



1017 L Street, #288  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-778-0746  
info@calbike.org

May 20, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor

The Honorable Toni Atkins  
Senate President *Pro Tempore*

The Honorable Anthony Rendon  
Speaker of the Assembly

The Honorable Nancy Skinner  
Senate Budget Committee Chair

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Assembly Budget Committee Chair

*Submitted via Email*

**Re: Proposed 2021-22 Budget Request for a \$10 million Electric Bicycle Affordability Program**

Dear Governor Newsom, *Pro Tempore* Atkins, Speaker Rendon, Chair Skinner and Chair Ting:

As Californians, we are deservedly proud to be among the world leaders in advancing technologies and policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. **Yet, we know we are not doing enough, fast enough.** Terrible wildfires and a severe drought are a powerful reminder.

**In the transportation sector we are failing in large part because we are not giving Californians better options than the private car.** Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) continue to increase, and will negate other efforts to prevent the worst impacts of climate change. Because Californians use their cars mostly for short trips of five miles or less, bicycles can replace many of those trips. Electric bicycles can *easily* replace those trips. Electric bicycle users can take children to school, haul hundreds of pounds of equipment or groceries, and travel long distances and over steep hills, without breaking a sweat. *For many Californians, an electric bike is the only feasible alternative to the car.*

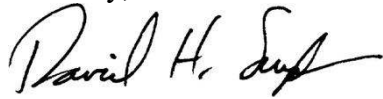
Unfortunately, electric bicycles are not nearly as widespread as they should be because they are expensive. Safe electric bikes of respectable durability cost from \$2,000 to \$5,000 depending on your need. Although people who are severely burdened with the costs of car ownership and use would save important sums of money by owning an electric bike, they won't switch because the upfront cost of the e-bike is hard to justify. An incentive program will enable the switch,

simultaneously serving California's VMT reduction goals and improving the economic security of the recipient.

**The undersigned organizations support a \$10 million allocation to the Air Resources Board to implement an electric bicycle incentive program that will make e-bikes mainstream in California.** The program should adhere to the policy goals spelled out in Assembly Bill 117 which has the support of more than 40 organizations representing millions of Californians concerned about bicycling, equity, and the environment. The attached Fact Sheet addresses the frequently asked questions about the proposal in detail.

Thank you for considering this proposal.

Sincerely,



Dave Snyder  
Executive Director

**Statewide Organizations for Environment, Equity, and Sustainable Transportation**

Carter Rubin, Mobility and Climate Advocate  
Natural Resources Defense Council

Julia Randolph, Policy and Outreach Associate  
Coalition for Clean Air

Hana Creger, Senior Program Manager, Climate Equity  
Greenlining Institute

Arnold Sowell, Jr.  
Executive Director, NextGen California

Bryn Lindblad, Deputy Director  
Climate Resolve

Jonathan Matz, California Senior Policy Manager  
Safe Routes Partnership

Heng Lam Foong, Director  
Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement

Ruben Aronin, Senior Vice President  
Better World Group

Carolynn Johnson, West Coast Program Manager  
Institute for Transportation and Development Policy

Laura Cohen, Western Region Director  
Rails to Trails Conservancy

Allis Druffel, IHM, Southern California Director  
California Interfaith Power & Light

