



Washington 2023 End of Session Report

Executive Summary:

The 2023 Legislative Session began January 9 and concluded on-time on April 23, 2023. It was an action-packed session that saw the passage of several major policies as well as the passage of the state's biennial budgets: Operating, Capital and Transportation.

Democrats continued to control the agenda in Olympia with strong majorities in both the House (58-40) and Senate (29-20) as well as control of the executive branch. 2,302 bills were introduced over the course of the 105-day session. 494 bills passed the legislature and were signed by the Governor into law.

Forth's Legislative Priorities:

Forth is continuing to strengthen our advocacy and lobbying efforts in Washington, while also meeting regularly with the Department of Commerce to provide perspective and expertise on the various clean transportation budget allocations and initiatives.

Washington implemented the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) which caps and reduces greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from the largest emitting sources and industries. This program works by setting an emissions limit, or cap, and then lowering that cap over time to ensure Washington meets the GHG reduction commitments. Under the law, proceeds from the CCA allowance auctions must be invested in critical climate projects focused on improving clean transportation options — increasing climate resilience in ecosystems and communities — and addressing issues of environmental justice and health inequity in Washington. This leads to tremendous amounts of investment by Washington into clean transportation.

Highlights from the key budget initiatives and appropriations that Forth tracked are below.

As part of our work with the Department of Commerce, two Forth Staff representing Policy and Programs, were selected to take part in ongoing workgroups to help advise the Electric Vehicle Coordinating Council and consultants on issues related to implementing a statewide Transportation Electrification Strategy.

The Transportation Budget allocated \$968 million of Climate Commitment Act Funds to clean energy and decarbonization initiatives and programs, **including:**

1. **\$120 Million for Zero Emission Medium and Heavy-Duty Incentives**

\$120,000,000 of the carbon emissions reduction account—state appropriation is provided solely for implementation of zero-emission commercial vehicle infrastructure and incentive programs and for the replacement of school buses powered by fossil fuels with zero-emission school buses, including the purchase and installation of zero-emission school bus refueling infrastructure.

(a) Of this amount, \$20,000,000 is for administering an early action grant program to provide expedited funding to zero-emission commercial vehicle infrastructure demonstration projects. The department must contract with a third-party administrator to implement the early action grant program.

(b) The Office of Financial Management shall place the remaining \$100,000,000 in unallotted status until the joint transportation committee completes the medium and heavy duty vehicle infrastructure and incentive strategy required under section 204 of this act. The director of the office of financial management or the director's designee shall consult with the chairs and ranking members of the transportation committees of the legislature prior to making a decision to allot these funds.

2. **\$64 Million for EV Infrastructure and Access**

\$25,200,000 allocation under Move Ahead Washington funding for the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure grant program.

\$3,746,000 of the electric vehicle account—state appropriation and \$30,000,000 of the carbon reduction emissions account—state appropriation are provided solely for the clean alternative fuel vehicle charging and refueling infrastructure program in chapter 287, Laws of 2019 (advancing green transportation adoption).

\$2,100,000 of the carbon emissions reduction account—state appropriation is provided solely to fund electric vehicle charging infrastructure for the electric charging megasite project at Mount Vernon library commons.

\$1,200,000 of the multimodal transportation account—state appropriation and \$2,000,000 of the carbon reduction emissions account—state appropriation are provided solely for the pilot program established under chapter 287, Laws of 2019 (advancing green transportation adoption) to provide clean alternative fuel vehicle use opportunities to underserved

communities and low to moderate income members of the workforce not readily served by transit or located in transportation corridors with emissions that exceed federal or state emissions standards.

3. \$7 Million for Electric Bike Incentives

\$5,000,000 of the carbon emissions reduction account—state appropriation is provided solely for the department to establish a program for providing rebates to qualifying persons who purchase e-bikes and qualifying equipment and services from a qualifying retailer. For persons who are at least 16 years of age and reside in households with incomes at or below 80 percent of the county area median income, the amount of the rebate is up to \$1,200 on the sale of an e-bike and any qualifying equipment and services. For all other persons who are at least 16 years of age, the amount of the rebate is up to \$300.

For fiscal year 2025, \$2,000,000 of the carbon emissions reduction account—state appropriation is provided solely for the department to establish an e-bike lending library and ownership grant program.

The Operating Budget allocated \$444 million of Climate Commitment Act Funds and over \$200 million in general funds to clean energy and decarbonization initiatives and programs, **including:**

1. \$138 Million for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

\$69,000,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$69,000,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the development of community electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

2. \$50 Million for ZEV Purchase Incentives for Low-Income

\$50,000,000 of the electric vehicle incentive account—state appropriation is provided solely for the department to implement programs and incentives that promote the purchase of or conversion to alternative fuel vehicles, prioritizing programs that will serve individuals living in an overburdened community, individuals who are in greatest need of this assistance in order to reduce the carbon emissions and other environmental impacts of their current mode of transportation, and low-income communities.