

Before the House Transportation Committee
Written by Zack Pistora, Kansas Sierra Club
Opponent to HB 2060
1/26/17



Chairman Proehl and Honorable Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition of HB 2060; which increases annual registration fees on hybrid and electric vehicles. HB 2060 has some negative repercussions, listed here:

HB 2060 discourages use of hybrid and electric vehicles, when these vehicles ought to be encouraged.

HB 2060 would escalate registration fees for hybrid vehicles two and a half times over to \$75 per year, and five times over for electric vehicles (EVs) at \$150 per year. While it is understood that these vehicles currently do not contribute as much to the motor fuels tax, these automobiles are advantageous to solely fossil-fueled vehicles when it comes to emissions and air pollution. These fee increases also appear to leverage more costs to these lighter vehicles than to heavier vehicles, which create significantly more damage to Kansas roads. Hybrids and EVs are better for overall road safety than big trucks and SUVs too, so why discourage their adoption by adding higher fees? Keep in mind, hybrids and EVs are still constitute such a tiny portion of total vehicles on our roads.

Kansas should encourage sustainable lifestyles and technological advancement to our residents, instead of pushing higher costs onto them. Regarding commercial interests, other states are capitalizing off of the new industry of hybrids and EVs. With our centered geography, we have an advantage for our car dealers to sell their hybrids and EVs out of Kansas and establish electric vehicle infrastructure here in our state. We should really encourage this type of business here.

Let the market control the steering wheel when it comes to vehicle choice.

Kansans who drive hybrids and EVs have spent extra dollars to reduce their fossil fuel consumption and benefit our collective health and environment. These committed individuals and businesses are helping the whole on their own dime. We should not be raising their annual registration fees, especially when they likely pay higher taxes anyway for owning a newer and probably more expensive vehicle. The free market is driving the growing use of EVs and hybrids; HB 2060 goes against our market capitalism model by interjecting governmental regulation and cost burdens on individual vehicle choice.

Ask yourself what the true point of this legislation is.

If we need to assess a greater motor fuels charge for hybrids and electrics, it should be charged at the charging station. If you think hybrids and EVs are stealing money from Kansas roads, you might want to look at what our Governor's office is currently doing to highway funds. If we need to raise more dollars for our roads and highways, then a uniform increase of fees on all our vehicles would be better than resorting to this vehicle discrimination.

Sincerely,

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The Sierra Club is the largest grassroots environmental organization dedicated to preserving, protecting, and enjoying our great outdoors. The Kansas Chapter represents our state's strongest grassroots voice on environmental matters for more than forty years now.