



Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection | Office of Communications
For Information Contact: Tony Russell | 860-966-6495 | Tony.Russell@ct.gov
Lee Sawyer | 860-471-4509 | Lee.Sawyer@ct.gov

For Release July 14, 2020

Connecticut Joins Bi-Partisan Multi-State Effort to Green Truck Fleets *Signatory States Will Work to Accelerate Truck Electrification to Eradicate Harmful Emissions by 2050*

Connecticut took another significant step forward in its effort to address the climate crisis and the health impacts of air pollution today as it joined 14 other states and the District of Columbia in signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work collaboratively to advance and accelerate the market for electric medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

Under the MOU, signatory states will work toward ensuring that 100 percent of all new medium- and heavy-duty vehicle sales be zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) by 2050 with an interim target of 30 percent ZEV sales by 2030. The vehicles included in the MOU include large pickup trucks and vans, delivery trucks, box trucks, school and transit buses, and long-haul delivery trucks (big-rigs).

The transportation sector is responsible for approximately 70 percent of smog forming air pollution and 38 percent of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Connecticut. The state fails to meet the national ambient air quality standards for ozone, and every day we exceed those standards represents very real and very tangible adverse health impacts for many people in this state and the greater Connecticut-New York-New Jersey metropolitan area.

“Now is the time to act regionally to protect the health of our residents and our climate by reducing emissions from medium- and heavy-duty trucks,” said Gov. Ned Lamont. “In Connecticut, as in other states, our most vulnerable residents are hit hardest by the health effects of air pollution, including asthma and other respiratory ailments. I am looking forward to working with our partners through this agreement to leverage private sector ingenuity with smart public policy to transition to zero-emission vehicles.”

Many low income and marginalized communities in Connecticut are located near major trucking routes, ports and other trucking hubs and are particularly vulnerable to the harmful health impacts of air pollution from diesel trucks. Poor air quality exacerbates acute and chronic respiratory problems such as asthma, and cities such as New Haven and Hartford rank in the top 20 of the 100 largest U.S. cities where it is most challenging to live with asthma.

Recognizing the dangers caused by a changing climate, Connecticut has put in place aggressive mandates to reduce air pollution and GHG emissions and decarbonize the electric grid, which include:

- An ongoing need to reduce ozone (smog) precursor emissions such as nitrogen oxides to meet federal health-based air quality standards;
- State mandated GHG reduction targets including:
 - 45% below 2001 levels by 2030,
 - 80% below 2001 levels by 2050; and
- A goal to establish a carbon-free electric grid by 2040.

Additionally, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) owns or oversees a fleet of 1,250 heavy duty and medium duty transit buses that serve large numbers of transit-dependent residents in Connecticut. Approximately 38 percent of ridership are people of color and people with low incomes. Although DOT has a statutory mandate to achieve at least thirty per cent of all buses purchased by the state as zero-emission buses, Connecticut has committed to 100 percent electrification for its transit bus fleet while recognizing that the shift to a fully electric fleet will be a gradual transition, subject to funding and further improvements to heavy duty electric vehicle technology. To advance this effort DOT has launched transit bus pilots in two environmental justice communities. Our most vulnerable population deserves the cleanest transportation option available and this MOU moves the state in a positive direction toward this goal.

Joining the MOU is also consistent with recommendations contained in DEEP's [Electric Vehicle Roadmap for Connecticut \(EV Roadmap\)](#), which is another exciting initiative recently launched by DEEP to improve air quality for residents while also addressing the climate crisis. Recognizing that by 2035, heavy-duty trucks would be responsible for 61% more nitrogen oxide emissions than light duty vehicles, the EV Roadmap found that electrification of medium and heavy-duty vehicle classes will be vital to ensuring Connecticut remains on track to meet its emission reduction targets. Other initiatives DEEP is involved in that contribute to lower emissions and improved air quality include the [Energize Connecticut](#) energy efficiency program, and the state's growing [renewable energy](#) portfolio.

"Today's action is an important step towards meeting our commitments to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in Connecticut, which are critical to protecting our future," DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes said. "By working together with fourteen other states and Washington DC, we are sending a signal that will drive investment in cleaner, cheaper transportation solutions that will improve both our economy and our environment as we work together for clean air, clean energy and clean transportation."

The MOU provides a framework to coordinate state efforts to meet the MHD electrification goals. The signatory states will work through the existing multi-state [ZEV Task Force](#) facilitated by the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) to develop and implement a ZEV action plan for trucks and buses. The plan will identify policies and programs to inform policy makers and support the timeframes and targets specified in the MOU.

In addition to the public health benefits and avoided health care costs attributable to the emission reductions from zero emission trucks and buses, by 2030, the total cost of ownership for many common commercial vehicles is projected to reach parity with conventionally fueled vehicles. Connecticut also believes that by promoting and investing in electric trucks and buses as well as the charging and fueling infrastructure that will be needed to serve these vehicles, this effort will support job creation and Connecticut's clean energy economy.

Other states and jurisdictions joining Connecticut in the MOU include: California, Colorado, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington and the District of Columbia. The MOU can be accessed at this [link](#).

Below are supporting statements received by the state based on this action:

"Acadia Center is so pleased that Connecticut and almost all of the other Northeastern states have taken this historic step to address air quality in trucking corridors that disproportionately impacts communities of color and low-income communities. Acadia Center advocates for widespread electrification of vehicles and collaborative regional efforts to electrify our transportation, buildings, and power sectors. We applaud Connecticut and the other states on this historic agreement and look forward to more regional and sub-national cooperation to improve transportation while reducing emissions and associated health concerns." *Amy McLean, Connecticut Director, Acadia Center*

"Once again, Governor Lamont is taking a strong leadership role in the fight against climate change. The CT League of Conservation Voters is proud that our state is joining this important effort to reduce emissions from one of the highest polluting sectors in our nation. This makes sense from an economic, environmental and public health point of view." *Lori Brown, Executive Director, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters*

"We are pleased to see Connecticut continuing to take a leadership role in reducing pollution from the transportation sector. As the federal government attempts to roll back the environmental progress we have made over the last decades, it is more critical than ever that states protect their citizens by maintaining and strengthening their own programs. This concerted action by Connecticut, working in partnership with our fellow states, is an important step in our continued progress towards reaching our greenhouse gas reduction and air quality goals." *Charles Rothenberger, Climate and Energy Attorney for Save the Sound*

More at: portal.ct.gov/deep | Follow on Facebook at [CTDEEP](#) | Follow on Twitter @[CTDEEPNews](#)

###