

American Lung Association
of the Northeast

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Energy & Technology Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3900
Hartford, CT 06106

Testimony of the American Lung Association in Connecticut in favor of
House Bills 6030 and 6031

Ruth Canovi, Manager of Public Policy

**Distinguished Chairpersons and Members of the Energy &
Technology Committee:**

My name is Ruth Canovi. I am the Manager of Public Policy for the American Lung Association (ALA) in CT. While unable to deliver this testimony in person, I wanted to be sure to present our support of legislation encouraging the purchase and use of zero emission vehicles.

Many of you may know the American Lung Association from our work to reduce smoking rates and exposure to secondhand smoke. Another one of our goals is to assure that the air we breathe doesn't cause or worsen lung disease. Emissions from combustion engines cause a significant amount of the air pollution in Connecticut. Expanding the use of zero emission vehicles is a key strategy for improving the quality of the air we breathe as well as the lung health of Connecticut residents.

As part of our efforts to improve air quality, every year the American Lung Association releases our State of the Air Report. In 2014 Connecticut earned failing grades for the number of days exceeding the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ground ozone in all counties, with the exception of Litchfield, which earned a C and Windham County, which does not track ozone levels. Fairfield County is rated as having the 19th worst ozone in the country.

Air pollution can make it more difficult to breathe, cause shortness of breath, cause coughing, inflame and damage the airways, aggravate lung diseases (like asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis), increase frequency of asthma attacks, increase susceptibility to

infection and continue to damage the lungs.¹ Evidence since the last ozone standard review also warns that breathing ozone may cause cardiovascular damage and increase the risk of low birth weight babies.

Populations most at risk for adverse health effects from air pollution include children, older adults, adults who are active outdoors and people with respiratory diseases. We know that too many people in our state are living with lung disease. 10.4% of the state's population has asthma (both adults and children combined). 4.2% of people in the state have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.

The American Lung Association supports policies that improve the quality of the air we breathe. We know that vehicle emissions account for approximately 40% of the greenhouse gas creation in our state. These zero emission vehicles will also reduce hydrocarbon pollution, which is a key ingredient in ozone smog. We hope you will implement strategies for increasing opportunities for purchasing and usage of zero emission vehicles in Connecticut. Not only is this an opportunity to improve our environment for future generations, but it is an opportunity to improve the health of our residents now.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our requests.



Ruth Canovi
Manager, Public Policy
American Lung Association in Connecticut

¹ Health Effects of Ground-level Ozone. Environmental Protection Agency.
<http://www.epa.gov/groundlevelozone/health.html>