WASHINGTON (November 15, 2018) – Leading environmental, scientific and business organizations working to advance modern, clean and low-carbon transportation applauded a new report issued today by the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI) summarizing the results of six regional listening sessions on transportation modernization, which took place between March and August 2018. Groups advocating for a regional plan to modernize transportation and cut air pollution from vehicle emissions hold up as an example successful state efforts reducing power plant emissions over the last decade.

The TCI Summary Report shows that the listening sessions for clean transportation attracted a combined 500 participants, including more than 100 state agency officials, representing 12 of the 13 TCI jurisdictions.

Across all of the TCI listening sessions, the most frequently offered suggestion was the idea of pricing carbon and using the proceeds to invest in clean transportation options and modernizing our transportation infrastructure and transit systems, which would improve livability and mobility for millions of people in urban, suburban and rural communities.

The full Listening Sessions Summary Report by the Transportation and Climate Initiative is now available for download at: [https://www.georgetownclimate.org/articles/tci-listening-session-summary-report.html](https://www.georgetownclimate.org/articles/tci-listening-session-summary-report.html).

The regional meetings were broken into three discussion areas for participants: needs for a low-carbon future; defining goals; and policies and actions for states to explore. Goals for modernizing transportation include: building new infrastructure for electric vehicles; light rail service; improving public transportation, including zero-emission bus service; and new programs to ensure low-income and marginalized communities have access to transportation options that are affordable, convenient, and non-polluting.

Seven states and Washington, D.C. have already pledged to development a regional policy to reduce carbon pollution from the transportation sector. The announcement by Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont was made during the Bonn Climate Change Summit in November 2017. Other TCI states, including New Jersey and Virginia, are also participating in these discussions.

Transportation experts and leaders from the broad array of groups supporting TCI and applauding today's report commented on the findings, as well as their personal experiences attending and participating in the Listening Sessions.

"Bold and rapid action is needed to slash the ever-growing emissions from the transportation sector," said Sierra Club Regional Deputy Director Mark Kresowik. "The listening sessions were an important step to address transportation issues, and now it's time for states to take the next step and propose meaningful region-wide action -- ideally through a cap and invest program -- that will increase electric vehicle usage, expand public transit, and ensure walkable and bikable communities to protect our clean air and region."

Jordan Stutt, director of carbon programs, Acadia Center said: "The region’s residents and businesses have made it clear that they want better transportation options and cleaner air. Participants at the TCI listening sessions offered overwhelming support for regional cap-and-invest policy, for measures to benefit communities that have been underserved and overburdened by our transportation system, and for investments to advance low-carbon transportation. This report is a
stakeholder-driven blueprint for action. It’s time for the TCI states to use that blueprint to build a better transportation future."

Bruce Ho, senior advocate, Climate & Clean Energy Program, Natural Resources Defense Council said: "These listening sessions have shown that businesses and residents overwhelmingly support efforts to clean up and modernize the way we move in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. By investing in clean transportation, state leaders can make our streets safer, our air healthier to breathe, and our public transit systems more comprehensive and efficient. Now is the time to invest in the future.

Union of Concerned Scientists President Ken Kimmell said: “We have a real opportunity in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to build a clean, modern transportation system. Whether it’s cleaner vehicles and fuels or buses and trains, transportation needs to work for everyone—and many people in our region are left out by a system that’s old, outdated and inefficient. It’s encouraging to see state leaders kicking off this process in the right way by listening to the communities who will be most affected. We can build a future with less pollution, better access and a stronger economy, but it’s going to take careful attention to the needs of communities across the region."

"Many investors and companies recognize the need for a regional approach to modernize our transportation system," said Alli Gold Roberts, senior manager for state policy at Ceres. "More than 70 businesses, investors, and higher education institutions recently sent letters to Northeast and Mid-Atlantic governors calling for policies and investments to encourage emissions educations, electrification, public transit, and a more energy efficient transportation system. Reducing our reliance on imported oil will yield economic, public health, and quality of life benefits for all. Regional collaboration is key in developing efficient and cost effective solutions across state lines."

