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State of Connecticut
SENATE

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GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION &
ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
HOUSING COMMITTEE
LABOR COMMITTEE

MEMBER
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

August 22, 2023

Commissioner Katie Dykes
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106

RE: PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED FOR 8/22/2023

Dear Commissioner Dykes,

I write to you today in opposition to the regulations being discussed that will ban the sale of gas-powered vehicles by the year 2035 in Connecticut.

First and foremost, I would like to remind you that we live in a free nation that guarantees our citizens the freedom of choice and expression. Those freedoms extend to their consumer purchases. Our government does not have the right to force citizens to buy one product over another. These same freedoms should extend to the automakers who will now be forced to completely overhaul their entire product line in the span of twelve years. If automakers decide to make so-called "eco-friendly" vehicles and consumers decide to buy those vehicles, that should be by their choice and only as a result of market forces. Automakers, consumers, repair shops, and fuel stations should not be subject to force and coercion by government. Personal choice and freedom in the marketplace must be protected.

This is especially true when there is a lack of any compelling argument whatsoever to begin outlawing gasoline powered vehicles. The case for global climate change being the direct result of manmade CO2 emissions is not the least bit conclusive with scientists on all sides of the argument. Some even suggest that CO2 levels were at dangerously low levels until recently, potentially preventing photosynthesis, killing plant life and eventually everything, and that manmade CO2 might have actually helped.

That debate should continue based only in legitimate science. For our purposes, the argument over climate change is moot since the banning of gas-powered autos and trucks in favor of electric vehicles does not reduce the amount of so called "fossil fuels" in use or CO2 emissions. Our electric grid relies almost entirely upon natural gas. This is the true source of the electricity that would be used to charge and recharge the batteries in electric vehicles. Until our electric grid is powered by something other than natural gas, the push for electric vehicles is unnecessary, and obviously based solely in politics and hysteria.

More importantly, one small US state making such a commitment is as implausible as it is pointless. Without a worldwide commitment and effort, there is zero attainable benefit to our environment through this policy agenda.

The average cost of electric vehicles today is somewhere in the range of \$50-60k which is far and above what many Connecticut residents can afford. This number will likely climb by year 2035. The result will be fewer newer vehicles being purchased. People will choose to retain their older less efficient gas-powered vehicles longer. Again, this is another result in direct contradiction of the stated goals of this initiative.

We must also consider the economic, geo-political and environmental impact that electric vehicles reap in terms of their production and recycling. The materials used in their production come from ecologically questionable cobalt-mining in third world countries by unfriendly - and even adversarial nations with egregious environmental and human rights records. Countless news stories have been published itemizing the damage to the environment, as well as the human suffering that is already underway to satisfy the demand for lithium batteries. These batteries raise concerns also. They have proven to be dangerous in terms of potential fires and the inability to be recycled in an environmentally conscious manner.

Finally, Connecticut's electric grid simply cannot handle the increase in electric usage that will be needed to power these electric vehicles. Connecticut residents already pay some of the highest premiums for electricity in the nation. Our electric grid, energy production, and overall infrastructure will need to be dramatically overhauled, and a span of ten to twelve years is not nearly enough time for this to happen. I implore you to reconsider these regulations and ask that you engage the legislature in any future discussions so that we may cooperatively find ways to make our state more economically and environmentally friendly in a safe and responsible manner.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to these regulations and I offer you the opportunity to reach out to me and my office any time to discuss this topic further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Sampson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

State Senator Rob Sampson
16th District