



# SIERRA CLUB

**Connecticut Chapter**  
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May 25, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Connecticut Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration Low or No Emission Vehicle Grant for Battery Electric Buses

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our more than 40,000 members and supporters in Connecticut, I write in support of the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CTDOT) application for funding under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low or No Emission Vehicle program (LoNo) in which CTDOT will purchase up to ten new battery electric buses for use in the Waterbury region in central Connecticut.

The Sierra Club is committed to solving the climate crisis we face with just and equitable solutions that will result in a healthy world for everyone. Transportation pollution in Connecticut is a serious problem for public health and our climate. According to the latest greenhouse gas inventory<sup>1</sup> from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the transportation sector accounts for 38% of greenhouse gas emissions in the state contributing to the climate crisis. Poor air quality is contributing to a health crisis disproportionately impacting Black, Brown and low income communities like Waterbury with acute and chronic respiratory problems such as asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, and other lung diseases.

We seek solutions to these issues that include clean, pollution-free vehicles and making our communities more walkable, bikeable and transit-friendly. That's why we offer our support for the CTDOT application. The request is for \$7,404,210 in LoNo funds to be matched with \$5,730,390 from state and other sources, for a \$13,134,600 project when fully funded. The CTDOT LoNo application will be used for the incremental costs of a battery electric bus over a diesel, plus the purchase and installation of charging stations and electrical infrastructure upgrades for the CTtransit Waterbury bus maintenance facility. The Department will use 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grant monies to cover the base costs of the battery electric vehicles.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/climatechange/2017\\_GHG\\_Inventory/2017\\_GHG\\_Inventory.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/climatechange/2017_GHG_Inventory/2017_GHG_Inventory.pdf)

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Reducing emissions in Waterbury will improve local air quality for one of Connecticut's largest cities. Over 100,000 people in Waterbury alone will benefit from cleaner air in a county that received an "F" grade from the American Lung Association in its 2021 State of the Air report.

Thank you in advance for you and your Department's consideration of this proposal. We look forward to this project deploying electric buses that will simultaneously address the climate crisis and the poor air quality disproportionately impacting environmental justice communities in our state.

Sincerely,

Samantha Dynowski  
Sierra Club Connecticut