

Testimony to the House Environment and Transportation Committee  
HB 913 Motor Vehicles - Certificate of Title Fees - Zero—Emission Plug-In Electric  
Drive Vehicles  
**Position: Unfavorable**

19 February 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair  
Room 251, House Office Building, Annapolis, MD 21401

Honorable Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

My name is Scott Wilson, and I currently drive a 2017 Chevy Bolt EV and a 2013 Nissan Leaf. I serve on the Maryland Zero Emission Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Council, and I'm also Vice President of the Electric Vehicle Association of Greater Washington DC. The following remarks are entirely on my behalf.

As an EV driver, I want nothing more than to pay my fair share in road taxes. I don't like potholes any more than the next guy. And, given the gravity of the TTF shortfall, I'm very willing to join with all other Maryland drivers and pay a \$75 annual surcharge. However, rather than charge an extra arbitrary \$25 for EV owners, we should first examine the findings of the Maryland Commission on Transportation Revenue and Infrastructure Needs (TRAIN).

Testimony at TRAIN has shown that the real cause of declining TTF revenue is primarily the decrease in gasoline purchases due to increasing Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards in the wider fleet. CAFE standards will continue to rise, raising a fair question about whether, for example, hybrids like the Toyota Prius have been "paying their fair share".

We now have a forum to hash out thoughtful, policy-driven options to improve TTF funding. TRAIN took testimony last year and will make final recommendations at the end of this year. The Interim Report last January recommended only that the General Assembly consider options to collect revenue for the TTF, which I support. We should let TRAIN finish its work by allowing it to take the time to consider a broad range of funding options, most of which are already being used or piloted in other states. The General Assembly should base TTF revenue policy on the TRAIN conclusions.

In fact, there is a solution that is both fair and which would permanently solve TTF funding: implementing a Road Usage Charge (RUC) also known as a Vehicle Mile Tax (VMT). A VMT is the fairest solution since it would charge vehicles in direct proportion

to their road use. The more you drive, the more you pay, the less you drive, the less you pay, which is the way gas cars are taxed now. A VMT would also enable charging by weight, thus genuinely accounting for road wear and tear. Rather than charging EV's an extra \$25 annually, we should use the situation as an opportunity to explore, informed by TRAIN, a pilot VMT system, eventually going live for EVs and finally for all cars.

There are many ways to implement a VMT which include robust and verifiable privacy protections, and we can learn from the states that are already doing so. Oregon<sup>1</sup>, Utah<sup>2</sup>, Virginia<sup>3</sup>, and even deep red Oklahoma<sup>4</sup> all have active or pilot VMT programs. Washington, California, Nevada, Colorado, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New Jersey, Delaware, Hawaii, and Maine all have VMT pilots. 20 other states, including Maryland<sup>5</sup>, are researching VMT programs through multi-state consortia. The National Conference of State Legislatures<sup>6</sup> has shown that VMT programs are affordable, effective, and privacy-protecting. The TRAIN Commission has taken testimony<sup>7</sup> which included VMT and has stated it will consider VMT in 2024.

As an EV driver, I want nothing more than to pay my fair share. Let's not get in front of the TRAIN, let's wait for the TRAIN to come in.

Thank you for your time,

Scott Wilson

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.myorego.org/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://roadusagecharge.utah.gov/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/vehicles/taxes-fees/mileage-choice>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fairmilesok.com/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://tetcoalitionmbuf.org/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ncsl.org/resources/details/ncsl-road-usage-charges-summit-agenda-presentations-june-2022>

<sup>7</sup> Ed Regan "2023 Outlook on Fuel Tax Sustainability" at [2:12:45 https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Committees/Media/false?cmte=tri&clip=APP\\_8\\_24\\_2023\\_meeting\\_1&ys=2023rs](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Committees/Media/false?cmte=tri&clip=APP_8_24_2023_meeting_1&ys=2023rs)