



SamTrans Board of Directors
Meeting of September 3, 2025

Correspondence as of August 15, 2025

Subject

1. NYT: Clean Hydrogen Dreams Fading Again
2. SamTrans Comment - 977720
3. Transportation Tax
4. Transportation Tax
5. Letter from SamTrans General Manager/CEO April Chan to Senate Appropriations
Committee Chair Anna Caballero RE: AB 1250 (Papan) Paratransit Eligibility: Recertification
– Support (August 14, 2025)

From: [Adrian Brandt](#)
Subject: NYT: Clean Hydrogen Dreams Fading Again
Date: Monday, August 11, 2025 2:32:30 PM
Attachments: [IMG_0644.png](#)
[IMG_0642.png](#)
[IMG_0643.png](#)

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America's Clean Hydrogen Dreams Are Fading Again

The market for the clean-burning fuel remains nascent, costs are rising, and Congress just put a lucrative tax credit out of reach for many companies.

https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/11/business/energy-environment/hydrogen-clean-energy.html?unlocked_article_code=1.dU8._BJG.5Nx1leIAIP4K&smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare

The appeal is clear: Using hydrogen [produces water vapor](#) instead of greenhouse gases. But the fuel is expensive, is hard to store and transport, and is made using lots of energy.

“The rationale behind it was that green hydrogen was going to be abundant and cheap,” said Matthieu Giard, head of the Americas for Air Liquide, a French industrial gas company. “It’s not really what we see today.”

Today, hydrogen is produced mostly from natural gas in a process that emits carbon dioxide, the leading cause of climate change. It can be made using electricity to split water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen. But many projects that aimed to do that have been canceled or are on the chopping block.

Hydrogen’s problems are myriad. Electricity demand is rising rapidly in the United States, as are costs. People are using electricity to power everything from cars to heat pumps. And tech companies are using vast amounts of power to train and run artificial intelligence systems.

That all means more competition for the energy required to extract hydrogen from water. In addition, it is getting [harder and more expensive to install wind turbines and solar panels](#) in the United States, making fewer such hydrogen projects financially viable.

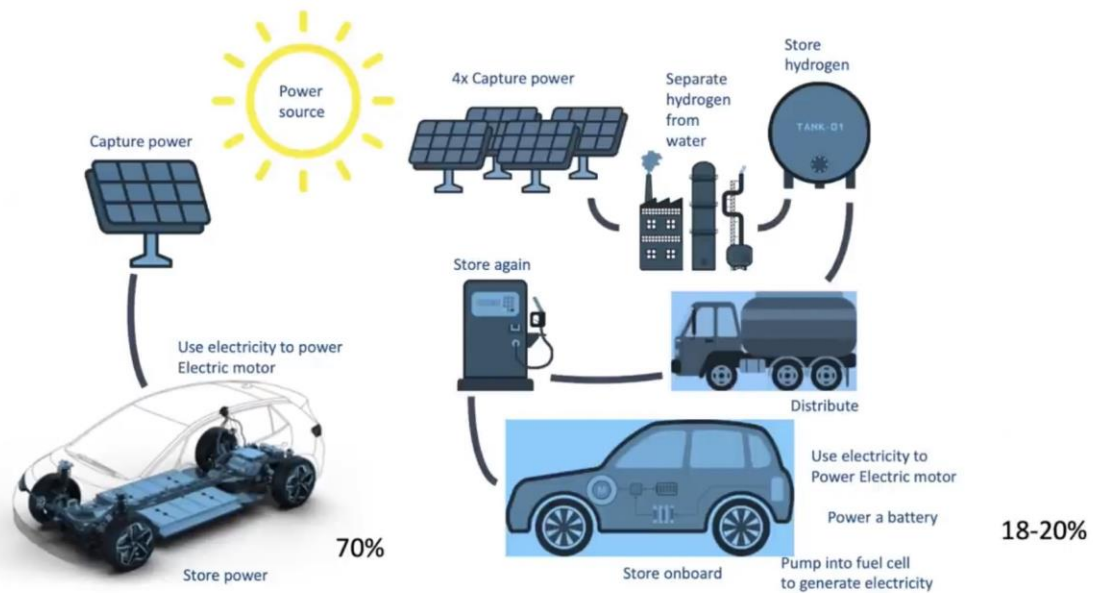
“It’s tough times,” said Bernd Heid, a senior partner at McKinsey & Co. who leads the consulting firm’s hydrogen work. “This market will be flattish in the U.S. for quite some time.”

