

DOCKETED

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Initial Review Comments: Staff Draft Report: 2026-2027 Investment Plan Update for the Clean Transportation Program

Please see memorandum below.

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



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Memorandum

To: California Energy Commission

From: Board of Directors
California Hydrogen Car Owners Association (CHCOA)
Gregory Cane, President *Gregory R. Cane*

Date: May 10, 2026

Subject: Initial Review Comments:
Staff Draft Report: 2026-2027 Investment Plan Update for the Clean
Transportation Program

The California Hydrogen Car Owners Association has 224 active members, and we believe that we represent the interests of the 14,000 drivers of light-duty hydrogen vehicles in the State.

There is a symbiotic relationship between light-, medium-, heavy-duty and transit hydrogen vehicles. In a future successful market, all of these will grow together. Our Association strongly encourages supportive funding for hydrogen refueling stations to serve transit and heavy-duty hydrogen vehicles. Having said that, funding bonuses should be put in place to provide fueling dispensers for light-duty and medium-duty fuel cell electric vehicles at these stations. The cost to add these fueling positions at a new heavy-duty station is only on the order of 10%.

We need to remember, however, that heavy-duty hydrogen stations will not just materialize when these trucks appear on the road. There needs to be a robust light-duty market before manufacturers will decide to commercialize very expensive fuel cell trucks. Fuel suppliers will need to continue to build upon their current experience with light-duty stations in order to develop a retail-ready heavy-duty station solution.

According to the draft Investment Plan, California has spent approximately \$2.7 billion on ZEVs through the Clean Transportation Program, with less than 10% going to hydrogen. While this has the practical impact of underfunding hydrogen infrastructure, perhaps just as importantly, this historical underfunding message has had a chilling effect on the industry response to investment in transportation-hydrogen.

For the future of ZEVs, one of the greatest benefits of a robust transportation-hydrogen infrastructure is that it is nearly synonymous with the way we currently fuel our gasoline and diesel vehicles. Hydrogen cars can refuel in 5 minutes at a nearby “gas station”, the same as for most family cars of today. There will be no need for a massive web of individual chargers, one for every battery electric vehicle on the road.

With ARCHES funding frozen by the federal government, this is the time for the CEC to show their sincerity and interest in hydrogen, when the market needs it most. The CTP provides

virtually the only California funding directed to the most critical need for the hydrogen mobility market, that is, infrastructure.

**No matter what his, or her, potential, an underfed child cannot thrive.
Neither can the emerging transportation-hydrogen industry.**

Having said all this, I would be more than remiss if I did not acknowledge our gratitude to the CEC for the recent \$45 million reallocation of previously undersubscribed hydrogen funds.
Thank you.

Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles are a proven technology for zero emission transportation and continue to be supported by multiple manufacturers. We ask that the CEC acknowledge this great potential as a part of California's green energy future.