

February 29, 2016

Joint Committee on Transportation  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

**RE: An Act Promoting Electric Vehicle Adoption (H. 3085/S. 1824)**

Dear Chair Straus, Chair McGee, and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this important legislation. Increased adoption of electric vehicles provides a tremendous opportunity to benefit the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its citizens. Electric vehicles, including both all-electric models and plug-in hybrid models, are:

- **Good for consumers, the regional economy, and energy independence;**
- **Crucial for meeting environmental and public health requirements;**
- **A key part of the electric grid of the future; and**
- **Fun to drive.**

Over the last several years, Massachusetts has made major strides by adopting a number of policies to accelerate electric vehicle adoption. The undersigned sixteen organizations urge the adoption of the measures in these bills, H. 3085/S.1824, as a crucial next step on this path.

***Benefits of Electric Vehicles and Scale of Challenge***

Electric vehicles present an opportunity for a wide array of benefits to drivers, the regional economy, communities burdened with air pollution, and even electric ratepayers. One particularly significant challenge that electric vehicle can help solve is the contribution of our current transportation system to global climate change. In Massachusetts and the rest of the Northeast, the transportation sector emits at least 40% of the total greenhouse gas (“GHG”) emissions. To reach the requirements of the Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act of 25% below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, emissions from the transportation sector need to decline rapidly.

In addition to walking, biking, car-pooling, and expanded use of public transit, increased adoption of electric vehicles is a clear pathway to achieving the GHG emissions reductions we need. In the short term, purchasing an electric vehicle instead of a conventional vehicle can cut GHG emissions by 60%. In the long-run, with cleaner electricity generation, EVs will represent even larger reductions and, with a fully renewable electricity system, could have no emissions at all.

Massachusetts, as an adopter of California’s Zero Emission Vehicle (“ZEV”) regulations and as a signatory to the Multi-State ZEV Action Plan, has committed to a goal of approximately

300,000 zero-emission vehicles, including EVs, on our roads by 2025. However, as of mid-2015, there were only 5,500 EVs registered in the Commonwealth. New advances in technology and decreases in costs will continue to make electric vehicles more appealing to consumers, but policy will also play a crucial role in moving us to a future with greatly increased electric vehicle usage.

### *A Comprehensive Agenda to Promote Electric Vehicles*

In October 2015, Acadia Center, Conservation Law Foundation, and Sierra Club issued a report, *Charging Up*,<sup>1</sup> that took a comprehensive look at the policies and plans in the Northeast and California to promote electric vehicles. The report concluded that we need an all-hands-on-deck effort from government, utilities, automakers, and auto dealers and put forward “Nine Vital Steps for Success”:

1. High-level task forces or commissions to provide state-level leadership and coordination.
2. Consumer incentives to make EVs less expensive and more convenient.
3. Programs to make EVs more accessible to low-income residents.
4. Utility programs and investments that incentivize EV adoption as part of a modernized grid.
5. Policies to promote widespread availability of consumer-friendly charging stations.
6. State and local governments leading by example by integrating EVs into their fleets and other programs.
7. Increased efforts by automakers to manufacture EVs that appeal to a broad range of consumers, and to market and sell them aggressively in and beyond California.
8. Auto dealership programs that promote EVs.
9. Public education and outreach to ensure the vast majority of consumers view EVs as a viable and desirable option.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has adopted important policies in several of these areas already, notably:

- The formation of the Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Initiative Task Force in 2013 and the subsequent creation of the statutory Zero Emission Vehicle Commission.
- The implementation of a consumer rebate program, Massachusetts Offer Rebates for Electric Vehicles (“MOR-EV”) and two extensions by the Baker Administration.
- The order from the Department of Public Utilities exempting charging stations from burdensome public utility regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://acadiacenter.org/document/charging-up/>

- The Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (“EVIP”) to promote purchases of EVs and charging stations by towns, public agencies, public colleges and universities, as well as workplace charging.
- Additional programs run by the Department of Energy Resources to promote investment in DC fast charging and address other market segments.

With these great policies, Massachusetts stands out as a regional leader, but there is more to do.

*Provisions of H. 3085/S. 1824, An Act Promoting Electric Vehicle Adoption*

The scope of possible legislative action to advance electrification of the transportation sector is practically limitless. Beyond the list of areas touched on above, such legislation could encompass anything from climate legislation for the transportation sector (such as a carbon tax, regional cap-and-trade program, or clean fuels standard) to transportation funding reform.

The bills before the committee today are more modest in scope, but address five areas that are ripe for action in 2016 and would benefit greatly from legislation.

- **Section 1 – EV Access to High-Occupancy Vehicle Lanes.** This policy has been an enormous incentive for electric vehicle adoption in other states and could help spur the market in Massachusetts.
- **Section 2 – Municipal Enforcement of EV-only Parking.** Under current law, the authority of cities and towns to enforce designated “EV-only” parking spaces, such as electric vehicle charging stations and preferential parking spaces, is limited. This section would give new discretionary authority for cities and towns to enforce “EV-only” parking with reasonable fines and the ability to tow violators.
- **Section 3 – Building Code Requirements for EV Charging.** The Board of Building Regulations and Standards (“BBRS”) is the entity with direct authority over the Commonwealth’s Building Code. This section would require the BBRS to work with the Department of Energy Resources to promulgate regulations for electric vehicle charging within one year. In particular, requiring new buildings to have the ability to install charging stations in the future is a low-cost measure that will set us up for success in the long-run.
- **Section 4 – Fair Access Requirements for Public Charging Stations.** This section is based upon a California law passed in 2013, the Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Open Access Act, designed to stop charging providers from unfairly preventing electric vehicle owners from accessing charging stations that are generally available to the public. This includes (1) a prohibition on “member-only” charging stations, (2) a requirement to allow payment by credit card or mobile technology, and (3) disclosure to the public federal database.

- **Section 5 – State Leading by Example.** Current law requires a fuel efficiency standard for passenger vehicles purchased by the Commonwealth. This section would require this standard to specifically incorporate electric vehicles, with a requirement that 25% of yearly purchases run on electricity by 2025. This section would also require a study on the opportunities for electrification of all segments of the state fleet, including regional transit authorities.

The undersigned organizations strongly support the passage of the measures contained in H. 3085/S. 1824 into law this year. We also urge the Joint Transportation Committee and the entire Massachusetts legislature to start thinking more broadly about the other important issues touched on in this joint testimony.

Respectfully,

Mark LeBel	Acadia Center
Kevin Miller	ChargePoint
Joel Wool	Clean Water Action
Jennifer Rushlow	Conservation Law Foundation
Mark Renburke & Al Dahlberg	Drive Electric Cars New England
Berl Hartman	Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2)
Josh Craft	Environmental League of Massachusetts
William Ravanese	Health Care Without Harm
Jeannette Orsino	Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities
Daniel Gatti	Massachusetts League of Environmental Voters
Eugenia Gibbons	Mass Energy
John Rosenthal	Meredith Management
Janet Gail Besser	Northeast Clean Energy Council
Tedd Saunders	Saunders Hotel Group
Emily Norton	Sierra Club
Kathleen Connor	Voltrek