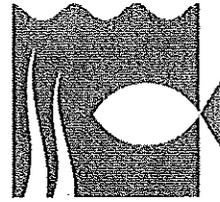


**Connecticut Fund  
for the Environment**



**Save the Sound<sup>®</sup>**  
A program of  
Connecticut Fund for the Environment

**Testimony of Connecticut Fund for the Environment  
Before the Committee on Transportation**

*In support of*

**H.B. No. 5943, AN ACT EXEMPTING CERTAIN FUEL-EFFICIENT VEHICLES FROM  
THE MINIMUM VEHICLE OCCUPANCY REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE'S HOV  
LANES**

Submitted by Shannon Smyth  
Energy & Environment Attorney  
February 6, 2015

*Connecticut Fund for the Environment (CFE) is a non-profit environmental organization with over 5,500 members statewide. The mission of CFE, and its bi-state program Save the Sound, is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and Long Island Sound. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring people together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.*

Dear Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, and members of the Committee on Transportation:

Connecticut Fund for the Environment (CFE) submits this written testimony in support of proposed H.B. No. 5943, An Act Exempting Certain Fuel-Efficient Vehicles from the Minimum Vehicle Occupancy Requirements of the State's HOV Lanes. However, we recommend that the bill incorporate the following changes.

First, the proposed exemption should apply only to plug-in electric vehicles (including plug-in hybrid electric vehicles) and fuel cell vehicles, collectively referred to as zero-emission vehicles. Applying the exemption only to the cleanest and most technologically advanced vehicles will result in greater emissions reductions by encouraging drivers to choose zero-emission vehicles over less efficient options.

Second, owners of zero-emission vehicles should not be required to pay an annual fee of \$25 to obtain the exemption. Connecticut does not have an extensive network of HOV lanes, and the existing lanes do not justify imposition of a \$25 annual fee. Ideally, the application should be free. If a fee is imposed, it should not exceed the amount necessary to cover the administrative costs of the program.

In conclusion, CFE supports proposed H.B. No. 5943, but we recommend that the bill be amended: (1) to apply only to zero-emission vehicles; and (2) to eliminate the application fee, or else reduce it to an amount not to exceed the amount necessary to cover the administrative costs of the program.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Shannon Smyth

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