



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

**DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE**

600 New London Avenue
Cranston, RI 02920-3024
Phone: 401-462-4368
www.dmv.ri.gov

March 3, 2026

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley
Chair, House Committee on State Government and Elections
State House
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: 2026 H-7988- AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES –
INSPECTION OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

Dear Chair Shanley:

The Division of Motor Vehicles ("DMV") writes to express concerns with House Bill 7988, An Act Relating to Motor and Other Vehicles – Inspection of Motor Vehicles.

The proposed bill would impose a fifteen-dollar (\$15.00) fee for the safety inspection of every battery powered electric motor vehicle and apportion that fee between the inspection station and the program manager. The proposed bill would also require all vehicles, regardless of their gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) to be subject to emissions inspections.

The DMV has several concerns with the proposed fee for the inspection of battery powered electric vehicles. First, it is unclear whether the proposed fee would be imposed annually or biennially. Under DMV regulation 280-RICR-30-15-3.3.1(C), all motor vehicles registered in the State of Rhode Island with a GVWR of eight thousand five hundred pounds (8,500 lbs.) or less are inspected every two years. The fee for this two-year safety and emission inspection for all vehicles is fifty-five dollars (\$55.00) as specified by R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 31-38-7(c)(1) and 31-47.1-11. The regulation does not classify electric vehicles as having a different inspection interval and they are included with all other vehicles under 8,500 lbs. in the biennial requirement. It is true that electric vehicles are exempt from the emissions portion of the testing, but all vehicles, including electric ones, are subject to the safety inspection, which consumes the majority of the time and labor spent examining the vehicle. Consumers with gas powered vehicles would therefore be paying much more than electric vehicle owners for what essentially amounts to the same inspection as far as time and labor.

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Second, the proposed bill would apportion the new electric vehicle inspection fee as ten dollars (\$10.00) being retained by the inspection station owner, and five dollars (\$5.00) being remitted to the program manager. Currently, under R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-47.1-11, the fifty-five dollar (\$55.00) inspection fee is divided as follows: nineteen dollars (\$19.00) is retained by the inspection station owner to cover the costs of inspection, and the remaining thirty-six dollars (\$36.00) is remitted to the program manager. The program manager retains no more than four dollars (\$4.00) of that fee, an amount which is determined by the state's contract with the vendor. The remaining amount of no less than thirty-two dollars (\$32.00) is deposited into the Rhode Island Highway Maintenance Account. Under the proposed bill, however, the Highway Maintenance Account would receive nothing, even though battery powered electric vehicles are typically much heavier than their combustion engine counterparts and have at least as much impact on the state's highways, roads and bridges.

Section two of the proposed bill would require that all motor vehicles, regardless of GVWR, are subject to emissions testing. It is unnecessary to add this language to R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-47.1-3, when § 31-47.2-2 already requires emissions inspections for vehicles with a GVWR over eight thousand five hundred pounds (8,500 lbs.) including, but not limited to, all diesel powered trucks and buses of all model years. Further, such addition could create ambiguity and confusion over whether the safety and emissions inspections standards in Chapter 31-47.1 or Chapter 31-47.2, and their corresponding regulations, govern these vehicles.

The DMV looks forward to working with the sponsor going forward to draft revisions to the proposed bill that are mutually agreeable.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Walter R. Craddock, Esq.
Administrator

Cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections
The Honorable Jennifer Boylan
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Thomas A. Verdi, Director, Department of Revenue