

Testimony in support of H7353: Resolution to Submit a Proposal for New, Multi-Year Electric Vehicle Programming

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To Chair Solomon and the honorable Members of the House Corporations Committee:

While Rhode Island struggles to meet the greenhouse gas emissions reduction mandates of the Act on Climate, transportation continues to be the largest emitter of greenhouse gases. Consequently, accelerating the transition to electric vehicles (“EVs”) is one of the fastest and lasting ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Rhode Island (and beyond).

To reach this acceleration, we need to boost consumers’ confidence in the EV technology, in particular in a readily available charging infrastructure, so they don’t need to be anxious that they might get stranded with an empty battery. This will remove “range anxiety” as the major remaining road block towards buying the electric car they know they will enjoy—because it will need less maintenance, cost less to drive, and be clean and good for the climate.

Surprisingly, and in disregard of this context, there currently are no state or utility incentives to build out more electric vehicle charging infrastructure for Rhode Islanders.

H7353 aims at filling that void, using proven solutions to take major steps towards scaling-up and improving the EV charging infrastructure in the state. The bill focuses on the most impactful areas by requesting the utility to issue a proposal for new, multi-year electric vehicle programming, with

- comprehensive “Make Ready” offerings, where the utility covers the costs to bring electric service to charging stations for residential consumers (including multi-unit dwellings), workplaces, public charging sites, and fleets (light, medium- and heavy-duty),
- rebates for electric vehicle supply equipment,
- greater incentive levels for low-income people or people who live in disadvantaged communities,
- off-peak charging rebates with its many benefits, as detailed in the bill,
- and specific offerings, such as curbside or pole-mounted charging pilots, to make charging more available to residents of multi-unit buildings, and to others who park their vehicle on the street.

Not incentivizing the build-out of our EV charging infrastructure will not get us to meeting the Act on Climate mandates, while H7353 will. We can’t wait any longer, nor can we continue to burn more fossil fuels and pollute the climate by driving cars with combustion engines.

Please bring the bill to a vote in 2024. Later will be too late!

Thank you very much for considering my input, and thank you to Representative McGaw for introducing this important bill.



Dr. Hans Scholl

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