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Written Testimony of Christopher Phelps, Environment Connecticut State Director
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Energy and Technology Committee

February 10, 2015

Supporting House Bill 6030: AN ACT CONCERNING ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLES IN CONNECTICUT.
Supporting House Bill 6031: AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRIC VEHICLES.

Senator Doyle, Representative Reed, Senator Formica, Representative Ackert, and members of the committee,

My name is Chris Phelps, I am State Director for Environment Connecticut. We are a nonprofit environmental advocacy organization working to protect Connecticut's air, water, and natural landscape. We appreciate this opportunity to offer testimony in support of HB 6030 and HB 6031.

In 2004, Connecticut passed the Clean Cars Law, joining other states that enacted clean car emissions standards that have played a significant role in driving mass-adoption of highly fuel efficient gas, hybrid-electric, and electric vehicles. Increased consumer demand for such vehicles over the last decade has reduced dependency on oil, saves drivers money at the pump, and cuts emissions of carbon pollution from vehicle tailpipes. Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEV's), such as plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles, are the newest, most fuel-efficient, least polluting vehicles currently available to consumers.

Getting more ZEVs on the road is one of the most important steps Connecticut can take to achieve the carbon-pollution cuts required by PA 08-98, the Connecticut Global Warming Solutions Act. In 2014, Connecticut and 7 other states produced an [action plan](#) committing to get 3 million ZEVs on the road by 2025. In the near term, adopting consumer purchase incentives, tax cuts, and infrastructure investments, are the best opportunity for Connecticut to achieve its goal of getting more ZEVs on the road.

Environment Connecticut respectfully submits these suggestions and recommendations for the committee's consideration as it drafts Zero Emission Vehicle legislation:

- Incentives should be tied to fuel efficiency and environmental performance, not specific technology. We make this recommendation because not all clean cars are made equal. We suggest that any purchase incentives, tax credits, or similar policies be offered for vehicles that exceed a minimum EPA efficiency rating. (Example: 50MPG or 50MPG-equivalent.)

- Connecticut should offer consumer financial incentives in the form of tax cuts for purchase of Zero Emission Vehicles exceeding a minimum efficiency rating as mentioned above. Many states already have such incentives in place. For example, Colorado offers income tax credits of up to \$6,000 for purchase of battery-electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles. Other financial incentive policies that could be considered are sales tax exemptions, property tax cuts, and direct-to-consumer rebates.
- In addition to consumer-purchase incentives, Connecticut's efforts to spur consumer adoption of ZEVs will benefit from policies supporting growth of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Requiring utilities to offer reduced nighttime (off-peak) electric rates for vehicle charging, uniform municipal permitting, and building codes for charging infrastructure, would all help to spur growth in ZEV sales and use in Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony supporting HB 6030 and 6031.

Sincerely,

Chris Phelps, State Director
Environment Connecticut