

January 22, 2024

Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro
508 Main Capitol Bldg.
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Shapiro,

As our economy benefits from an unprecedented influx of federal climate and infrastructure investments, the time is now for our transportation system to better serve communities and support our shared climate and public health needs. We can and must transition to low-carbon transportation choices to ensure an equitable and sustainable future, and right the wrongs of our past. For too long communities of color have been displaced, overburdened, and underserved by past policy decisions that enabled high emission modes of transport through unchecked highway expansion and heavily polluting vehicles.

As you may know, the Biden-Harris Administration has issued a [performance measure](#) rule inviting states to set targets to reduce carbon pollution from the road system – by giving people more choices, from active transportation to transit, and by centering the voices and needs of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. The new rule is an important part of the US Department of Transportation's (US DOT) role in improving the performance of the nation's transportation system. **But we have only a short time to establish appropriately ambitious targets and leverage substantial federal funds, as the first round of targets are due February 1, 2024.** Outlining a path to achieve an ambitious set of greenhouse performance targets. This is an opportunity for us to both tackle climate change and center justice.

Your leadership is essential. Setting and submitting an appropriate target is a critical first step to broadening transportation options and cutting pollution. As of 2021, transportation makes up 26.2% of emissions in your state and the target your administration sets must reflect that reality, or your states' climate commitments will be at risk. Outlining a path to achieve an ambitious set of greenhouse performance targets is an opportunity for us to both tackle climate change and center justice.

Pollution from road transportation is the biggest threat to our health and our climate. We can achieve our equity and decarbonization goals and cut down road pollution by expanding and investing in more transportation options— rapid deployment of electric vehicles as well as public and active transportation and more shared mobility. We can begin to amend the harms that past racist policies imposed on our communities, especially by highways. Our marginalized and underserved neighborhoods suffer the heaviest burdens from the dirty air and the unsafe streets.

To that end, as your administration, led by your Department of Transportation, finalizes its initial targets under this performance measure, **we request that you incorporate the following commonsense recommendations.** Importantly, under this measure, each state will set its own target for reducing emissions and implement its own approaches to meet them.

1. Set ambitious targets that are consistent with Pennsylvania's climate commitments and national GHG reduction goals, and ensure that, at minimum, targets are consistent with reaching net zero on-road emissions by 2050.
2. Finalize a plan to meet targets via significant and quantifiable pollution reduction in environmental justice communities, identified either with federal Justice40 screening tools or robust state equivalent tools.
3. Set ambitious targets incorporating the expected emissions reductions from declining vehicles emissions rates as a result of increased vehicle electrification and the federal clean vehicle rules. States should also consider the impacts of significantly reducing highway expansion on vehicle miles traveled and emissions, and set targets accordingly.
4. When determining the required 2- and 4-year targets for submission in February, your administration should also make an effort to set longer term 8- and 20-year targets in order to outline a meaningful path to secure the additional reductions in climate pollution demanded by the urgency of the crisis. This can dovetail with the Carbon Reduction Strategies states are required under IIJA to submit to US DOT.
5. The methodology used to establish targets should be transparent and easily digestible by all interested stakeholders and community members.
6. Targets should be used to update all relevant transportation plans, policies and documents including the federally required Transportation Improvement Plan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Strong targets will help guide Inflation Reduction Act and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act investments, can channel grants and jobs to your state, and produce durable benefits for your residents and local economy.

Sincerely,

412 Justice

Alliance for a Just Society

America Walks

American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE)

Center for Coalfield Justice

Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT)

Clean Energy Works

Climate Changemakers

ClimateVoice, a project of Tides Center

Common Defense

Evergreen Action

Mobilify Southwestern Pennsylvania

Moms Clean Air Force, PA Chapter

Natural Resources Defense Council

PA Jewish Earth Alliance

Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania

Pittsburghers for Public Transit

Plug In America
POWER
RMI
Shared-Use Mobility Center
The Earth Bill Network
The League of American Bicyclists
Transportation for America (T4A)

CC Michael Carroll, Secretary of Transportation for the State of Pennsylvania