

## Transportation Facts



American workers have a big role to play in building the 21st century transportation infrastructure. From building cars that run farther on less gas to developing new battery technology that will power plug-in hybrids, the manufacturing sector will power our nation's clean energy future.

# Checklist for Cars: Today's "To Do" List to Put America on the Road to Clean Transportation

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America's commuters just have to look at the morning gridlock to see that our nation's transportation infrastructure is no longer working. Clogged roads, smog-filled air, and transportation restrictions that fuel our oil dependence and contribute about one-third of our global warming pollution are all indicators that we need to move beyond our outdated approaches to getting around. Cutting-edge solutions available today will make transportation easier, cheaper, and cleaner. NRDC has developed a three-part checklist for adopting smart transportation policies that can carry us into a clean energy future.

Congress is preparing to vote on climate and transportation bills that have the potential to bring transformative change to the way we commute and travel. Now is our opportunity to build a transportation infrastructure for the 21st century and beyond.



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### Build the 21st Century Transportation Infrastructure

- *Shift money from building roads to building more fuel-efficient alternatives.*
- Fund the huge backlog of passenger rail, bus, bicycle, and and pedestrian projects to enable capacity to keep up with growing demand for transit and provide safe routes for biking and walking
- Encourage the design and implementation of intelligent transportation systems, which provide real-time information to travelers and make travel more convenient and more efficient. Also, set prices for road tolls and parking based on availability thereby reducing congestion and pollution.
- *Distribute funding for projects based on their performance.* Just as vehicles and fuels are subject to performance-based requirements, so regional planners of transportation infrastructure and land use should be rewarded for adopting plans that achieve the greatest reductions in carbon pollution and fuel consumption.



### Invest in the Fuels of the Future

- *Put all transportation fuels under the global warming emissions cap.*
- *Enact a low carbon fuel standard.*
  - Cover all transportation fuels.
  - Include safeguards to protect sensitive lands. Safeguards must prevent biodiversity loss, water pollution, soil degradation, degradation of forests and grasslands, and disruption of sensitive habitats.
  - Include indirect emissions impacts of land use changes such as those resulting from switching to crops used to produce biofuels.
- *Kick off a Billion Gallon Biofuels Challenge.* The best biofuels—those that reduce global warming pollution and protect the environment—have yet to make the jump from the lab to the pump. We need to jumpstart smart biofuels and make them work for our economy and our environment with a Billion Gallon Biofuels Challenge that will scale-up production of the best biofuels to 1 billion gallons by 2014.



### Fund Tomorrow's Cars Today

- *Strengthen R&D and start government fleet deployment of advanced, clean technologies.* Focus funding on vehicle batteries, which are crucial for powering transportation with clean, renewable electricity.
- *Provide incentives to vehicle and component manufacturers to re-tool their plants and bring advanced technologies to market ahead of statutory requirements.* Award manufacturers that beat their national fuel economy and/or emissions mandates.



### A Transportation Success Story in California: SB 375

At the end of 2008, California changed the way regions plan for increased growth with the passage of Senate Bill SB 375, which provides incentives for planners to design cities with more low-carbon alternatives to driving. SB 375 encourages the development of compact, livable neighborhoods with more options for people to walk, bike, and take public transportation instead of driving.

Under SB 375, the state designates transportation funding to local governments based on regional plans that cut global warming emissions from vehicles. The law requires the California Air Resources Board to set vehicle emission reduction targets for each region of the state. Regional agencies use their existing planning processes to develop their own strategies to achieve the targets, and state transportation funding is offered to local governments to implement the plans to achieve the targets.

### Learn More

Read blogs by NRDC transportation experts Deron Lovaas, Roland Hwang, Nathanael Greene, and Luke Tonachel at <http://switchboard.nrdc.org>

Get more policy details in the NRDC policy brief *Fueling the Clean Energy Economy* online at [www.nrdc.org/globalWarming/cap2.0/fueling.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/globalWarming/cap2.0/fueling.asp)



Workers at the Cobasys plant in Springboro, Ohio, are helping to power low-emission, fuel-efficient cars and trucks

