



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

60 State Street, Wethersfield, CT 06161

<http://ct.gov/dmv>



Testimony of Department of Motor Vehicles
Commissioner Melody A. Currey
Energy and Technology Committee
February 20, 2014

S.B. No. 108 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING REGISTRATION AND USE OF CERTAIN LOW-SPEED NEIGHBORHOOD VEHICLES.

Good morning Senator Duff, Representative Reed, Senator Chapin, Representative Hoydick and other members of the Energy and Technology Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 108, AN ACT CONCERNING REGISTRATION AND USE OF CERTAIN LOW-SPEED NEIGHBORHOOD VEHICLES. The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has several concerns regarding this legislation including safety issues for the motoring public as well as Departmental resource and funding issues.

First, the Department has safety concerns regarding allowing these vehicles to operate on the roadways of Connecticut. A "Neighborhood Electric Vehicle" (NEV) is defined in section § 22a-174-36 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as "a motor vehicle certified to zero emission vehicle standards and meets the definition of 'low speed vehicle' either in California Code of Regulations, Title 13, section 385.5 or in 49 CFR 571.500." Section 571.500 states the following for low speed vehicles: "(a) When tested in accordance with test conditions in S6 and test procedures in S7, the maximum speed attainable in 1.6 km (1 mile) by each low-speed vehicle shall not more than 40 kilometers per hour (25 miles per hour)."

Essentially, operating on a relatively flat surface (maximum 1% gradient) with a maximum loaded weight of 170 lbs., including instrumentation, the maximum speed of this category of vehicles is 25 miles per hour. This legislation would permit these vehicles to be operated on public roads with speed limits of 35 miles per hour or below. Unlike mopeds which are able to travel to the far right of the roadway, these vehicles will proceed in the travel lane of the roadway. On hills, it is likely these vehicles will be traveling significantly below 25 miles per hour, impeding traffic and posing a danger to their operators and other motorists. Unlike motor vehicles, low speed vehicles provide little protection to their operators or passengers in the event of a crash.

Low speed vehicles are well-suited to large private or gated communities. They are not well-suited to operation on the public roads.

In addition, this legislation would require DMV to register and title such low-speed neighborhood electric vehicles resulting in additional work currently not performed by DMV. To accommodate the titling and registration of this type of vehicle would require significant IT and programming changes and other DMV system design modifications that would negatively impact the Department's efforts underway to modernize its entire IT and computer systems.

Thank you again for allowing me to submit testimony raising concerns regarding SB 108.