



ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY STUDY INSTITUTE

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TEA-21 Reauthorization and Clean Bus Deployment How SAFETEA Addresses Recommendations of members of the National Clean Bus Network

1. Strengthen the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

CMAQ was established in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 and reauthorized under the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). It provides flexible funding to State and local governments to help meet the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act. Projects and programs eligible for CMAQ funding include transit improvements, travel demand management strategies, traffic flow improvements, and public vehicle fleet conversions to cleaner fuels, among other options.

- Provides funding to non-attainment and maintenance areas under new PM2.5 and new 8-hour ozone standards.
- Permits the Secretary to use 0.5 percent of annual CMAQ apportionments to carry out a national program of evaluation and assessment of projects regarding effectiveness of reducing emissions and relieving congestion. Assessments will be stored in a database and shared with state and local transportation and air quality agencies prior to release.
- Provides specific eligibility for projects or programs to reduce emissions per vehicle. This emphasizes technology-based solutions, specifying transit buses, school buses and other vehicles.
- Encourages States and metropolitan planning organizations to consult with state and local air quality agencies on the estimated emissions reductions of projects and programs.
- Does not specifically make public health improvements, greenhouse gas reductions or petroleum displacement a focus of the CMAQ program.
- Does not establish quantifiable goals as the basis for funding decisions
- Does not add education program dollars to encourage regional and local authorities to use CMAQ funds.

Strengthen the Clean Fuels Formula “Clean Bus” Grant Program

Established under TEA-21, this program would have provided a minimum \$100 million (and a maximum \$200 million) to transportation management areas for the purchasing and/or leasing of clean fuel buses (defined as being powered by natural gas, biodiesel, electric and hybrid-electric propulsion, alcohol fuels, fuel cells, clean diesel or other low-emissions technology) and supporting infrastructure, and for the repowering, retrofitting and rebuilding of pre-1993 bus engines.

- The Administration’s proposal **eliminates** the Clean Fuels Formula “Clean Bus” Grant Program which would have provided incentives for the purchase of new buses using alternative fuels and advanced vehicle technologies and supporting infrastructure. Under TEA-21 this program guaranteed a minimum \$100 million annually, but congressional appropriators diverted these funds to project earmarks. Additionally, the Department of Transportation failed to produce regulations for the program until 2002, four years behind schedule. SAFETEA does not propose a replacement for this program or any similar incentive mechanism.



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Promote Cleaner Choices in the Major Capital Investments “New Starts” Program

- Makes non-fixed guideway systems like Bus Rapid Transit eligible for “new starts” funding.
- Eliminates parity between highway and transit modes by changing the federal/local funding ratio for new starts projects from **80/20 to 50/50**. This produces an incentive to invest in highway projects over transit projects.

Add Incentives for Advanced Vehicle Technology and Alternative Fuels Infrastructure

- Does not provide incentives to aid in infrastructure investments to support cleaner fuels and engine efficiency technologies

Promote the Flexibility Incentive Grant (FIG) Program

Proposed by the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), the FIG Program would provide incentives to encourage states to establish new sources of revenue for transit projects and services and to reward states for creating more flexibility in the use of their existing transportation funds. Rep. Julia Carson (IN-7th) is seeking co-sponsors for this legislation.

- Does not include the Amalgamated Transit Union’s proposal for an incentive grant program to allocate flexible transportation funds to states that establish dedicated funding mechanisms for transit programs and projects.
- Does not provide incentives to projects meeting multiple performance goals, such as the percentage of vehicle emissions reduced and/or the percentage of petroleum fuel displaced.

Support the Research and Development of Cleaner Transit Choices

- SAFETEA proposes a new **Multimodal Research Program** to replace the Advanced Vehicle Technologies Program (49 USC 5506) to continue the development of hybrid-electric propulsion, advanced batteries, fuel cells and other engine efficiency technologies. The program would receive \$100 million from the Highway Trust Fund over six years.
- Would not provide funding for information dissemination and outreach to states, regional transit authorities and localities regarding new technologies and their development. Education and communication programs help speed the research and development process.

Support the Deployment of Cleaner Vehicles through the Transit in Parks Program

- Would establish a new Federal Lands Transit Program authorizing the Secretary of Transportation to carry out the development of public transportation projects on or near federal lands. (Deployment of clean-powered vehicles would not receive priority).

Give Public Health, Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Oil Displacement Initiatives Greater Priority

- Creates a program to study strategies for improving the energy efficiency of and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, as well as the effects of climate change on the transportation system.
- Permits the establishment of idling-reduction facilities at recreation areas and rest stops which are designed to save on fuel consumption and reduce emissions.
- Does not give priority through incentives or funding criteria to projects that improve public health, reduce greenhouse gas emissions or displace petroleum