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**Testimony to the Energy and Technology Committee**

**Proposed House Bill 6030 An Act Concerning Zero-Emission Vehicles**

**February 10, 2015**

Senator Doyle, Representative Reed, distinguished Vice Chairs and Ranking Members, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee, my name is James Albis, State Representative for the 99<sup>th</sup> district in East Haven. Thank you for the opportunity to offer my enthusiastic support for HB 6030, AN ACT CONCERNING ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLES.

This legislation would create incentives for consumers to purchase zero emission vehicles or ZEVs. In 2013, Governor Malloy signed on to a Multi-State ZEV Action Plan with seven other states to put 3.3 million zero emission vehicles on the road by 2025. As of today we are far from reaching our goals. HB 6030 will be a major step to ensure that Connecticut not only takes the lead in reducing the effects of carbon emissions, but makes clean energy production a priority for new jobs in the high tech economy that our state has helped grow over the last four years.

Connecticut has aggressively tackled carbon emissions in the public sector and the electric power sector, but we have failed to take on the biggest contributor to poor air quality and climate change: our personal and family cars. Nearly 40% of emissions come from transportation, and while we work to convince neighboring states to reduce emissions, Connecticut should not wait for other states to take actions we can do ourselves.

By design, zero emission vehicles have competitive monthly payments when compared to conventional vehicles, enjoy more affordable fuel costs and up to 35 percent lower maintenance costs, and tend to have greater appeal as their numbers increase among friends, family, and neighbors—all speaking to a shared quality of life.

As a partner in putting ZEVs on the road, our state has many options available to increase consumer interest. A sales tax credit or rebate of \$2,500 to \$5,000 would make ZEVs cost competitive with their conventional rivals in our state. Currently, the Federal Government offers a \$7,500 rebate for purchasing a Zero Emission Vehicle that is matched in other states including California, Georgia, Colorado, Maryland, and Massachusetts. For example, Colorado residents can receive a \$6,000 tax rebate, one of the largest in the country. California offers a \$2,500 tax rebate and has two of the largest markets for zero emission vehicles in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In Georgia, residents can receive a 10% tax rebate, plus an additional 20% income tax credit.

I want to make clear these tax and financing incentives bolster the existing Federal credit. A sales tax credit or rebate of \$2,500 to \$5,000 would make ZEVs cost competitive with their conventional rivals in our state.

Non-financial incentives are also an option also available to us right now. Municipalities looking for cost saving incentives can set aside preferred parking spaces, or reduce parking fees near government offices or in downtown commercial districts. Allowing ZEVs to access our state's High Occupancy Vehicle or HOV lanes on I-84 and I-91 can provide the benefits of relieved traffic congestion to ZEV consumers.

Of course, the more infrastructure we build to support fuel and maintenance, the more market demand will grow. Connecticut is also in the unique position of having in-state businesses that develop the advanced technology used in ZEVs. As consumer demand for ZEVs grows, we have the potential to increase jobs in the electric vehicle and hydrogen fuel cell industries.

These incentives are not the only ideas that can be brought to the table. As this process moves forward, bringing in municipalities, businesses – including dealerships – and residents as stakeholders offers more opportunities for both to make this a self-perpetuating process.

Acting now to create incentives for this technology is a smart, common sense investment for consumers and citizens, and moves us toward a healthier, more sustainable Connecticut. I thank the Committee for your time and consideration of this important matter, and look forward to your questions about the bill. Thank you.

Spiegel, Jan Ellen. "Connecticut's Summer Air Some of the Worst on East Coast." *CT Mirror*. January 29, 2015. <http://ctmirror.org/2015/01/29/connecticuts-air-quality-among-worst-on-east-coast/>

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. January 2014 *Draft Plan, Connecticut Path to Clean Fuel and Clean Vehicles*.  
[http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/air/electric\\_vehicle/clean\\_fuels\\_and\\_clean\\_vehicles\\_draft\\_action\\_plan.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/air/electric_vehicle/clean_fuels_and_clean_vehicles_draft_action_plan.pdf)