low and zero emissions vehicles

Dear Members of the Virginia General Assembly,

As a community of Virginia municipalities, we urge lawmakers to empower our localities and businesses to usher in a clean economy, reduce air pollution, and improve public health by supporting policy which expands access to low and zero emissions vehicles.

Fossil fuel based transportation threatens our air quality and significantly increases community healthcare costs. A recent study from Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action (VCCA) found that the health impacts attributable to Virginia-specific transportation emissions are valued at \$750 million annually.¹ Moreover, air pollution and the associated costs disproportionately impact low-income and minority communities, where respiratory illness is correlated with higher exposure to emissions from fossil fuel vehicles. The VCCA study found that Virginia could significantly reduce healthcare costs by implementing low and zero emissions vehicle standards.

Climate change also poses a significant risk to the health, livelihood, and economic stability of our communities. Recognizing these risks, our communities are making ambitious commitments and taking action to improve energy efficiency, adopt clean energy, and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Transportation is responsible for 48% of climate emissions statewide² and is a significant contributor to each of our community-wide emissions as well. Vehicle electrification is essential to our ability to reduce emissions at the community level.

Despite the significant health and climate benefits of vehicle electrification, unfortunately, auto manufacturers do not provide Virginia automotive dealers with many low and zero emission vehicles, leaving our citizens with little from which to choose. Sixteen states have already passed standards requiring manufacturers to increase the availability of low-emission and zero-emission vehicles. Combining these standards with tax incentives for purchase of these vehicles will accelerate transportation electrification, improve public health, and support Virginia's continued leadership on climate change.

We ask the General Assembly to pass legislation which increases the availability of low and zero emissions vehicles in Virginia and provides consumers financial incentives to choose them. Our localities want to ensure that all Virginians can enjoy a thriving economy, a clean environment, and healthy communities for the many generations to come. We hope that the General Assembly will partner with us to turn this vision into reality.

Sincerely,

County of Albemarle, Board of Supervisors
Mayor Justin M. Wilson, Alexandria City Council
Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, Alexandria
City Council
County of Arlington, Board of Supervisors
Mayor Leslie Hager-Smith, Town of Blacksburg

City of Charlottesville, City Council
Mayor David L. Meyer, City of Fairfax
City of Harrisonburg, City Council
Mayor Kenneth Cooper Alexander, City of Norfolk
Mayor Levar M. Stoney, City of Richmond

¹ <https://www.virginiaclinicians.org/transportation>

² U.S. Energy Information Administration