Two Australian companies, Woodside Energy and Fortescue, are among those that recently canceled low-emission hydrogen projects in the United States. Woodside cited cost increases and lower-than-expected demand as reasons to scrap a project near Oklahoma City.

Fortescue, a mining giant that [bet big on hydrogen](#), pointed to changes in U.S.

energy policy. Its \$550 million project outside of Phoenix was supposed to open in 2026.






“The lack of certainty and a step back in green ambition has stopped the emerging green energy markets, making it hard for previously feasible projects to proceed,” Agustin Pichot, Fortescue’s chief executive of growth and energy, said on a July conference call with financial analysts.

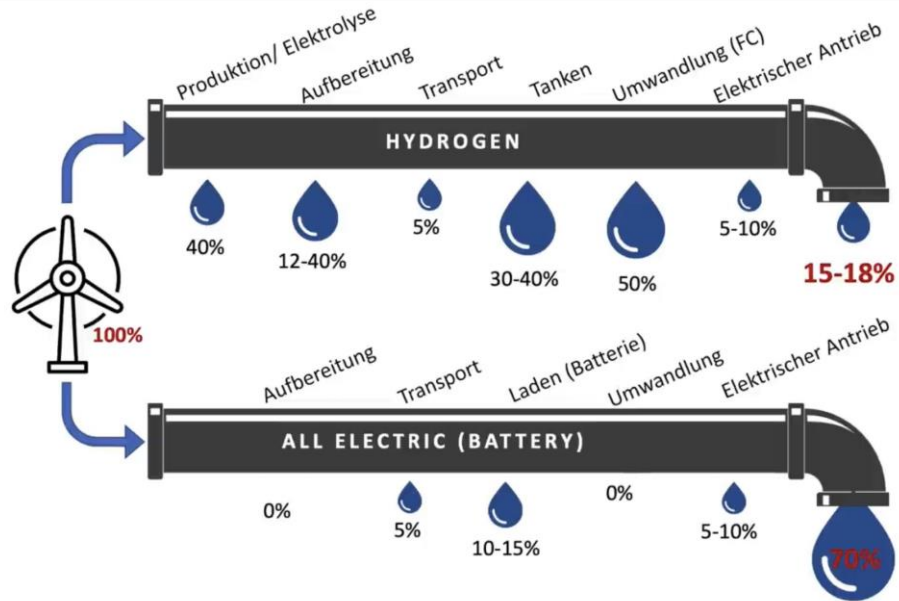


Batterieelektrischer Antrieb

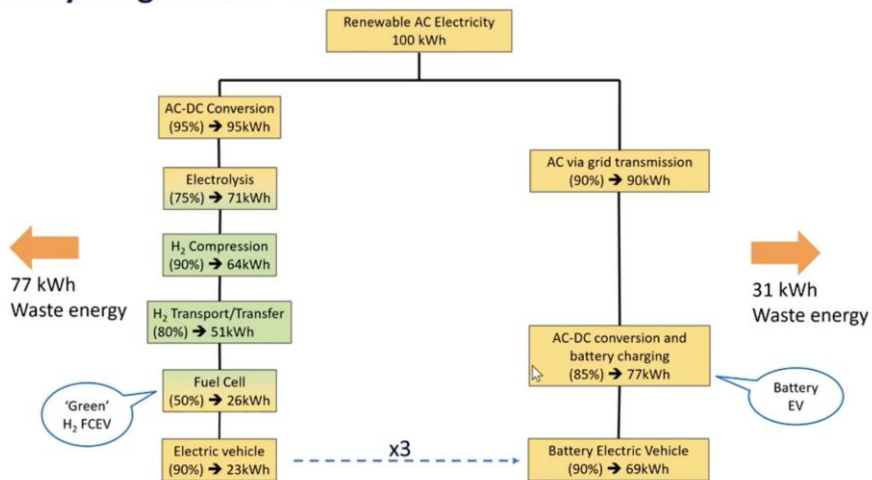
H₂ Antrieb mit Brennstoffzelle

Figure 1: "INPUT ENERGY" versus "ENERGY AT THE RAILS"

