

PLUG 'N DRIVE

The Electric Vehicle Discovery Centre
1126 Finch Ave. W., Unit 1
North York, ON, M3J 3J6

August 4, 2017

Federal Budget Committee
Government of Canada

RE: Advancing Electric Vehicle Adoption in Canada

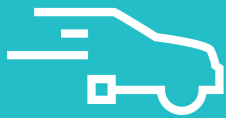
Dear Federal Budget Committee Members,

Plug'n Drive is a leading not for profit accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles for their environmental and economic benefits. Since 2011, Plug'n Drive has established itself as a leader in the electric vehicle industry and as a trusted source of unbiased information about electric cars, charging stations and the electricity sector. Its programming focuses on four primary pillars: education and outreach, infrastructure, advocacy/policy and research. We focus most of our efforts on educating the public on the environmental and economic benefits of making the switch from a gas car to an electric car. Plug'n Drive is funded primarily by industry, including leading companies from the electricity and auto sectors, labour groups as well as TD Bank and others. The Ontario Government, as part of its Climate Change Action Plan, has committed to provide funding (as a public-private partnership) for our Electric Vehicle Discovery Centre (EVDC), a world's first experiential learning centre for consumers to learn about electric cars, charging stations and the electricity that powers them, and to test drive cars from the leading EV manufacturers all in a no pressure no sales environment. The instant success of our EVDC, open since April, 2017, has attracted attention across Canada as well as abroad for its innovative model and its focus on education, not sales. We have daily success stories of consumers who visited the EVDC, became convinced of the benefits of driving electric and subsequently went to a dealership and purchased an EV.

As I am sure you know, transportation is the largest GHG-emitting sector in many provinces of Canada and is the second largest emitting source Canada-wide. If Canada is to achieve the ambitious climate goals it has committed to as part of the Paris Climate Agreement, it must tackle emissions from transportation. We are pleased to see that the Federal Government has recognized that EVs can play an important role in reducing emissions from transportation in announcing its plans to implement a Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy by 2018 and I am pleased to be working as a member of the advisory group of this important initiative.

Recognizing the critical role that electrification of transportation can play in achieving Canada's climate change goals, PND would like to put forward some key recommendations that would accelerate the transition to electric vehicles, reduce GHG emissions and contribute to Canada's growing clean economy, as follows:

- 1. Build on and expand EV public education and awareness programs** to help more drivers make the switch, including establishing an Electric Vehicle Discovery Centre (EVDC) in all major Canadian Cities, building on our successful model in the GTHA;
- 2. Expand public charging infrastructure**, especially Level 3 "Quick Charge" stations on the high traffic routes such as the 400 series highways (to allow for inter-city travel) as well as a focus on Level 2 workplace charging;



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3. Consider both supply and demand side policies, including both financial and non-financial incentives, to encourage automakers to make more EVs available and also to encourage consumers to choose them (and to charge them at off peak times); and
4. Incent the electrification of transit. Buses (including school buses) and rail are large emitters and electrification can present significant emission reduction opportunities. These vehicles are commercially available at a higher up front cost with savings over time. Creative financing or up-front incentives can go a long way to encouraging transit organizations to consider electric alternatives for ultimate cost and environmental benefits.

We applaud the Federal Government for its recent investments in EV infrastructure. These investments are important to help consumers consider electric vehicles and to reduce range anxiety and we agree that more is needed. **However, despite the importance of EV infrastructure, it is not the entire solution. Without new electric vehicle buyers, this investment will not deliver on GHG reductions. Education will be critical in helping drivers make the switch.**

Significant EV education is required to help consumers get over their concerns about a new technology that they are mostly unfamiliar with but can meet the needs of most Canadians. This approach is validated by *The Electric Vehicle Technology Road Map for Canada*, which identifies gaps in public education regarding EVs and calls for initiatives to address the problem. The report concludes that Canadians generally do not understand the long-term benefits and cannot rely on vehicle sales personnel to provide a balanced view. Further, our May 2017 study in the GTHA, "[Driving EV Uptake in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area](#)" confirms that consumers have many misconceptions about EVs that remain barriers to adoption as well as a secret shopper study that confirms that dealerships are not, for the most part, well equipped to be successful at selling electric vehicles. In response, PND initiated a social marketing approach to engage the public, present the facts, and allow practical demonstration of an EV's capabilities through a combination of the EVDC and the EV Roadshow (where we take the EVs and chargers to the towns and cities across Ontario and beyond). Our data shows that these initiatives have contributed significantly to reducing barriers to EV adoption and we strongly encourage the Federal Government to invest in making these kinds of EV education programs available to as many Canadians as possible.

In summary, we recommend that the Federal budget include funding specifically allocated to electric vehicle public education, including Electric Vehicle Discovery Centres, as well as funds allocated to infrastructure and incentives. We are pleased to assist in any way we can to help the Federal government implement its ZEV strategy and ultimately achieve its climate change goals.

Sincerely,

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