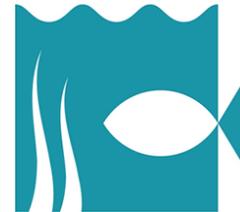




**Connecticut Fund
for the Environment**



Save the Sound®
A program of
Connecticut Fund for the Environment

**Testimony of Connecticut Fund for the Environment
Before the Committee on Energy and Technology**

In support of

H.B. No. 6030, AN ACT CONCERNING ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLES IN CONNECTICUT, and
H.B. No. 6031, AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Submitted by Shannon Smyth
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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 Doyle, Representative Reed, and members of the Committee on Energy and Technology:

Connecticut Fund for the Environment submits this testimony in support of Proposed H.B. No. 6030, An Act Concerning Zero-Emission Vehicles in Connecticut, and proposed H.B. No. 6031, An Act Concerning Electric Vehicles. These bills would help Connecticut reduce greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution by establishing incentives and policies encouraging drivers to choose electric vehicles (EVs) and other zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs). The Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (CTLCV) supports and joins us in these comments.

I. Promoting zero-emission vehicles should remain a priority for Connecticut.

The transportation sector generates nearly 40% of Connecticut's greenhouse gas emissions, but the state has not taken meaningful action to address transportation-related emissions. Under the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act, Connecticut must reduce its emissions to 80% below 2001 levels by 2050. Zero-emission vehicles are a necessary part of the solution. Moreover, they are part of the state's Comprehensive Energy Strategy and draft 2014 Integrated Resource Plan. Connecticut should pass legislation creating incentives for the lease, purchase, and use of ZEVs, and adopt policies that will support widespread adoption of these vehicles.

Zero-emission vehicles are an important way to alleviate local air pollution. Connecticut has some of the worst air quality on the East Coast. While many of these pollutants originate in upwind states, Connecticut's reliance on gas-powered vehicles is also part of the problem. Motor vehicle emissions contribute to health problems, such as asthma and other respiratory ailments. These health impacts are most severe in urban areas and disproportionately affect people who live, work, or attend school near large roads—generally economically disadvantaged and minority communities.

In the past, Connecticut has been a leader in promoting clean cars. In 2003, the state passed the Clean Cars Act, which requires 15% of cars sold in the state to be ZEVs by 2025. And in 2013, Connecticut joined seven other states in signing on to the State Zero-Emission Vehicle Programs Memorandum of Understanding, in which the signatory states agreed to promote ZEVs. In 2014, the Multi-State ZEV Action Plan was completed. This plan identifies a range of policies that states can adopt to promote ZEVs, many of which are described in more detail below.

Connecticut has made a good start by providing funds to build an electric vehicle charging station infrastructure, and by joining other states in pledging to accelerate the adoption of ZEVs. It is now time for Connecticut to follow through on these promises and take more definitive action, like Massachusetts and California have done, to become a leader in promoting ZEVs.

II. Incentives are needed to get more zero-emission vehicles on the road in Connecticut.

Cost is the greatest barrier to widespread zero-emission vehicle adoption. Although a federal rebate of \$7,500 is available, ZEVs still cost more than comparable internal combustion vehicles. A Connecticut sales tax exemption or rebate of \$2,500 to \$5,000 would make ZEVs cost-competitive. Other states, including California, Georgia, Maryland, and Massachusetts, have established monetary incentives for ZEVs, and these measures have been successful in increasing the number of ZEVs sold in these states. Connecticut should follow their lead and pass legislation creating monetary incentives for the purchase or lease of ZEVs.

Connecticut should also establish other incentives to encourage more drivers to choose ZEVs. These could include preferential parking (premium spaces and/or reduced fees), which is already available in New Haven, unrestricted access to high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, and various incentives relating to electric vehicle charging infrastructure, described below.

III. Connecticut's electric vehicle charging infrastructure should be expanded.

Connecticut already has close to 190 public electric vehicle charging stations. This is a step in the right direction, but further action is needed to ensure that the state has a robust EV charging infrastructure. Connecticut should require all public EV charging stations to be open access, and public stations should be required to disclose basic information, such as location and price, to a public database. Uniform signage for charging stations also needs to be developed.

Legislation should direct the state building inspector to issue an official interpretation of the building code to clarify that it does not pose a barrier to the installation of charging stations; this will help streamline the permitting process. Finally, new parking facilities should be required to be "EV-capable" (*i.e.*, able to support an EV charging station), or to actually include an EV charging station, depending on the size of the facility and the sector it serves. Other states have already done this.

IV. The electric utility framework must be prepared to support electric vehicles.

Connecticut must ensure that the state's electric grid is prepared for increased charging. The utilities should be required to provide time-of-day rates, which would include reduced costs for off-peak charging of electric vehicles. Legislation should extend the fast charger pilot program, which Eversource Energy (formerly Connecticut Light and Power) is implementing. It should also provide for utility planning for increased demand for electric vehicle charging, including notification to the utilities (with appropriate privacy protections) of EV purchases and charging station installations.

V. Zero-emission vehicle educational programs should be implemented.

Education is needed to inform Connecticut residents about the benefits of zero-emission vehicles. The state should establish a program through the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to educate consumers, businesses, automobile dealerships, and municipalities about the lasting benefits of ZEVs for Connecticut's economy, environment, and public health.

VI. Connecticut should lead by example in supporting ZEVs.

Connecticut should lead by example by purchasing zero-emission vehicles for its fleets and by providing electric vehicle charging stations at all state workplaces. The legislation should require ZEVs to make up 25% of the state's light-duty purchases and leases by 2025, along with appropriate intermediate targets. In addition, it should require the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to study the state fleet and opportunities for further electrification.

In conclusion, CFE and CTLCV strongly support legislation creating incentives to promote the adoption of electric vehicles and other zero-emission vehicles in the state of Connecticut.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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