Chris Dempsey, director, Transportation for Massachusetts said: "Transportation for Massachusetts staff attended several of the listening sessions and we were impressed by the range of voices in the room. Business leaders, community groups, environmental advocates, and everyday transportation users all want a better and cleaner transportation system. We left these listening sessions optimistic that there is momentum building for solutions. We thank the participating states and the Georgetown Climate Center for spearheading this incredibly important conversation, and urge Massachusetts to be a leader."

Matt Casale, transportation campaign director at U.S. PIRG said: "When it comes to transportation, business as usual is no longer an option. The Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions are plagued by congestion, pollution, and out-dated transportation infrastructure. To protect our health and the environment, we need to fundamentally change our transportation system, and the listening sessions showed that the public is ready for that change. The Transportation and Climate Initiative can be the driving force that gets us on the track to cleaner air and healthier neighborhoods."

Nick Sifuentes, executive director of Tri-State Transportation Campaign said: "Transportation is now the sector contributing the most to climate change, and our region's cars and trucks have long been sources of pollution that cause asthma, heart disease, and cancer. We've been successful in the Northeast at limiting pollution from power plants. Now we must do the same for transportation, and the best way to do that is through the Transportation and Climate Initiative. It's long past time to transition to electric cars, buses, and trucks. New technologies and infrastructure have made it achievable. TCI should be the way we do it."

Omer W. Khwaja, Esq., New York campaign director, Jobs to Move America said: "Significant benefits to working people will flow from investing in a measured transition to a clean transportation
system in the Northeast region: job-pipelines for disadvantaged workers, improved access to clean air and public transportation for working communities, and job retraining opportunities for those currently working in industries dependent on fossil fuel. Jobs to Move America is confident that lifting workers' concerns at these listening sessions will help accelerate this transition."

“A regional solution to our transportation challenges is necessary, but we must be sure everyone has a seat at the table,” said Amy Laura Cahn, senior attorney and interim director of the Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice program at Conservation Law Foundation. “Transportation is the largest source of carbon pollution in New England and our most vulnerable communities feel the brunt of it. Now that the regional listening sessions are complete, state policymakers need to engage directly and work with people who are most affected by transportation inequity, pollution, and impacts of climate change in order to create sound policy.”

Andrea McGimsey, senior director of global warming solutions, Environment America said: "The message in IPCC’s recent report couldn’t have been clearer: We only have 12 years to get our act together and avoid the worst impacts of global warming. That means we need to electrify our transportation system, which is now the number one source of global warming pollution emissions in the region. As the listening sessions showed us, the public understands this and is firmly behind those efforts. While the Trump administration is heading the wrong way on clean transportation and working to dismantle the federal Clean Car Standards, the Transportation and Climate Initiative has the potential to pave the way for a transportation system that creates a safe climate and clean air for all."

As part of the TCI Listening Sessions agenda, participants helped to define key goals of regional transportation policies. The TCI Summary Report showed two themes in particular came up most frequently during discussions: 1) Be equitable and benefit disadvantaged communities – Policies should be equitable across demographic categories and not disproportionately impact low and moderate-income people or burden any one community. Those with fewer transportation options should have greater access to services; and 2) Ensure and expand mobility for all people – Benefits of transportation policies should improve mobility for everyone regardless of income. The unique needs of urban, suburban, and rural communities should be addressed, with low emission alternatives available to all users.

Regional Listening Sessions were held in: Albany, New York; Hartford, Connecticut; Wilmington, Delaware; New York City, with Rutgers University and the Regional Plan Association; and in Largo, Maryland with University of Maryland University College, convened in conjunction with the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. In 2018, Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island also hosted State Listening Sessions to gather input from their residents.

ABOUT THE GROUPS

The organizations quoted in this release are part of a broad coalition of groups advancing modern, efficient, and clean low-carbon transportation solutions in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. The groups are focused on improving our transportation system -- the ways we move people and goods in the region -- to spur economic growth, make us healthier and safer, clean up the environment, and improve our quality of life. An improved transportation system means more clean cars and trucks, more reliable mass transit, more walkable and bikeable communities, and investments that connect everyone, including those in underserved and rural areas.

MEDIA CONTACT: Patrick Mitchell, (703) 276-3266 or pmitchell@hastingsgroup.com.