

Good morning Chairman Green, Vice-Chairman McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Thank you for allowing me to speak in support of House Bill 546 with my joint sponsor, Representative Weinstein. HB 546 would halve the additional motor vehicle registration fees for plug-in electric motor vehicles from \$200 to \$100 and hybrid motor vehicles from \$100 to \$50. Additionally, this legislation will alter which vehicles are classified as plug-in electric motor vehicles and hybrid motor vehicles. Under current law, a “plug-in electric motor vehicle” is a passenger car that is powered either wholly or in part by a battery cell energy system that can be recharged. This bill narrows the definition to a passenger car that is only powered wholly by a battery cell energy system. Furthermore, this bill broadens the definition so that a “hybrid motor vehicle” is a passenger car powered by an internal propulsion system that consists of a combustion engine and either a battery cell energy system that cannot be recharged, or one that can.

I have spoken to many hybrid and plug-in electric vehicle owners throughout the state who are unhappy about the fact that they were surprised with an increase in registration fees, which were approved in last year’s transportation budget. Many also feel as though they are being double taxed and punished for choosing an eco-friendly vehicle. To put this increase into perspective, a Toyota Camry hybrid saves around 96 gallons of fuel each year, yet the owners of this vehicle will be paying on average \$65 more per year than the owners of an equivalent gasoline model. The Environmental Protection Agency also estimated that for example, a Tesla 3 would need to drive 65,111 miles per year to earn the \$200 annual tax.

While we need to address issues with infrastructure funding, the Ohio Department of Transportation and LSC estimate that the state will only generate approximately \$7.3 million in FY 2020 from these registration fees, as opposed to \$67 million for every increase of a penny per gallon coming from the state gasoline tax. These fees not only unfairly penalize EV owners, but disincentivize consumers from making a switch to green vehicle technology, and auto manufacturers looking to expand these new technology sectors into Ohio. Currently, General Motors, in partnership with LG Chem, plans to invest \$2.3 billion in building a new plant in Lordstown to build batteries for electric vehicles. I encourage you to support this legislation to not only reduce carbon emissions and incentivize renewable energy, but also to demonstrate that Ohio is open to new industries and green technology. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony and I will now pass along the floor to Representative Weinstein. Afterwards, we would be happy to answer any questions you might have.