

2014 -- H 7726

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF ENERGY RESOURCES TO ISSUE A  
REPORT DESCRIBING ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS  
REGULATORY ISSUES AFFECTING ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Introduced By: Representatives Ruggiero, Walsh, Ferri, Handy, and Marshall

Date Introduced: February 27, 2014

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

1           WHEREAS, Plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs) have tremendous potential to reduce  
2 residents' and business' expenditures on imported gasoline and diesel and advance the state's  
3 clean energy and climate goals. There is an urgent need for the State of Rhode Island to provide  
4 clear guidance for PEV owners, utilities, regulators, third-party providers, and other stakeholders,  
5 and to facilitate and prepare for large-scale PEV adoption in a manner that provides consumer  
6 and environmental benefits to the maximum extent possible; and

7           WHEREAS, The Transportation & Climate Initiative, a regional collaboration of 12  
8 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic jurisdictions that seeks to develop the clean energy economy and  
9 reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector, cites a recent Pike Research survey  
10 highlighting that the Providence-New Bedford-Fall River metropolitan area is likely to have high  
11 penetration rates or absolute sales of electric vehicles relative to the national average; and

12           WHEREAS, Rhode Island is including PEVs in its annual purchase of state cars and  
13 trucks and is also allowing cities and towns to participate in PEV procurement; and

14           WHEREAS, The Office of Energy Resources completed installation of 50 Level 2 (240  
15 volt) electric vehicle supply equipment throughout Rhode Island; and

16           WHEREAS, Increasing the use of electricity for transportation through the large-scale  
17 adoption of PEVs represents a significant opportunity to further important state policy goals to  
18 reduce transportation expenditure on imported gasoline and diesel, boost economic activity by  
19 keeping more of our energy dollars in state, diversify our transportation fuel networks, reduce

1 greenhouse gas pollution, and reduce criteria air pollutants; and

2 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (Office) is well suited to  
3 consider and make recommendations regarding the structural reforms necessary to ensure that  
4 PEVs are integrated into the electric system in a manner that enhances distribution system  
5 reliability, minimizes costs, and protects consumers; and

6 WHEREAS, The Office has launched a working group to investigate grid modernization  
7 which will address many of the issues involved with deployment of PEVs; now, therefore be it

8 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and  
9 Providence Plantations, in order to plan for increased electricity demand associated with PEVs,  
10 hereby respectfully requests The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources to commence an  
11 investigation of the issues affecting PEVs with the goals of facilitating PEV adoption,  
12 maintaining and enhancing system reliability, minimizing cost, and maximizing environmental  
13 benefits. In its investigation, the Office shall seek public input and may coordinate its  
14 investigation with its own effort to address grid modernization, including coordination with any  
15 grid modernization working group convened by the Office; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully requests the Office to issue a report, on  
17 or before April 15, 2015, that provides recommendations to advance the goals described herein  
18 including recommendations for regulatory action and to address the following issues:

- 19 • Establishing guiding principles to inform decision-making for plug-in electric vehicle  
20 issues;
- 21 • Establish a schedule for forecasting loads as PEVs are integrated into the system,  
22 including the impact of PEVs charging on electric demand and transmission and distribution  
23 facilities during periods of peak demand. This process should result in an understanding of the  
24 infrastructure and energy costs associated with PEVs. There is also a need to explore the  
25 interaction between PEV infrastructure needs and other grid modernization efforts;
- 26 • Establish reporting and analysis requirements for utilities over time;
- 27 • Identify rate-setting mechanisms, including time-variable rate design for residential  
28 customers, to encourage PEV owners to maximize vehicle charging during periods of lower  
29 impact on the grid in order to minimize costly investments in distribution infrastructure;
- 30 • Explore the implications of allowing for the purchase of stored energy back from  
31 electric vehicle owners (vehicle-to-grid) and changes to rates and standards that would facilitate  
32 this;
- 33 • Develop procedures for accelerated utility review and service upgrades related to PEVs;
- 34 • Define regulatory treatment for non-utility, third-party transportation electricity

1 providers;

2 • Establish requirements for consumer education for PEV owners concerning vehicle  
3 charging costs, residential charging infrastructure installation, protecting the reliability of the  
4 distribution system, and other challenges that new PEV owners may face;

5 • Determine appropriate policies for competition and market forces;

6 • Address the issues related to the provision of electricity by non-utilities for delivery of  
7 PEV charging, and clarify whether companies that procure electricity at wholesale will be subject  
8 to the same set of regulations and requirements as any other entity wishing access to wholesale  
9 markets directly; and

10 • Require coordination, to the maximum extent practicable, with other New England  
11 states to maximize consistency among state policies; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully requests the Office to issue a report  
13 describing its findings and recommendations to address regulatory issues affecting electric  
14 vehicles to the General Assembly on or before April 15, 2015; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
16 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Commissioner of The Rhode Island Office  
17 of Energy Resources.

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