

**Testimony of
Chip Gengras
In Opposition to
Senate Bill 127
Transportation Committee
February 19, 2021**

Representative Lemar, Senator Cassano, Representative Simms, Senator Somers, Representative Carney, and Members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Chip Gengras and I am the President of Gengras Automotive and an officer and member of the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Automotive Retailers Association. Gengras Motor Cars is a local business started by my grandfather in 1937. Our headquarters facility is located in East Hartford, Connecticut. We employ over 300 people in our stores located in East Hartford and North Haven. We represent 11 franchises: Honda, BMW, Volvo, Chevrolet, Chrysler, Dodge, RAM, Jeep, VW, Ford, and Harley Davidson.

I am here today to speak in opposition to SB 127 - An Act Concerning the Sale of Electric Vehicles in the State. This bill undermines our state franchise laws that regulate auto retailers and manufacturers, while providing an unfair advantage to out of state and out of country companies. This bill will not only allow for an unlevel playing field to sell cars in our state, but also will extend that privilege to hundreds of foreign electric vehicle manufacturers, exporting jobs overseas.

I have heard arguments that Connecticut dealers do not want to sell electric vehicles (EVs) or that the dealers are incapable of selling EVs. This is entirely untrue.

All Connecticut auto dealers are fully committed to selling EVs. We invite legislators to visit our dealerships and see the many different kinds of vehicles we have on our lots. In fact, there are over 40 options of EVs available for Connecticut consumers. These are EVs, ZEVs, and fuel cell vehicles in a wide choice of styles, prices, and functions to meet the needs of consumers.

Earlier this month, a report from the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy ranked Connecticut 13th in the country for encouraging consumers to buy electric vehicles.

CARA, DEEP and state electric utilities developed the CHEAPR program in 2015. This program provides incentives to consumers who purchase EVs. The CHEAPR program will soon be offering incentives specifically for low to middle income earners in an effort to provide expanded access to electric vehicles.

Nearly all manufactures now produce EVs. Some manufacturers, like Volvo, a brand that I sell, will be all electric in a few short years. Connecticut dealers are able and ready to meet the demands of EV consumers.

Connecticut dealers sell EVs intended for everyday consumers. The Chevrolet Bolt, for example, has one of a longest battery ranges and sells for \$36,500. The Chevy Bolt, and other mainline EVs typically serve as a driver's primary vehicle, unlike more expensive EV brands which are often a 2nd or 3rd car for a buyer.

Clearly, the franchise system is the best way to get EVs onto Connecticut roads. The only way Connecticut will meet its ZEV goals under CARB is with affordable vehicles driven every day by the average working person.

I urge you not to pass SB 127- An Act Concerning the Sale of Electric Vehicles in the State.

Thank you for your time.