

"May sustainable transport systems be at the heart of Adelaide's success as a people-friendly and environmentally responsible city."

Hon Chris Bowen MP
Minister for Climate Change and Energy

20 November 2023

By email: Chris.Bowen.MP@aph.gov.au

E-bike subsidies

Dear Minister Bowen,

South Australia has among Australia's lowest rates of cycling and public transport use, lowest per capita investment in public transport services and infrastructure, and some of the highest rates of car use and ownership and per capita carbon emissions. It is of ongoing concern that 29% of Australia's carbon emissions is from the transport sector. In South Australia, more than 80% of those emissions are from private cars. And the emissions are increasing.

This is despite State Government trials of hydrogen-powered public buses and trains, and the electrification of the Gawler Railway Line in 2022. But public transport makes up less than 10% of SA's transport emissions. Electric cars are still cars and will do nothing to address congestion, road maintenance liabilities, and induced demand for more and bigger roads. We will only replicate current problems if we do not consider real action to promote active transport.

Earlier in 2023, the Albanese Labor Government introduced the National Electric Vehicle Strategy. Unfortunately it does not recognise e-bikes as electric vehicles. It also did not address the capacity for e-bikes to replace millions of kilometres of car journeys per year, and their proven ability to encourage reduced car dependency.

While e-bikes aren't the solution to everyone's travel needs, cycling is a far more viable and accessible option to more people than driving. It requires no license, it is low maintenance, it is social, and is open to all ages; unlike driving. Importantly it allows parents to carry their children to school without a car, and allows older people independent transport with a modest power boost. E-bikes are the perfect electric vehicle to replace a huge amount of car journeys that are only a few kilometres long.

We ask that you commit to considering an e-bike strategy to directly address Australia's problems with transport emissions, congestion, car dependency and car-first urban planning. We ask that this strategy include possibilities for private e-bike subsidies, e-cargo bike and small electric commercial delivery vehicles subsidies to address the growing number of large delivery trucks on our streets with the rise of online shopping and home delivery services. And finally to investigate the development and nurturing of domestic e-bike and light electric commercial vehicles manufacturing to support the growing demand and need for sustainable transport options.

Regards,



David Elliott, Chair
