

U.S. and China embark on a R2ZE

June 3, 2016

U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and China's Minister of Transport Yang Chuantang announced new efforts to reduce emissions from city bus fleets.

Referred to as a "Race to Zero Emissions" (R2ZE), this effort allows participating cities to compete against each other to achieve the highest percentage of zero-emission buses by 2025. A zero-emission bus runs on either electricity or hydrogen and has no tailpipe emissions. Cities in either country are eligible to compete if their fleet size is at least 200 buses. The announcement also included the goal of achieving 35 percent emission-free buses by the end of the competition period.

Though electric buses are expensive, often double the cost of traditional diesel buses, the market for emissions-free buses has grown in the U.S. with recent federal funding. The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, a 5-year transportation bill approved by Congress in 2015, doubled funding for low- and no-emissions buses to \$55 million each year. While the leading electric bus maker is a Chinese company known as BYD Co. Ltd., American manufacturer Proterra Inc. will soon open new plants in California to support greater demand.

While there is no explicit prize for winning, this effort aims to hasten the development of new technologies, generate economic growth, improve air quality in urban areas, and mitigate climate change.

Sources: ClimateWire, Proterra.com, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, United States Department of Transportation

Updated 7/11/2016
