

Testimony in support of Proposed S.B. No. 127 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SALE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN THE STATE.

Dear Honorable members of the Transportation Committee,

I am a Greenwich resident writing to urge you to adopt S.B No. 127, permitting the issuance of car dealership licenses to electric vehicle manufacturers.

This January, my husband and I tried shopping for an electric vehicle in CT. The lack of knowledge and preparedness on the part of the auto dealerships was astounding.

We first made an appointment to see the Kona EV at a Hyundai dealership in Stamford. When we arrived for the appointment, the car was not even on the lot, and we had to wait a half hour for someone to find it. When it arrived, the battery was at 7% and the salesperson had no idea how to charge it for a test drive. They admitted that they knew very little about the car and we left without even having driven it.

We then tried to see the Niro EV at the KIA dealership in Stamford. We were told the car was not available to see, but if we were ready to purchase it sight unseen, they could order it for us. I asked the dealer to check if it was available for a test drive from a different Kia dealership, and was told that there was one in Rhode Island and one in Albany, NY.

Under the current system, customers have to work too hard to buy an EV. My personal experience confirms what was found by a study of the Natural Resources Defense Council--that 83% of consumers were dissatisfied with the process of buying an EV, citing the lack of knowledge by sales staff as the greatest frustration.¹ In my experience, car dealerships are not prioritizing the sale of EV's. Selling EV's requires specialized knowledge while at the same time being less profitable to the service shops run by the auto dealers because their maintenance costs are so low.² Auto dealers' relegation of EVs to the back of the lot does nothing to transition us to a reduced carbon future. The inability to buy an EV directly from the manufacturer, who knows the ins and outs of the car, does a terrible disservice to consumers.

I urge you to visit your local auto dealer and ask to see and test drive an electric vehicle, so you can experience first hand how difficult it is for a consumer to buy one. I hope that you will pass SB 127 to allow electric vehicles to compete on a level playing field for sales in CT.

Sincerely,
Svetlana Wasserman
Greenwich, CT

¹ "The Challenge for Electric Car Sales is Car Dealers Again," *Green Car Reports*, August 5, 2014

² "Pay Less for Vehicle Maintenance with an EV," *Consumer Reports*, September 26, 2020