

343 Cass Ave.  
Woonsocket, RI 02895  
March 6, 2024

House Committee on Corporations  
State of Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

To whom it may concern:

I am a Rhode Island resident and electric vehicle (EV) driver and I am writing in support of H7353. Although I personally can charge at home, I am concerned about the state of public charging in Rhode Island. In Woonsocket, where I live, there are only a handful of public EV chargers, and most of those are Level 2 AC chargers, which require hours to charge a typical EV. Only one 4-plug site is a Level 2 charger at an apartment complex, which is very good for residents of that complex, but next to useless for people who live elsewhere. Let me emphasize this: A city with a population of 43,240 in 2020, many of whom live in apartments, has *four* EV plugs for apartment-dwellers, according to the EV charging tracking site PlugShare (<https://www.plugshare.com>). If EVs are to become widely popular, as they must if we are to deal with global warming, it's imperative that we begin building the infrastructure necessary for non-homeowners to charge EVs.

Note that DC fast charging, which can charge an EV from 10% to 80% in roughly half an hour, is usually more expensive than the slower Level 2 AC charging. Thus, as a matter of public policy, it's best to encourage the deployment of Level 2 AC charging at apartments (in apartment complex parking lots or on streets for apartments that don't offer off-street parking) and workplaces. This is not to diminish the importance of DC fast charging, which can be vital on road trips and to fill the gaps in Level 2 charging deployment; but it's well past time that we built out Level 2 charging for apartment-dwellers.

I would also like to see government policies to encourage off-peak charging. Currently, most Rhode Island utility programs are flat-rate — I pay the exact same rate for electricity consumed at 2:00 PM as at 2:00 AM, despite the fact that the wholesale electricity rates, and the environmental costs of generating the electricity, are far higher at 2:00 PM than at 2:00 AM, particularly on a hot summer day. Most cars are parked most of the time, and so can be charged at any time that is convenient. Utility time-of-use (ToU) rate plans, or EV-centric rate plans that encourage off-peak charging, can help reduce the economic and environmental costs of transportation.

For these reasons, I strongly support H7353, “respectfully requesting Rhode Island Energy in conjunction with the Public Utilities Commission to submit a proposal for new, multi-year electric vehicle programming.” This resolution addresses the preceding concerns and issues in a sensible way. The programs and policies outlined in H7353 have been implemented elsewhere in the United States to good effect, and I believe they can and should be implemented in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roderick W. Smith", written in a cursive style.

Roderick W. Smith