

My name is Daniel Gatti, and I am a Senior Transportation Analyst with the Union of Concerned Scientists.

I want to thank Governor Cuomo for his commitment to 100 percent clean electricity for New York by 2040. I'm here to ask the Cuomo administration to be just as bold and just as ambitious when it comes to addressing pollution from transportation.

We are already making a lot of progress reducing emissions from electricity. Total emissions from electricity in New York State have dropped by 54% between 1990 and 2015, according to the most recent data available by NYSERDA.

We are not making overall progress in transportation. In transportation, emissions in 2015 were 20% higher than 1990 levels. With more SUVs and ever greater congestion on our streets, it is likely that transportation emissions have continued to grow since 2015. Overall, transportation is responsible for over 40% of global warming emissions in New York, by far the largest emitting sector of our economy.

One reason why we have made so much progress reducing pollution from electricity is because under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, New York has established a limit on overall emissions from electricity. That limit is enforced by requiring big polluters to purchase allowances from a limited pool made available in regional auctions. Funds generated by the program are invested in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects that cut emissions and save money for consumers.

RGGI, together with other smart programs like the Renewable Energy Standard, as well as the switch from coal to gas, has helped put the Northeast region on track to reduce emissions by 65% by 2030.

The RGGI program exists because of the leadership of the state of New York. It was New York Governor George Pataki in 2004 who, faced with a federal government indifferent to climate science, reached out to Governors in both parties to do something about climate change. Today, RGGI is a program that has demonstrated that we can reduce emissions while growing the economy and cutting costs.

The biggest limitation to RGGI is that it only applies to electricity. But officials have been meeting for years through the Georgetown Transportation and Climate Initiative to discuss how the region can address transportation pollution. This December, nine states in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Region, along with the District of Columbia, agreed to design and create a program modelled after RGGI covering transportation emissions.

The states committing to create this program included states that are still in the process of joining RGGI, like Virginia and New Jersey. They include Pennsylvania, a state that has never joined RGGI but is looking for solutions for clean transportation. They include Republican administrations in three states: Massachusetts, Maryland and Vermont, showing that climate policy in the Northeast continues to command bipartisan support.

New York is not one of the nine states that agreed to create this program. Why not?

New York needs this initiative to be successful. If done right, this program could create an enforceable limit our largest source of global warming emissions. But not only that – this program could be a funding source for a wide variety of investments in technology and infrastructure that need to be a critical component of a Green New Deal.

We need to build a clean, modern transportation system works for everyone. And we need to do it at a time when climate change is going to impose increasing threats to our transportation infrastructure.

We need to figure out how to make electric vehicles affordable and convenient for all consumers. We need to expand, improve and electrify our public transportation services, particularly in communities that suffer from high rates of asthma from diesel emissions. We need to protect our transportation infrastructure from the impact of a changing climate. And we need to provide more affordable housing near transit, so that people can afford to live close in communities with good transportation choices.

UCS has found that if New York adopted a cap and invest program covering transportation fuels similar to the program currently in place in California and Quebec, it could raise over \$1 billion per year for investment in clean transportation projects.

In addition, we've found that investments in clean transportation can achieve significant savings for consumers. Our analysis shows that clean vehicles and fuels technologies can help drivers in New York save over \$30 billion in net financial savings by 2050, in addition to nearly \$50 billion in environmental and public health benefits.

The Transportation and Climate Initiative is an important regional effort that could play a key role in helping New York cut emissions from this challenging sector and create a better transportation system for everybody. It's not enough for New York state officials to participate in conversations behind the scenes. The other states in the region need to see that New York is with them on this. To make this program happen, New York needs to lead.