This is the electrical energy required as "input energy" ...	Multiplied by ... the various "energy-conversion efficiencies" delivering the "input energy" to the rails as traction work ... equals 10 MWh of usable energy ("capacity to do traction work") at the rails
25 MWh x	Grid energy into electrolysis to "make" H ₂ =76% x Compression or liquefaction, storage & handling=90% x Fuel Cell onboard the locomotive converting H ₂ energy into electricity=60% x Traction gears etc=95% = 39% efficiency	 10 MWh @ rails
13 MWh x	Grid energy into battery recharging system=90% x Battery charge & discharge efficiency=90% x Traction gears etc=95% = 77% efficiency	 10 MWh @ rails
11 MWh x	Grid energy into catenary distribution system along railway=95% x Traction gears etc=95% = 90% efficiency	 10 MWh @ rails
28 MWh (petroleum energy in tank) x	Diesel engine & alternator efficiency producing traction power=38% x Traction gears etc=95% [operating as diesel on petroleum fuel] = 36% efficiency	 10 MWh @ rails
12 MWh x	Grid energy into catenary distribution system along railway=95% x eTender power conversion efficiency=95% x Traction gears etc=95% [operating in dual-mode as an electric locomotive] = 86% efficiency	 10 MWh @ rails













Electrify everything we can: Vehicles...



- 3x more renewable electricity to power a hydrogen FCEV than a Battery EV: 3x cost!
- The killer is the conversion from heat to work in the fuel cell
- Electrify everything you can!

8h₂

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From: [SamTrans BOD Public Support](#)
To: emil.savin.lawrence@gmail.com
Cc: [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](#)
Subject: SamTrans Comment - 977720
Date: Wednesday, August 13, 2025 11:26:21 AM

To Emil Lawrence,

Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences with our service, though we are sorry to see it proved a poor experience for you. We apologize for the trouble you had with our ECR service back on 07/20, and we assure you that your comments on the matter were forwarded to our Bus Operations team for review. A copy of this correspondence will also be provided to our Board of Directors.

However, according to our service records, our northbound ECR scheduled to depart from El Camino Real & San Carlos Ave at 12:15 PM back on 7/20 departed that stop at 12:15:28 PM. Please keep in mind our operators are required to maintain the on-time performance of our posted timetables; they cannot wait for passengers who are not already at the stop. This is why we ask our riders to be at their chosen stop several minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive with their fare ready.

We understand this would have been challenging in your circumstances, as the transfer you were hoping to make that day was only possible due to an atypical alignment between the eastbound 260 and the northbound ECR, but it is nevertheless the standard by which SamTrans operates. If a SamTrans bus arrives at a bus stop and there are not passengers currently physically at the stop, the bus will continue on its route per its schedule. This is done to maintain our schedules, for our riders already onboard, and for our riders still waiting along our routes.

Of course, we recognize there is always room to improve, and we assure you that SamTrans is committed to providing our community with safe and reliable transit service. To that end, thank you again for sending us your feedback. And thank you for riding SamTrans.

Your SamTrans BOD Public Support Team

From: [Chris Conway](#)
To: [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](#); [Gee, Jeff \[jgee@redwoodcity.org\]](#)
Subject: Transportation Tax
Date: Thursday, August 14, 2025 7:40:30 AM

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I can not begin to describe my disappointment in April Chan and Jeff Gee for deciding on their own to tax the residents of San Mateo County for BART and SF Muni. This is the worst form of governance as it allows taxation without representation. I did not get to vote for April Chan or Jeff Gee or any member on the board and yet they are allowed to decide whether this bill goes on the ballot.

Lastly, you might want to change your own website where Mr. Gee states, ***“We’re facing a pivotal moment, and this measure gives county voters a chance to decide how we secure sustainable, long-term funding for public transportation.”*** Mr. Gee, you and I both know that is a lie. The people in the other counties can out-vote those in San Mateo County and the tax still passes. Stop gaslighting your customers and the voters of San Mateo County. I would like a response from Sam Trans on how they think approving this for the ballot is a good idea.
I didn't know about Mr. Gee and Ms. Chan until this vote. I know them now and will pursue this issue further. Trust me, bailing out BART and SF Muni is a bridge too far.

