

Testimony in opposition to H5076 Article 5 Section 3-EV Registration Fee

George Voutes, 17 Shore Road, Bristol RI 02809, Date of Hearing: February 25, 2025

To Chair Abney and the honorable Members of the House Finance Committee:

I strongly oppose increased registration fees only to EVs, because they are completely counterproductive to both the state EV tax credit and the goals of the RI Act on Climate.

At the current stage of the renewables transition, we must incentivize ownership of EVs and not penalize residents for helping to implement the Act on Climate, or purchase/own an EV/BEV because they choose to own and operate that type of modern vehicle.

H5076 is a horrible idea and must be not go forward. According to the US Department of Energy, there were 6,400 battery electric vehicles (BEV) and 5,100 plug-in hybrids registered in Rhode Island in 2023 (the most recent year for which we have data), compared to 793,000 gas-powered vehicles and 11,000 diesel-fired vehicles. BEV and plug-in hybrids together represented 1.4% of the vehicles on the road. A conservative assumption that BEVs are replacing internal combustion engine cars and their gasoline usage 1:1 means a 1.4% reduction in gasoline use and gas tax revenues. A 1.4% decline in gas tax revenues does not warrant taking immediate action. Taxing EV/BEVs is ridiculous and goes against freedom of choice for what to purchase and drive. More EVs/BEVs (not less) are needed now on RI roads.

Where fees should increase should be based on a vehicle's weight, because heavier vehicles cause more wear and tear. Take a drive down Rt. 114 in the East Bay of RI (from Barrington through Bristol) and experience the appalling condition of the road surface. EV/BEVs did not create these dangerous road conditions, rather heavy vehicles, include construction equipment to name a few.

The gas tax should be maintained as it is, as a carbon tax.

Thank you very much for considering my input.

George Voutes