



Downtown New Haven

## ZERO EMISSION VEHICLES

### WHAT ARE ZEVs?

Zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) include electric vehicles (EVs) and other vehicles that emit zero tailpipe emissions, such as fuel cell vehicles. Some models include a small gas tank as a backup source of fuel, but they rely primarily on electricity and are still much cleaner than internal-combustion vehicles.

Approximately 40% of Connecticut's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions come from transportation. Gas-powered cars and trucks also cause local air pollution, which can harm public health. ZEVs are 70% cleaner than conventional vehicles, even taking into account GHG emissions caused by generating electricity used to charge electric vehicles. Encouraging ZEV use will improve Connecticut's air quality and help the state reach its GHG emissions goals under the Comprehensive Energy Strategy and Global Warming Solutions Act.

### WHY DO WE NEED INCENTIVES?

ZEVs are gaining in popularity, but there are still many barriers that prevent more Connecticut residents from driving an electric or fuel cell car. First, ZEVs are more expensive than comparable gasoline cars. Also, consumers who regularly travel long distances must investigate whether the electric vehicle charging infrastructure is sufficient to ensure that they can reach their destination without running out of power.

In the mid 2000s, financial incentives such as rebates and sales tax exemptions enabled hybrid cars to become mainstream. While these incentives for hybrids have since expired, almost every major car company now offers one or several hybrid models at a much more competitive and affordable price.

### WHAT CAN WE DO TO PROMOTE ZEVs?

There are a variety of incentives that can help increase ZEV sales as required by the Connecticut Clean Cars Statute:

#### Financial Incentives

Currently, people who purchase a new ZEV are eligible to receive up to a \$7,500 tax credit from the federal government. Connecticut should offer an additional rebate or sales tax exemption of \$2,500-\$5,000 on purchase or lease to make ZEVs more affordable compared to similar gasoline models. These incentives have proven effective in other states. The legislature should

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## ZERO EMISSION VEHICLES *continued*

also consider requiring nighttime electric rates to be reduced to encourage drivers to charge their vehicles at home when energy demand is lowest.

### Infrastructure Incentives

Connecticut currently has over 180 electric vehicle charging stations and is continuing with plans to install more. DEEP has a strong goal of having a charging station within 10 minutes of any location within the state. In order to help quickly expand Connecticut's charging network, the legislature should provide tax incentives to encourage businesses to install charging stations.

### Other Incentives

There are other ways to make owning or leasing a ZEV attractive other than reducing the cost. Connecticut should look for ways to offer benefits to ZEV drivers, including unrestricted access to HOV lanes, free parking, and more reserved parking spaces in garages and lots.

In addition to these incentives, Connecticut can also update the building code to facilitate EV charging infrastructure, ensure the electrical grid is prepared for increased charging, streamline the municipal permitting process, and lead by example by purchasing ZEVs for the state's fleets.

In 2015, the General Assembly is considering legislation that creates financial incentives for purchasing ZEVs.

For more information  
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