Christopher P. Conway
San Mateo, Ca.

From: [Chris Conway](#)
To: [Canepa, David \[dcanepa@smcgov.org\]](#); [Corzo, Noelia \[ncorzo@smcgov.org\]](#); [SMCSupSpeier@smcgov.org](#); [Ray Mueller; lgauthier@smcgov.org](#); [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](#)
Subject: Transportation Tax
Date: Thursday, August 14, 2025 8:18:43 AM

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May I just say how proud I am of Supervisor Speier for her courageous vote on the transportation bill and the letter she wrote in the Daily Post a couple days ago. Supervisor Speier is so right on in her points that it gave me hope that there is someone in Redwood City that gets it. Why in the world would we want to take on debt from SF Muni and BART? This is an absolute loser for the taxpayers of San Mateo County and I do not see how anyone could come to the conclusion that this is a good idea. Unless of course you are in on this dastardly scheme. Even if your voters overwhelmingly vote this down, it still might pass due to voters in other counties who are more than happy to take our money. SF Muni, are you serious? We laughed at SF Muni for decades on their mismanagement never realizing that at the end of the day the joke would be on us. Who in their right mind would make us contribute to SF Muni?

Not to mention the fact, in which the Supervisor rightly points out and I learned watching commercials on Saturday mornings as a youth watching cartoons— **No taxation without representation**. How does Mr. Gee and Ms. Chan get a vote on how and when to tax San Mateo County taxpayers. I do not remember being able to vote for anyone on the San Mateo SamTrans Board, do you? or anyone else on any regional board.

Those who voted for this money grab to bailout poorly run transit agencies - A regional tax? Really? I guess with the state of public run organizations like BART and SF Muni, you have no other choice than to shove this down our throats in order for them to survive.

A little history for you newcomers. The reason why BART does not come down to San Mateo and San Mateo County back in the day is it was rejected by large developers like **David Bohannon Sr.** and my grandfather's company of **Conway and Culligan**. Why? They didn't want the "riff-raff" and crime that would come with BART if it came to let us say the Hillsdale Mall. All you need to do is look at Millbrae today to see that they were completely right – Millbrae's crime rate and homelessness has gone up, no doubt about it.

As a third generation Peninsulan, going back to the building of Burlingame Village in 1940 to South San Francisco Village, San Mateo Village and Redwood City Village, and many more subdivisions in the county, my family has been a big part of the building of the county, I can't tell you how disgusted I am that you sold out your county residents for these poorly run transit agencies that do not benefit us in the slightest and are in jurisdictions that are outside our control.

Again, thank you Supervisor Speier for having the courage to stand up for us. It is noticed and appreciated

Christopher P. Conway

San Mateo, Ca

District 2



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APRIL CHAN
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

August 14, 2025

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1250 (Papan) Paratransit Eligibility: Recertification-Support

Dear Chair Caballero,

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans), I write in **SUPPORT** of **AB 1250 (Papan)**, to create a streamlined paratransit recertification process for Californians with permanent disabilities.

Paratransit service plays a vital role in our society and is an essential component of public transportation. As a transit agency, we are committed to ensuring our riders with disabilities can comfortably and safely use this service to access jobs, healthcare, and educational opportunities, among other things. SamTrans' paratransit services (Redi-Wheels and RediCoast) serve 5,375 eligible individuals throughout San Mateo County.

We understand that transit agencies' existing paratransit recertification processes may include requirements that are difficult for individuals to navigate, including in person interviews. By making it easier to recertify individuals whose disabilities are unlikely to change, the bill reduces hurdles for riders and improves efficiency for transit agencies.

For example, under AB 1250, the proposed recertification process for riders with permanent disabilities will use a mail-in form, online web form, or phone interview, completed once every five years. It would not require riders with permanent disabilities to come in person for recertification.

AB 1250 not only honors the dignity of Californians with disabilities but also enhances operational efficiency for transit agencies. For these reasons, we strongly support it. Please contact SamTrans' Government and Community Affairs Director, Jessica Epstein, at epsteinj@samtrans.com if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "April Chan", written over a circular blue ink stamp.

April Chan
General Manager/CEO

Cc: San Mateo County Transit District Board of Directors
San Mateo County Transit District State Legislative Delegation