



Labor Principles for Transportation Electrification

The Labor movement stands united in our support for good, middle-class jobs, policies that address climate change, and safe transportation that brings equitable benefits to communities across the country. As our infrastructure evolves and adapts to new challenges, new technologies, processes, and business models meant to face these challenges must advance these goals. Today, our nation is grappling with the challenge of transitioning to zero-emission transportation vehicles and infrastructure over the next few decades. We cannot let the Wall Street and multinational corporations alone decide how to move forward on these issues. While we will all continue to advocate for modal and union specific concerns, the undersigned unions have come together to adopt the following principles that will guide our policy advocacy, collective bargaining, and organizing efforts as we all work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our industries and advance racial and environmental justice.

The transition to a zero-emission transportation sector will require significant federal leadership and investment. Federal leadership is required to move manufacturers, state and local governments, transit agencies, and the various aspects of the workforce development ecosystem, towards developing, procuring, and operating hybrid and zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure in an equitable way. Any federal mandate to progress towards a zero-emission future must be paired with sufficient federal dollars and direction to match the needs of the entire system, including disadvantaged communities. And these federal investments must come with conditions that maintain or create quality union jobs for American workers.

Public policies and research, development, and deployment programs must be reformed to enhance community voices and ensure input from frontline workers is at the core of policy development. Government policy must include the protection, retention, and improvement of good jobs as a central mission for all research and development programs – including those aimed at emission reduction and other environmental protections. Use of technology made possible through publicly funded research must come with strong conditions that the resulting products be manufactured in America. Advisory boards, task forces, stakeholder committees, and all other

consultative groups formed by the federal government or state and local governments must include worker representatives from the appropriate workgroup in at least equal numbers as corporate, environmental, or other stakeholders. Furthermore, these groups must be structured so that public interest advocates – including representatives of local communities, labor unions, equity and accessibility advocates, and environmental organizations – carry the majority of decision-making authority.

The next generation of vehicles should be made in America with union labor. Government subsidies, tax breaks, and other incentives for the transition to electric, autonomous, and other new vehicles must be paired with requirements that vehicles and components are produced in the United States with jobs at comparable wages and benefits to union jobs making the current generation of vehicles. These requirements must include returning offshored manufacturing jobs to the U.S. and creating a strong, sustainable domestic supply chain.

Procurement of new, hybrid, and zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure must be transparent and honest from the beginning. Federal policy has long sought to prevent government funding from undermining jobs and labor rights. As we gradually transition away from internal combustion engines, transit agencies, trucking and bus companies, motor vehicle and parts manufacturers, and others seeking to make large changes to their operations must disclose these plans to their workforce when the process for these changes begins. Buy America requirements must be strengthened and enforced in order to ensure American workers and communities benefit from public investment. This disclosure must include: a full accounting of the operational changes, including the number and kind of jobs affected; plans and resources for training, apprenticeship, and career ladder programs for reskilling the existing workforce and providing them with the first opportunity for new jobs created by the adopting of new equipment and infrastructure; and a realistic timeline for the transition. If workers will lose their jobs because of the operational changes, employers must be required to issue notices to the affected workforce as early as possible to allow individuals to transition into other roles.

Existing safety, labor, environmental, equity, accessibility, and performance standards cannot be compromised. These standards¹ protect the public and our workers from harm and ensure disadvantaged communities have access to our transportation systems. Innovative technologies, including those designed to move our economy towards zero emissions, must meet these existing standards before they are approved for widespread use. We cannot allow untested promises of environmental or safety “improvements” to eliminate public interest protections that were developed only after decades of struggle. Regulators must reject exemption requests and other extraordinary measures that would allow untested or unproven technology into our systems that fails to meet rigorous public interest standards.

¹ These include prevailing wage standards, transit employee protections, and other labor protections set forth in chapters 23 and 49 of the U.S. Code.

The existing workforce must benefit directly from investments in zero-emission infrastructure. We do not believe that jobs created by “green” technologies must come at the expense of existing jobs. Promises of potential new jobs in the future cannot outweigh real, immediate harm to workers at risk of losing their careers and new jobs must come with high labor standards

All publicly funded or incentivized charging infrastructure must be installed by laborers and mechanics pursuant to prevailing wage laws, including the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts, and require contractors to adhere to other high road labor standards, including registered apprenticeships, neutrality in organizing, local hire agreements, and the ABC test. The installation work of journeyman electricians must be performed by highly skilled Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP)-certified professionals trained in the appropriate safety standards.²

The incumbent workforce must also receive job training necessary to perform the operations and maintenance functions on new zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure. The introduction of zero emission vehicles and infrastructure must not degrade job quality through privatization or outsourcing. Any employers who seek to eliminate jobs through adoption of zero-emission technology must be required to publish a plan to fulfill their promises to their existing workforce and transition current workers into changing or newly created jobs. The terms of implementing zero-emission and other new technology must be mandatory subjects of collective bargaining.

Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers – Transportation Division (SMART-TD)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)

International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT)

International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)

Transport Workers Union of America (TWU)

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD)

United Steelworkers (USW)

² These include standards set forth in National Electrical Code, Nation Electrical Safety Code, and the Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace (NFPA 70e).