



OEC [Action Fund]

Opponent Testimony - Ohio House Bill 62 (Oelslager)
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March 13, 2019

Good morning, Chairman McColley, Vice Chairman Uecker, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee. My name is Miranda Leppla and I am the Clean Energy Attorney for the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) Action Fund. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Ohio House Bill 62 today.

The OEC Action Fund works toward a clean energy future to ensure Ohioans have clean air to breathe and clean water to drink. A clean energy future includes reducing reliance on fossil fuels in our electric sector, promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency, and supporting the electrification of our transportation systems.

While the OEC Action Fund agrees that electric vehicle (EV) owners should pay their fair share for upkeep of our transportation infrastructure, the current proposal contained in H.B. 62 as passed by the House--a \$200 annual fee on EVs and a \$100 annual fee on all hybrid vehicles--amounts to a penalty on EV and hybrid owners and will stunt this growing market in Ohio. The current legislation is problematic for three reasons.

First, the \$200 annual fee on EVs is too high. The current version of the bill implements a \$200 annual registration fee on electric vehicles. Other states that have implemented a registration fee at \$200 have seen the consumer uptake of EVs slow, and even EV owners selling their cars as a result of the registration fee. The OEC Action Fund recommends that the EV registration fee be no more than \$100 per year, and to ensure a portion of those funds are used to build out EV charging infrastructure so that EV drivers are able to traverse the state in the same manner as their gas-powered counterparts.

Second, the \$100 annual fee on all types of hybrids is unnecessary, as those vehicles already pay taxes on the gas they purchase. The OEC Action Fund recommends elimination of the \$100 annual fee established on hybrids because owners of these vehicles, while more efficient in their use of gas, do in fact pay into the gas tax.

Finally, any annual fee on EVs should dedicate a portion of that fee for EV charging infrastructure build-out across the state. EV owners face challenges in traveling across Ohio because electric charging infrastructure is not located in all parts of the state, especially in more rural areas. If we are going to require EV owners to pay into a fund for road infrastructure and maintenance, they should also be able to drive anywhere in the state they wish without worrying about whether they'll be able to charge their vehicle and make it home.

In conclusion, the intended goal of H.B. 62 is to ensure EV owners pay their fair share for the cost of upkeep to our roads and bridges--a goal OEC agrees is important. However, this bill should be revised to apply only to EV owners, since hybrid owners pay taxes through the gasoline they purchase. Further, it should be a reasonable fee--not a fee that will crush the EV market--and a portion of that reasonable fee should be set aside to build out electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the state, ensuring that EV owners can travel on the roads they are helping to fund without worrying whether they'll have a charging station in range to get where they are trying to go.

We look forward to working with the committee on determining a reasonable fee and set aside for electric vehicle infrastructure build out, which would vastly improve this legislation. I am happy to answer any questions at this time.