



Open letter

By Marc Bédard, CEO – Founder of Lion Electric

Promoting the electrification of transportation, here at home and now more than ever

What better time than an election campaign to survey our political parties on their vision of electrified transportation? It is an opportunity for the public to understand their vision to grow the green economy and make a real impact on our environmental footprint. In our opinion, at Lion, it mostly centers around a specific point: manufacturing in Canada.

Of course, financial incentives and strong policies are essential in order to develop a new sector such as that of electric transportation, just as it is necessary to be ambitious in order to achieve our objectives. But the economic or social impacts of this change will be minimal if our local businesses are at a disadvantage compared to our American, Asian and European counterparts. And, competition is fierce for Canada's flagship companies.

We believe it is essential to advocate for the creation of a strong Canadian transportation electrification ecosystem, including full integration of the natural resource supply chain, local purchasing, the production of the finished product, the development of cutting-edge expertise that will serve generations to come, and the creation of well-paying jobs. We call on the next government to develop regulations around procurement and financial assistance programs that require assembly in Canada and a significant percentage Canadian components. This is what almost every leading country in the world is doing by developing policies to encourage the local economy. It is quite normal for governments to encourage domestic businesses and the creation of jobs within their borders. This is especially true when it comes to the development of a whole new segment in the economy. Without a strong signal from the Government of Canada regarding manufacture and assembly in Canada, local companies will find themselves at a disadvantage in comparison to their foreign competitors. In fact, this is already affecting Canadian companies abroad who must establish production in the countries where they operate, while foreign companies that want to do business in Canada have free rein.

It should be remembered that electrification has a major effect on our economic growth and the creation of a green economy. And that's just the beginning. Through innovative public policies, Canada's zero-emission vehicle market could grow drastically – from \$1 billion in GDP and the creation of 10,000 jobs in 2015, to a value of more than \$15 billion in GDP and the creation of millions of jobs by 2040. These changes will improve our energy security and also have a positive business impact thanks to the return on investment that electric fleets will experience through lower maintenance costs, longer life cycles and lower operating costs.

Obviously, it is also a question of fighting climate change. Medium and heavy-duty vehicles account for nearly 40% of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the transportation sector. In fact, at the current rate, GHG emissions from the trucking sector are expected to exceed those from light-duty vehicles by 2030. The climate crisis does not give us the opportunity to wait.

So, let's put the odds in our favor and promote the Canadian transportation electrification ecosystem at home now, because we are already lagging behind.