



Expanding Access to Electric Vehicles Campaign Toolkit

The Environmental Justice Coalition

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Table of Contents

Section I. Background	3
Section II. Summary of the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021	5
Section III. Details of the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021	6
Section IV. Templates to Contact Legislators	10
Section V. Additional Methods to Support the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021	11
Section VI. References	13

Background

The U.S. Congress has made the following findings regarding the environmental implications of transportation and access to electric vehicles:

- I. The nation's transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S.
- II. 55 percent of nitrogen oxide emissions come from the transportation sector, resulting in unhealthy air quality and overall presents health risks. This is most prevalent in urban communities.
- III. Electric vehicles and charging are key in mitigating climate change, reducing emissions, and improving the economy and air quality. Electric vehicle companies and similar industries in the field of clean energy provide a significantly larger amount of sustainable jobs and contribute to a growing U.S. economy.
- IV. As the nation furthers the process of decarbonization as it relates to the U.S. economy, increased accessibility to electrical vehicle charging infrastructure is crucial and will provide all communities the opportunity to participate in decarbonization.
- V. Underserved communities, defined as "a community located within a ZIP Code or census tract that is identified as:
 - A. a low-income community;
 - B. a community of color;
 - C. a Tribal community
 - D. having a disproportionately low number of electric vehicle charging stations per capita, compared to similar areas; or
 - E. any other community that the Secretary determines is disproportionately vulnerable to, or bears a disproportionate burden of, any combination of economic, social, environmental, and climate stressors."

They have historically experienced lack of governmental budget allocations and thus, funding for clean energy and infrastructure although they experience larger amounts of pollution than higher-income white counterparts and are predominantly affected by the climate crisis.

Underserved communities, as defined above, are often populated by Black, Indigenous, and people of color and are located in urban areas. Urban areas are at highest risk of air and water pollution. These factors lead to unhealthy air qualities and unsafe water conditions and place these communities in the forefront of the climate crisis.

The findings show precedent for legislation such as the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act, to aid underserved and disadvantaged communities gain access to clean technologies and resilient infrastructure.

This toolkit will help contextualize and explain the Electric Vehicles For Underserved Communities Act of 2021 and provide resources to help pass the bill.

Summary of Electrical Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021

The House Resolution 1221: Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021 is a bill that will require the Department of Energy's support of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles (EV) in marginalized communities with significant lack of resources.

The Department of Energy (DOE) will be required to form an EV Charging Equity Program, in which it will grant financial and technical assistance to underserved communities in their efforts to establish EV charging infrastructure. In addition, the DOE will be required to assist in increasing the accessibility of EV charging in these areas.

Furthermore, the DOE will warrant the establishment of EV charging programs, enhancement of air quality, reduction of emissions, and substructure of public, safe, multimodal, and effective means of transportation.

Details of Electrical Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021

The Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act was introduced by Representative Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-9) in the House of Representatives and Senator Cortez Masto (D-NV) in the Senate on February 23, 2021 in the first session of the 117th congress as H.R. 1221. Its purpose is to “increase deployment of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in low-income communities and communities of color.”

The bill has only recently been introduced but is advancing in the legislative process. On February 24, 2021, the bill was referred to the House subcommittee on energy. The U.S. Department of Transportation has issued a statement on EV charging infrastructure grant allocations (as well updated information regarding alternative fuel corridors) and allocated new funding for EV charging research and development. The General Services Administration has begun to transition the nation fully dependent on EV (or otherwise ecologically-friendly vehicles).

H.R. 1221 addresses the lack of technological and ecologically-friendly services in underserved communities with the following three subsections:

I. Expanding Access to Electric Vehicles in Underserved and Disadvantaged Communities
The Secretary of Transportation will assess the current state of access and challenges to expanding access to electric vehicles in underserved and disadvantaged communities in the US. Within a year of the enactment, the Secretary must report the findings to the Energy Committee and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, describing EV charging infrastructure public accessibility, encouraging the local and State governments and private entities to develop and deploy EVs and equipment. The report will also include an analysis of current issues in the deployment of EVs and charging locations in underserved communities, and compile local and state governments as well as private and nonprofit companies’ most effective policies in increasing accessibility to EVs and equipment in marginalized areas.

Within five years of the enactment, the Secretary must update the prior assessments and update the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate with relevant information, case

studies, and key concepts compiled and analyzed in the period of five years of the enactment of the bill.

II. Electric Vehicle Charging Equity Program

Within a 90-day period of the enactment, the Secretary must establish the Electric Vehicle Charging Equity Program. The program will increase accessibility to EV charging locations in underserved communities through technical assistance and financial assistance to projects that value public accessibility and ensure that EV charging is available no less than 5 days, weekly. The Secretary will prioritize grants for projects that will support the largest number of people, deploy renewable and clean energy, and boost the economy through local job creation in underserved communities.

