

NATIONAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) INITIATIVE FOR TRIBAL NATIONS

Participating Agencies

U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Department of Energy
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Department of Labor
U.S. Department of Transportation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. General Services Administration

Introduction

Today, the U.S. government is releasing a National Electric Vehicle (EV) Initiative for Tribal Nations, which will ensure Tribes and Native communities are included in the EV future of the country and that the buildout of a national EV network includes Tribal lands and economies.

President Biden set an ambitious target and roadmap to get to 50% EV sale shares in the United States by 2030. Widespread adoption of EVs is necessary for reducing transportation emissions, which made up 27% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2020. The President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) included a down payment on the EV future, with more than \$7 billion in funding to secure an American EV supply chain, from materials processing to battery manufacturing and recycling, along with \$7.5 billion to build out the first-ever nationwide public EV charging network of 500,000 EV chargers. This will accelerate the adoption of EVs, fight the climate crisis, and support domestic manufacturing jobs.

One of the key funding components is BIL's establishment of a new National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program, making \$5 billion available for building out the national EV charging network. The program helps states create a network of charging stations along designated Alternative Fuel Corridors, particularly along the Interstate Highway System. 10% of that \$5 billion is set aside for the Secretary of Transportation to provide discretionary grants to states or localities to help fill gaps in the national network. An additional \$2.5 billion in NEVI discretionary community grants is available for EV charging, as well as hydrogen, natural gas, and propane fueling infrastructure. DOT is currently in the process of developing minimum standards to help ensure the national EV charging network is user-friendly, reliable, accessible to all Americans, and interoperable between different charging companies, with similar payment systems, pricing information, and charging speeds.

In addition, BIL provides over \$18 billion for specific vehicles to transition to electric, including school buses, transit buses, and passenger ferries to reduce emissions for their riders. In August

2022, the Administration announced the first allocations for the Low- and No-Emission Transit Bus Program, which in one funding cycle will nearly double the number of electric transit buses on America's roads. In October 2022, the Administration announced almost \$1 billion in Clean School Bus rebates going to nearly 400 school districts across the country, including districts serving Tribal students.

In August 2022, President Biden signed into law the Inflation Reduction Act, which is the largest investment in history to build a clean energy economy, tackle the climate crisis, and lower households' energy costs—providing \$369 billion in clean energy and climate investments. Specific to EVs, Americans can receive up to \$7,500 in tax credits for new electric vehicles and \$4,000 for used electric vehicles.

Together, these investments aim to make electric vehicles accessible to all Americans, create good-paying jobs across the country, and ensure a convenient, reliable, affordable, and equitable charging experience for all users.

Tribal Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Until today, there has not yet been a clear, specific, national plan for deployment of EV infrastructure to Indian country and Alaska Native communities. The goals of this EV initiative are to ensure that: Tribal Nations are part of the EV future of the country; federal resources for EV development are equitably shared and supportive of Tribal economies; and the physical buildout of a national EV network includes Tribal lands and Native communities.

Historic infrastructure inequities have long barred economic development opportunities in many American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Tribal infrastructure needs are larger than the scope of this initiative, and they will continue to require significant financial resources and technical assistance. As EVs begin to shape the future of transportation, energy, and economic opportunity in communities, we must work with Tribal leaders and Tribal citizens to include Tribes within a national network of EV infrastructure.

Tribal Nations, as sovereigns and in furtherance of their territorial sovereignty, often invest substantial resources into developing their on-reservation economies: planning, design, financial investment, and development efforts to create economic centers; the construction of necessary infrastructure to support economic activities; the provision of critical Tribal government services and amenities; and the comprehensive regulation of all aspects of land management, leasing, and commercial activities pursuant to Tribal law.

There is a direct connection between transportation needs and day-to-day government services and economic opportunity in Indian country and Alaska Native communities: government vehicles; police, fire, and emergency services; travel for business, trade, and tourism; bus transportation for Tribal schools; and daily commutes for employment, education, health care, and elder care. All of these are implicated in growing the national EV economy. EV infrastructure is also part of the President's larger strategy to invest in and deliver an equitable

clean energy future, including by ensuring that investments in the clean energy economy reach Tribal lands.

Tribal Nations are also uniquely positioned for EV infrastructure investment and deployment under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation ("FAST") Act of 2015, which authorized GSA and other federal agencies to install, operate, and maintain EV charging stations in parking areas under federal agency jurisdiction (i.e., at federal buildings). GSA, DOI, HHS, and USDA operate the majority of federal buildings serving Tribal communities.

Specific Agency Commitments

To further EV infrastructure investment and deployment for Tribal communities, the participating agencies in this initiative propose the commitments listed below and will work in consultation with Tribal Nations on design and implementation.

This initiative will require agencies to map the proposed deployment of infrastructure, provide technical assistance to access that funding, support training and certification of workers installing EV supply equipment, and consult with Tribes and engage other stakeholders throughout the process.

