

February 2021

## Include Propane Gas in the Clean Corridors Program

**The Issue:** NPGA urges Congress to make propane gas eligible for grant funding opportunities for the installation of fueling infrastructure along designated corridors across the National Highway System.

**Background:** Congress created the National Alternative Fuel Corridors Program through the *FAST Act*, which the President signed into law in December 2015. Under the *FAST Act*, Congress ordered the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to create highway corridors with appropriate signage for alternative fueling stations. Under Section 1413 of the *FAST Act*, the fueling corridors included four alternative fuels: electricity (battery electric vehicles), hydrogen, propane gas, and natural gas. The *FAST Act* did not provide dedicated funding for the creation of Alternative Fuel Corridors.

The FHWA believes the designation of these corridors should assist in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through the increased use of alternative-fueled vehicles by establishing strategic deployment of fueling infrastructure in designated highway corridors.

Propane gas is a viable alternative fuel that should play a central role in the future of the Alternative Fuel Corridors program. Domestic propane bolsters our economy and helps alleviate environmental and health concerns when compared to conventional fuels. For example, propane engines produce 12% fewer CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and 60% fewer CO emissions than gasoline engines.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, a study by West Virginia University found propane engines produce 90% fewer NO<sub>x</sub> emissions and 80% less smog-producing hydrocarbon emissions than diesel engines.<sup>2</sup>

During the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, Senator Tom Carper (D-DE), the lead Democrat on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, introduced S. 674, the *Clean Corridors Act of 2019*. Shortly after, Rep. Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA) introduced a House companion, H.R. 2616. Among other things, both bills would create grant funding opportunities for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations and hydrogen fueling infrastructure along the designated Alternative Fuel Corridors. During the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee mark-up of the House surface transportation reauthorization bill (H.R. 2, the INVEST in America Act) last year, the Committee added propane gas and natural gas back to the program through a bipartisan amendment. The House passed H.R. 2 with the amended provision on July 1, 2020.

Political experts expect that Congress will introduce an infrastructure bill as early as spring 2021, potentially serving as a legislative vehicle for the proposed Clean Corridors Program.

NPGA strongly urges the Congress to make all fuels designated under Section 1413 of the *FAST Act* eligible for grant funding opportunities for the installation refueling infrastructure.

**The Ask:** Ensure propane gas is eligible for grant funding opportunities for the installation of alternative fueling infrastructure under any surface transportation or infrastructure bill.

<sup>1</sup> ROUSH CLEANTECH: PROPANE VISION, <https://www.roushcleantech.com/blue-bird-vision-propane/#benefit-down> (last visited March 8, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> In-Use Emissions and Performance Testing of Propane-Fueled Engines (PERC Docket 20893). (2019, July). Center for Alternative Fuels, Engines, and Emissions - West Virginia University.