Entities that are eligible for these grants include households or individuals in charge of the project, a State, local, Tribal, or Territorial government (or an affiliate), utilities, nonprofit organizations, public housing authorities, small businesses, and higher education institutions. The list of eligible entities is subject to revision under the terms of the Secretary, if determined that the revision is beneficial to the efficacy of the act.

(f) Public Notice And Request For Applications.—The Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register, and such other publications as the Secretary considers to be appropriate, a notice and request for applications to carry out projects under the EV Charging Equity Program.

Within a year and once every two years following the implementation and establishment of the EV Charging Equity Program, the Secretary will report to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate the status of the program with details on financial and technical actions taken under the act.

Through the years 2021 through 2030, the EV Charging Equity Program is appropriated to carry out \$96,000,000 annually.

III. Ensuring Program Benefits for Underserved and Disadvantaged Communities

In insuring the efficacy of the program implemented, the Secretary will invest and lead possible programme to provide:

- a) Support and promotion of EV charging infrastructure
- b) Support of clean energy-based transportation
- c) Improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions

d) Addressing the needs of underserved communities.

Templates to Contact Legislators

How to Find Your Representatives and Senators

To locate your state's US representative's website and contact information, click on the link here: <https://www.house.gov/representatives>. Search for your state and congressional district. If you do not know your congressional district, you can enter your ZIP code and find your representative here: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>. Remember that each state has a varying number of representatives based on the state's population.

To locate your state's Senator's website and contact information, click on the link here: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>. Select your state from the "Choose a state" drop-down menu. Remember that each state has only two senators.

Email Template

Copy the email template below and enter all of the information that pertains to you and your state in the bracketed portions of the text.

Dear [*Title*] [*Last Name*],

My name is [*Name*], and I am emailing you to ask for your support of the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021 and consider cosponsoring the act in Congress (if you have not done so already).

The climate crisis is rapidly emerging. Although there has been legislative push for a turnaround, privileged communities are prioritized. Electrical vehicle access and charging infrastructure must be provided in all areas in the nation to combat the climate crisis in an equitable manner. Accessibility to ecologically-friendly infrastructure only increases the efficacy of mitigating climate change. We must create programs to support our marginalized communities that have historically faced health inequalities in the nation due to lack of ecological regard for these areas.

Your support of the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act will assure that the nation's underserved and underrepresented communities see a brighter future.

I thank you for your time and consideration of the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act.

Sincerely,

[*Name*]

Phone Template

The websites listed above for locating your legislators may also be used to gather the telephone numbers of your respective Representatives and Senators' offices.

You may call your legislators' offices using the template provided below, and further the campaign by arranging a meeting with your Representatives or Senators.

Hello, my name is [*Name*], and I am a constituent from [*Congressional District #, City, State, ZIP*]. I am calling to inquire that [*legislator's name*] supports the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021. The climate crisis is rapidly emerging. Although there has been legislative push for a turnaround, privileged communities are prioritized. Electrical vehicle access and charging infrastructure must be provided in all areas in the nation to combat the climate crisis in an equitable manner. Accessibility to ecologically-friendly infrastructure only increases the efficacy of mitigating climate change. We must create programs to support our marginalized communities that have historically faced health inequalities in the nation due to lack of ecological regard for these areas.

Please vote in favor of passing the Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act to the next stage in the legislative process. Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to the health of underserved communities in the US.

Additional Methods to Support H.R. 1221

More information on the act:

- [**HR1221: Electric Vehicles for Underserved Communities Act of 2021**](#)
- [**We need to address the electric vehicle charging divide now, not as an afterthought**](#)
- [**Electric cars can advance environmental justice — here's how**](#)

Places to Donate

- [**Donate to the League of Conservation Voters**](#)
- [**Donate to Earthjustice**](#)

Environmental and Transportation Organizations to Support:

- [**League of Conservation Voters**](#)
- [**100% EV Sales by 2030 - ZETA**](#)
- [**Earthjustice: Environmental Law**](#)

Get Involved with the Environmental Justice Coalition

The Environmental Justice Coalition is the first grassroots, youth-led movement mobilizing the next generation of activists in the fight for intersectional environmental justice and uplifting BIPOC, low-income, and marginalized communities most impacted by environmental racism and injustices through political advocacy, policy development, community organizing, educational initiatives, and content creation. We are working towards a future in which there is fair and equal treatment, equitable distribution of resources, and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, or income level in the development, implementation, and enforcement of sustainable environmental laws, regulations, and policies on the local, state, and federal level.

For position descriptions, eligibility requirements, sample projects, and application forms, please visit our [Job Board](#) to learn more about joining our executive team, enrolling in our fellowship program, or becoming a staff writer and reach out to team@environmentaljusticecoalition.org with any questions!

Follow the Movement

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Medium: medium.com/environmental-justice-coalition

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Linktree: linktr.ee/environmentaljusticecoalition

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