



TOPICS IN THE NEWS:

Electric Vehicles (May 2021)

INTRODUCTION

It's hard to believe someone could be driving a Prius that's 20 years old, but it was back in 2001 when Toyota made its worldwide release of the [first mass-produced hybrid vehicle](#). As we settle into 2021, it is the fully electric vehicle (EV) that is making tracks, and it is a Michigan-made vehicle that is central to the charge. Ford Motor Company is taking a bold step in the EV direction, introducing an electric version of its widely popular F-150 pick-up truck, anticipated to be in showrooms in Spring 2022. Dubbed the F-150 Lightning, the EV truck lives up to its name; in his recent visit to the Rouge Electric Vehicle Center in Dearborn, President Joseph Biden [marveled at its zip](#), capable of accelerating from 0 – 60 mph in under 5 seconds. But it is not just its pep, nor its ability to hold a charge for up to 300 miles and to tow up to 10,000 pounds [that Ford anticipates will tip the industry](#). Unlike Tesla and other high-priced EVs, the Lightning will list at a base price of ~\$40,000.00. With federal tax credits, the price would rival that of a gas-fueled F-150, making it accessible to a much larger market.

Why the push to electric vehicles? According to U.S. Energy Information Agency data, petroleum accounts for [91% of the transportation energy consumed in the U.S.](#) Transportation also accounts for [28% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions](#). Across the nation, states are looking to lessen reliance on petroleum and to expand use of alternative energy sources, such as biofuels, natural gas, hydrogen, and electricity. Towards this end, [at least 45 states have implemented legislative and industry-driven incentives](#) to encourage the adoption of EVs. Federal and state incentives include tax breaks and rebates on purchases of EVs, fee exemptions, use of high-occupancy vehicle lanes, and parking perks. The utilities industry also offers rebates and reduced rates for charging EVs during off-peak hours. Incentives are not just directed at consumers. For example, because central to the expansion of the use of EVs is a coincident expansion of EV infrastructure, localities are being offered grants to increase the number of public charging stations. In Michigan, a Department of Environment, [Great Lakes and Energy program recently distributed \\$1.87 million in grants](#) which will result in 88 new charging outlets across the state.

Not all are convinced the EV push is wise or well-timed, however, questioning everything from the capacity and cost of the [infrastructure](#), the economic effect on the [manufacturing industry and associated jobs](#), the realities of the [demand](#) for electric vehicles, and the [environmental trade-offs](#).

Tax breaks, rebates, and premier parking may all be powerful enticements, but perhaps what it will really take to push the transformation is a little Divine Inspiration: [Pope Francis to get all-electric popemobile from EV startup Fisker](#). Follow the many tangents in the development of the EV industry with the resources listed below. **If you need assistance accessing any of these items or need more information, please contact us at librarian@michigan.gov or by phone at 517-335-1477.**

LEGISLATIVE TRENDS

State legislatures have been busy [guiding policy at all levels of EV implementation](#), from incentivizing car purchases to expanding the required infrastructure, as well as fee strategies to offset potential lost gas tax revenues.

- **Michigan** [HB4801-4807](#) (pending) addressing construction of electric vehicle charging stations.
- **Hawaii** [HB 1142](#) (pending) would impose a fee on gasoline-powered vehicles with a retail price of \$60,000 or more to fund the installation of EV charging infrastructure.
- **Massachusetts** enacted a transportation funding bill ([HB 5248](#)) that includes funding for grants to localities and regional transit authorities for installing EV infrastructure and purchasing light-, medium- and heavy-duty EVs and zero-emission vehicles.
- **Virginia's** [HB 2118](#) (awaiting governor's signature), in addition to providing grants for EV charging, establishes grants to help public schools replace diesel buses with their electric counterparts.
- **Montana** [HB 188](#) (pending) would establish an additional fee of \$150 and \$250 for light- and heavy-duty EVs respectively.
- **Arizona** [SB 1108](#) (pending) would impose a tax on alternative-fuel vehicles, including those powered by electricity, natural gas, and propane.

RESOURCES TO READ

["Biden makes electric pitch at Ford plant: 'There's no turning back'"](#), (*Detroit News*, 5/19/2021)

["China is leading' electric vehicle race, but America will win, Biden says in Michigan"](#), (*MLive*, 5/19/2021)

["Ford CEO Jim Farley: Electric vehicle demand will transform auto industry"](#), (*ClickOn Detroit*, 5/21/21)

["Ford, SK Innovation to Form BlueOvalSK to Scale EV Battery Manufacturing"](#), (*dbusiness*, 5/21/21)

["Flint close to firing up new EV chargers in heart of downtown"](#), (*NBC25News*, May 26, 2021)

["Three steps Michigan can take to prepare for the EV revolution"](#), (*Lansing State Journal*, 5/9/2021)

["Buying an Electric Vehicle? Here Is Some Advice."](#), (*New York Times*, 5/4/2021)

["State Lawmakers Driving EV Policies in 2021"](#), (*State Legislatures News*, 3/26/2021)

["Electric Cars Are Coming. How Long Until They Rule the Road?"](#), (*New York Times*, 3/10/2021)

[Council on Future Mobility & Electrification - Annual Report](#) (Michigan Dept. of Labor & Economic Opportunity, 2020)

[History of the Electric Car](#) (U.S. Department of Energy, 09/2014)

RESOURCES TO WATCH AND LISTEN

[We Ride in the Ford F-150 Lightning All-Electric Pickup Truck. FIRST IMPRESSIONS](#) (Roadshow, 5/20/21)

[INSIDEEVs EV History Podcasts](#)

[Energy 101: Electric Vehicles](#) (U.S. Department of Energy)