



State of Connecticut  
SENATE

STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**SENATOR DAN DEBICELLA**  
DEPUTY MINORITY LEADER  
TWENTY-FIRST DISTRICT

1 LAZYBROOK ROAD  
SHELTON, CONNECTICUT 06484

HARTFORD: (860) 240-8800  
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-1421  
HOME: (203) 225-0558  
FAX: (860) 240-8306  
EMAIL: Dan.Debicella@cga.ct.gov

RANKING MEMBER  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
HIGHER EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT  
ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

MEMBER  
REGULATIONS REVIEW COMMITTEE

**Proposed Bill No. SB-558 –AAC The Use of HOV Lanes by Hybrid and Electric Cars**  
**Senator Dan Debicella Testimony**  
**March 6, 2009**

Good morning Chairmen DeFronzo and Guerrero, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner, and members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity today to testify in favor of Senate Bill #558.

My bill offers a simple and costless way to both benefit the environment and reduce traffic congestion by allowing all hybrid and electric cars to use the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on our highways.

**Environmental Benefits** - We are all familiar with the potential benefits of hybrid and electric cars. Hybrid cars are already gaining large popularity, and electric cars are an emerging technology that will grow in the upcoming decade. Both types of cars help the environment by using less gas and emitting less pollution. Connecticut has financial incentives such as sales tax exemptions in place for these vehicles.

At the same time, we have HOV lanes on our highways which are often underutilized. Allowing hybrids and electric cars to use HOV lanes would not cause traffic delays for those who already use them. Furthermore, allowing electric cars and hybrids to use HOV lanes makes sense as one purpose of these lanes is to reduce environmental harm from cars. Finally, allowing hybrids and electric cars to use HOV lanes would provide an additional incentive for people to purchase eco-friendly cars.

**Traffic Congestion Benefits** - Additionally, allowing hybrids and electric cars in HOV lanes will reduce traffic on the main highways. While this will not be a game-changer for traffic, every little bit helps when it comes to reducing traffic congestion.

**No Cost Proposal** - Best of all, this will cost the state nothing. In these tough economic times, it is rare we find an idea that helps the environment, reduces traffic congestion, and costs the state nothing. I urge the Transportation Committee to pass SB-558.