

March 10, 2016

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

Testimony regarding of HB5510, An Act Concerning Electric, Zero Emission and Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles.

Dear Co-Chairs Doyle and Reed and Distinguished Members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

My name is Ruth Canovi. I am the Manager of Public Policy for the American Lung Association in Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss HB5510, An Act Concerning Electric, Zero Emission and Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles. The American Lung Association is the oldest voluntary health organization in the nation and our mission is to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease.

The American Lung Association supports policies aiming to help Connecticut residents breathe healthy air and reduce the burden of lung disease that air pollution places on our residents and our health care system. Emissions from vehicles lead to all three of the criteria pollutants that the Lung Association tracks in its annual State of the Air Report – ozone, year round particle pollution and short term particle pollution. In our 2015 report, six of eight counties in Connecticut earned an F for ozone, while Litchfield and Windham earned a C. While we fare better in particle pollution, there is still much work to be done to protect our health.¹

In 2013, the World Health Organization classified air pollution as carcinogenic. The general public, especially children, elderly and people with lung disease are especially at risk for the myriad of adverse health effects linked to air pollution including shortness of breath, coughing, inflammation and damage to airways and aggravation of lung disease like asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Air pollution can also increase frequency of asthma attacks and susceptibility to infection. Evidence also points to ozone causing cardiovascular damage and an increase in the risk of low birth weight babies.²

¹ State of the Air Report 2015. American Lung Association. <http://www.stateoftheair.org/2015/states/connecticut>

² Ozone and Your Health. Environmental Protection Agency. <https://www3.epa.gov/airnow/ozone-c.pdf>

The American Lung Association supports policies that improve the quality of the air we breathe. We know that “mobile source pollution accounts for approximately fifty percent of all air pollution emitted in Connecticut...”³ Zero emission vehicles help reduce air pollution and can lead to healthier air for all of us to breathe.

HB5318 provides an opportunity to prepare our state with the infrastructure for further expansion of low/zero emission vehicle use. This is an important step to help address some of the barriers to increasing use of these vehicles. The CT Electric Vehicle Steering Committee is submitting a number of recommendations regarding proposed amendments and changes to the language of the bill to help clarify these regulations and reduce any unintended harm that could arise from the implementation of the law. We hope you will adopt these suggestions.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,
Ruth Canovi, MPH
Manager, Public Policy
American Lung Association of the Northeast

³ CT Low Emission Vehicles II. Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.
<http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?A=2684&Q=398686>