

The Narragansett Bay Commission
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Vincent J. Mesolella
Chairman

Laurie A. Horridge
Executive Director

April 8, 2024

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chairperson
House Committee on Finance
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Narragansett Bay Commission; House Bill 7859; Against

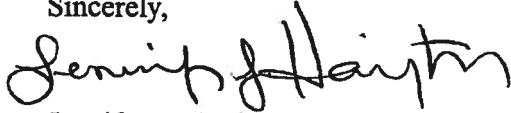
Dear Chairperson Abney and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for taking the time to consider the Narragansett Bay Commission's (NBC) position on House Bill 7859. While the objectives of this bill are admirable, I am writing to express NBC's concerns with H7859, which would require any vehicle owned by a governmental body to be replaced at the end of its useful life with a zero-emission vehicle or a comparable replacement if no zero-emission vehicle is available. In the event that neither option is able to be procured a waiver for said vehicle must be obtained by the governmental body, with a maximum of three waivers in a calendar year. This law would be unattainable in many instances depending on the type of work that needs to be performed.

While NBC understands the importance of striving for zero emission or alternative-fueled vehicles, there are instances/uses where vehicles that are battery powered would not only be impractical but would actually serve as an obstacle to completing work that needs to be performed by NBC staff. As an example, when NBC was attempting to procure an electric vehicle suitable to perform sampling required by our permits, there were no suitable electric vehicles available to house our samplers and chemicals needed to perform the tasks. Our managers have also expressed in some instances that while the technology is improving in electric vehicles there are some vehicles that are needed to perform elongated daily uses here at NBC that would not be able to be performed by electric vehicles. For instance, NBC's Interceptor Maintenance section utilizes large capacity and specialty vehicles that are required to run for several hours at a time. If one of their trucks is called to clean out a manhole, this could be at least 6 plus hours of continuous run time. The battery on the electric vehicles would not accommodate the needs for these types of situations. The upfront cost of electric vehicles may be prohibited at this time as well as the required charging stations that would need to be installed.

As the availability and functionality of electric vehicles is still developing, it is impractical at this time to require they be used in every situation. As a compromise, hybrid vehicles are an environmentally sound alternative. We would be happy to talk to the sponsors of this bill and discuss our concerns further and appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer J. Harrington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Jennifer J. Harrington, Esq.

General Counsel and Legislative Liaison