



Written by [David Kelly](#) on May 8, 2023

EPA Plans for a Zero-emissions Shipping Future

Seeking to make America's "ports safer and more reliable," President Biden [announced](#) on Friday \$4 billion in infrastructure funding to help electrify U.S. ports, with a goal of zero-emission port equipment and technology that supposedly will "strengthen our supply chains, reduce costs for the American people, and position the U.S. for economic success."



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The funding approved through Biden's Inflation Reduction Act provides \$3 billion for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) [Clean Ports Program](#), and \$1 billion for the [Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicle Program](#), to reduce pollutants at U.S. ports and vehicle emissions near ports and other truck routes. The programs will help ports develop climate action plans to improve air quality and public health in neighboring communities, and advance environmental justice.

The White House fact sheet [stated](#):

Today's announcement builds on previous port electrification announcements made by the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration to improve port efficiency and air quality, reducing local pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. They also complement [new proposed vehicle pollution standards](#) that would, if finalized, make trucks cleaner and more efficient and position the United States as a leading force in the clean energy future.

The EPA took the first step by issuing a Request for Information (RFI) on zero-emissions heavy-duty vehicles and port equipment, inviting manufacturers, fleets, ports, municipalities, school districts, utilities, and other stakeholders with zero-emission technology experience to help with the development of the new programs, specifically seeking information on:

- Zero-emission (ZEV) class 6 and 7 heavy-duty vehicles (e.g., electric or fuel cell delivery trucks, refuse trucks, utility trucks, school buses, and day cab tractors).
- ZEV port equipment (e.g., electric or fuel cell dray trucks, harbor craft, locomotives, and cargo handling equipment).
- Associated charging and other fueling infrastructure.

The EPA also wants to know the availability and manufacturer production capacity, durability, and maintenance requirements of all the sought ZEV technologies, and to know if equipment and



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components are currently manufactured in the United States, or expect to be in the near future.

The programs are driven by Biden's hubris-infected green energy agenda, relabeled under his recent environmental-justice [executive order](#) stating that the federal government has a duty to restore and protect a healthy environment for all Americans, "wherever people live, play, work, learn, grow, and worship."

According to [Times of San Diego](#), White House National Climate Advisor Ali Zaidi said the programs address "pernicious pollution pumping through our port communities by making investments and setting standards that will spur a shift away from dirty diesel to clean, American-made technologies."

The introduced programs fall in line with the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) [new rule](#) requiring a phased-in transition toward zero-emission medium-and-heavy duty vehicles. "Known as Advanced Clean Fleets, the new rule helps put California on a path toward accomplishing Gov. Gavin Newsom's [goal](#) of fully transitioning the trucks that travel across the state to zero-emissions technology by 2045," stated a CARB press release.

A recent comprehensive report, [Preparing the world for zero-emission trucks](#), published by McKinsey & Company, shared interesting factors that could be among the most important forces to shape the ZEV industry's future. Those include:

- **Technology development costs:** Battery costs have already dropped over the past ten years and are expected to decline further by 2030. Additional reductions are still needed to make these technologies economically viable.
- **Operational characteristics:** The operational constraints for battery electric vehicles (BEV) and fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEV) trucks include payload restrictions (due to battery weight), recharging times, and limited ranges; for FCEVs, payload restrictions are also an issue because of the large hydrogen tanks required.
- **Infrastructure availability:** Both BEV and FCEV trucks require new infrastructure to ensure widespread usage. That includes a more robust electric grid, as well as hydrogen refueling stations.

That "robust electric grid" is key to the success of going "green" and to Biden's lofty environmental-justice goals. But, sadly, there wasn't even an honorable mention anywhere in the White House and EPA's announcements about America's overburdened and failing electric grid and how that grid will fuel the future BEVs and FCEVs.

The announced government programs will fund charging stations and charging infrastructure, which will obviously be needed to support all the ZEVs. However, those charging stations will be useless until the electric grid can be built up to handle the massive demand a world full of ZEVs will require. That demand will require a complete update and restructure to America's aging power grid — and will take decades to build.

Biden's failure to recognize the greater need to rebuild the nation's power grid in his quest for environmental justice will not electrify the nation. Instead it will yield the *opposite* of his agenda's promised results, leaving Americans to live in a future that is dark and cold.



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