Participating agencies make the additional following commitments:

- DOI and DOT will map Tribal Nations within NEVI's geographic constraints. Using this data, agencies will consult with Tribes on how to deploy infrastructure for Tribes within those statutory, geographic constraints.
- DOT will provide technical assistance to Tribes on how to nominate Alternative Fuel Corridors for Secretarial consideration and approval.
- GSA, with assistance from DOI and HHS, will provide a map of all federal facilities and federal occupants in Indian Country under its jurisdiction. Using this data, all participating agencies will consult with Tribes on how FAST Act authority may be used to install, operate, and maintain EV charging stations within those facilities in Indian Country and Native communities.
- GSA will assist Tribes in purchasing or leasing EVs from GSA by leveraging their authorities under federal law, allowing Tribes to acquire EVs at highly discounted prices and lease vehicles at a lower rate. GSA will create informational guides and materials and deliver customized training to Tribes to further this initiative.
- For the 10% of \$5 billion in grants to states or localities requiring additional assistance to strategically deploy electrical vehicle infrastructure: based on identified gaps in the national network, DOT will give priority to rural and underserved areas, including projects conducted by states and localities that will serve Tribal communities.

- For the \$2.5 billion Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program, DOT will prioritize projects that will serve rural and underserved areas, including Tribal lands and Native communities.
- DOT will provide technical assistance to Tribes to take advantage of the \$2.5 billion Discretionary Grant Program for Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) for Tribal EV infrastructure.
- DOT will review and update its EV Toolkit to include specific sections addressing Tribal lands to ensure Tribal Nations have access to the most up-to-date resources for deploying EV infrastructure.
- DOT will consult with Tribal nations to consider updates to the NEVI State EV Charging Infrastructure Plan certification process to improve Tribal input.
- DOT will add topics on Tribal EV infrastructure to the technical assistance it provides to states.
- DOE will support Tribal Nations' roles in the EV battery supply chain through BIL funding opportunities supporting battery manufacturing, recycling, and material processing. Specifically, DOE will establish program guidance to improve engagement with Tribal governments and communities, Tribal workforce development, and community benefits agreements in funding applications relevant to Tribal Nations' concerns.
- DOE Loans Programs Office (LPO) will offer loans and loan guarantees through the DOE Tribal Energy Loan Guarantee Program (TELGP) and hold an informational session promoting the \$20 billion in loan authority and its applicability to EV investment infrastructure deployment for Tribes.
- DOE Office of Indian Energy will continue providing financial and technical assistance opportunities that promote affordable and reliable electricity access to support EV infrastructure adoption.
- DOE will work with Clean Cities coalitions through the Clean Cities Energy and Environmental Initiative to develop local partnerships with Tribal communities, facilitate community engagement, and provide technical assistance related to EVs and EV infrastructure deployment.
- DOE will coordinate with other agencies to enhance Tribal awareness, accessibility and engagement with relevant requests for information (RFI), notices of intent (NOI), and funding opportunities related to EV infrastructure deployment.

- The Joint Office of Energy and Transportation will develop, host, and update a Tribal resources page on driveelectric.gov to provide education, technical assistance, and information on funding opportunities for Tribes to deploy EV infrastructure.
- ED will consult with Tribal Colleges and Universities on implementing an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Programs (EVITP) to support training and certification of workers installing EV supply equipment. As part of that consultation, DOL will provide technical assistance on open educational resources related to electric vehicles developed through the Department's community college investments.
- DOL will conduct direct outreach to Tribes, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and other Tribal organization applicants for the planned Building Pathways to Infrastructure Careers grant program, which will competitively award funds for sector-based training programs across infrastructure-related sectors, including training for professional, scientific, and technical occupations that support renewable energy.
- DOL will continue to engage with Tribes, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and other Tribal organizations to promote Registered Apprenticeships as a workforce strategy, including opportunities for expanding Registered Apprenticeship Programs in the EV industry.
- EPA, through the \$5 billion received from the BIL, will implement the Clean School Bus Program to develop and replace existing diesel school buses with low or zero emission school buses. The program prioritizes Tribal schools, applicants requesting funds for new school buses that serve BIA-funded school districts, and school districts that receive basic support payments for children who reside on Indian lands.
- USDA will prepare a Tribal EV Companion to DOT's Rural EV Toolkit featuring examples of EV charging station projects and collaborations across Indian Country and Native communities.
- USDA will conduct outreach to Tribes about USDA programs under the Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, and the Rural Utilities Service-Electric Program that can support EV charging station infrastructure, related businesses, and EV buses and agricultural vehicles.
- USDA will consult with Tribal governments regarding USDA's Rural Development programs funded in the Inflation Reduction Act and how they may be used to support the development of EV charging infrastructure on Tribal lands and in Native communities.
- HUD will develop guidance outlining how Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) and Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) funds could be used by Tribes to install EV charging stations.

Tribal Consultation

In accordance with Executive Order 13175 and the Presidential Memorandum of January 26, 2021 (Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships), the participating agencies shall conduct timely consultations with Tribal Nations to obtain their comments and recommendations regarding implementation of this initiative. Tribal consultation and engagement shall continue as the strategies outlined by this initiative are developed and implemented.