Meredith Alexander, Policy Director  
CalSTART

**Public Agencies and Officials**

Honorable London Breed  
Mayor, City and County of San Francisco

City Council  
City of Los Angeles

Geof Syphers  
Sonoma Clean Power Authority

Suzanne Smith  
Sonoma County Transportation Authority

**Local and Regional Organizations for Environment, Equity, and Transportation Justice**

David Diaz, MPH, Executive Director  
Active San Gabriel Valley

Peter Choi, Board Member  
Bicycle Kitchen/La Bici-Cocina

Glenn Hammett, President  
Bike Bakersfield

Dave Campbell, Advocacy Director  
Bike East Bay

Gina Gallino Cole, Executive Director  
Bike Santa Cruz County

Kyle Heiskala, Board President  
Bike SD

Rick Ellison, Executive Director  
Bike SLO County

Joey Juhasz-Lukomski, Executive Director  
Bike Ventura

Dave "Poy" Poyourow, Board Member  
Bikerowave Co-op, Los Angeles

Christy Zamani, Executive Director  
Day One

John Jones III, President/CBO  
East Side Riders Bike Club

Elise Kalfayan, Steering Committee Member  
Glendale Environmental Coalition

Marven Norman, Executive Director  
Inland Empire Biking Alliance

Eli Akira Kaufman, Executive Director  
Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition

Tarrell Kullaway, Executive Director  
Marin County Bicycle Coalition

Denny Zane, Executive Director  
Move LA

Patrick Band  
Napa County Bicycle Coalition

Maryann Aguirre, Project Director  
People for Mobility Justice

Colin Bogart, Steering Committee  
Pasadena Complete Streets Coalition

Andy Hanshaw, Executive Director  
San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

Brian Wiedenmeier, Executive Director  
San Francisco Bicycle Coalition

Steve Dakin, Manager  
San Jose Bike Clinic

Anne Wallach Thomas, Executive Director  
Shasta Living Streets

Shiloh Ballard, Executive Director  
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

Eris Weaver, Executive Director  
Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition

Damian Kevitt, Executive Director  
Streets Are For Everyone

Deb Banks, Executive Director  
Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

Michael Schneider, Founder  
Streets For All

Liza Lutzker, Coordinating Committee  
Walk Bike Berkeley

Paul Rabinov, Board member  
Walk Bike Glendale

# \$10 Million E-Bike Affordability Program Budget Request

## Fact Sheet

### What is the request?

**A \$10 million appropriation for the CA Electric Bicycle Incentive Pilot Program**, to provide grants and vouchers for electric bicycles for mostly low-income residents who otherwise wouldn't have access to them. The program will be regulated by AB 117 currently on suspense in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

### This is an equity program.

**It will transform the lives of thousands of low-income people who currently rely on, and are burdened by, an expensive car for almost all of their trips.** Supporters of the program insist that at least 80% of its funding supports low-income Californians, and that high-income Californians are excluded from its benefits.

**This is a grant program designed to support community needs, not a rebate program.** The implementing agency may use vouchers and grants in order to target the benefits to people who need e-bikes the most to replace car trips. Community organizations should be able to use the funding to purchase e-bikes in bulk, at a discount, to distribute to eligible recipients at very low cost. They can provide additional support, like safety training and practical advice.

### This is essential to meeting our environmental goals.

**This program will annually replace millions of miles of car trips with zero emission bike trips.** Reducing vehicle miles traveled is key to achieving California's greenhouse gas reduction goals. Surveys of e-bike users routinely show that people use e-bikes to replace car trips, with an average distance of 9.3 miles according to the latest survey of North American e-bike users.

**Among strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it has the most powerful co-benefits.** More bicycling also supports better health and happiness, reduces health care costs, supports local economies, and improves traffic safety.

### This is not a novel or untested program.

**Modeled on successful local programs that already exist, this program merely scales up the effort to come closer to meeting the need.** Currently underway in San Diego, Pedal Ahead SD is an e-bike grant program for low-income residents that could serve as a model.

### Fraud is easy to prevent.

**Many e-bikes, by design, are not useful for recreation.** The bikes supported by the program will include a predominant share of large utility bikes, folding bikes, and commuter bikes with substantial carrying capacity. They will not be mountain bikes designed for recreation.

**The program can be designed to maintain a relationship with the bike owner.** Some model programs offer e-bikes to low-income recipients on a rent-to-own basis, contingent upon their use for transportation. Owners check in with the program sponsor periodically to show their odometer, ensuring a high degree of compliance with the goals of the program.