



April 13, 2026

Chair Robert Britto  
Rhode Island Senate Commerce Committee  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

To Chair Britto and Honorable members of the Senate Commerce Committee:

On behalf of Rivian, I am writing to express our strong opposition to **Senate Bill 2778**. While we share the goal of ensuring a robust automotive marketplace in Rhode Island, the proposed legislation imposes restrictive barriers that will stifle innovation, limit consumer choice, and discourage economic investment in the state's burgeoning electric vehicle (EV) marketplace.

Rivian is an American EV manufacturer and automotive technology company. The Company designs and builds award-winning electric vehicles, including the R1T pickup and R1S SUV, as well as commercial delivery vans, utilized primarily by Amazon. Rivian will be introducing the R2, an affordable mid-size SUV, before the end of this quarter. Unlike traditional legacy automakers, Rivian utilizes a direct-to-consumer model that streamlines the purchasing process, reduces overhead, and allows for seamless over-the-air software updates and specialized service.

The primary concern with S2778 is its attempt to further entrench the traditional franchise dealership model at the expense of modern, direct-sales manufacturers. Specifically:

- **Restriction of Market Access:** The bill creates unnecessary hurdles for manufacturers like Rivian that do not utilize independent franchised dealers. This prevents innovative companies from controlling their brand experience and maintaining direct relationships with their customers.
- **Reduced Consumer Choice & Increased Prices:** Rhode Islanders increasingly demand sustainable transportation options. By complicating the sales and service of EVs from direct-manufacturers, S2778 limits the ability of Rhode Island residents to purchase and maintain the vehicles of their choice within their own state. Furthermore, these restrictions directly contribute to increased consumer costs by mandating middlemen and affiliated costs.
- **Infrastructure & Service Barriers:** The technical requirements proposed in the bill regarding service and warranty work do not reflect the unique



mechanical reality of EVs, which require fewer traditional repairs but more specialized software support.

The passage of S2778 would signal that Rhode Island is closed to the innovation economy. By protecting legacy business models through protectionist legislation, the state positions itself for significant reductions in economic development.

If manufacturers like Rivian are unable to operate efficiently, they will be forced to look toward neighboring states for the construction of sales facilities, service centers, charging hubs, and corporate offices. Rhode Island risks losing high-quality jobs and the tax revenue associated with a growing EV market.

We urge the Senate Commerce Committee to support a free and open marketplace that encourages innovation. Rather than passing S2778, Rhode Island should embrace a regulatory environment that welcomes all automotive manufacturers, regardless of their delivery model.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of our position. We respectfully request that you **vote NO on S2778**.

Sincerely,  
Beau Whiteman  
Director, State Affairs