

DAVID FRASER-HIDALGO  
*Legislative District 15*  
Montgomery County

Environment and Transportation Committee

*Chair*  
Motor Vehicle and Transportation  
Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 223  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3186 · 301-858-3186  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3186  
David.Fraser.Hidalgo@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Delegate Marc A. Korman  
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee  
House Office Building – Room 251  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Mr. Chairman,

I am writing in favor of HB 150 – the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program and Diesel Vehicles Emissions Control Program – Fees and Fines.

HB 150 establishes a fee of fourteen dollars to be collected biannually on each motor vehicle registered in the state that is granted an exemption from the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP). The fee is mandated to be deposited into the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund where it will be utilized to expand electric vehicle infrastructure and provide incentives to increase electric vehicle ownership.

The Maryland VEIP testing is a crucial component of the State’s commitment to improving air quality. By requiring inspections of vehicle emission systems every two years along with repair orders for those vehicles that fail inspection, VEIP drastically reduces common pollutants in compliance with the Clean Air Act.<sup>1</sup> While this program helps address the concern of greenhouse gas emissions, there are some vehicles that are exempt from the state’s efforts to improve our air quality. Exempt vehicles include antique or historic vehicles, vehicles from 1995 or older, and electric or diesel vehicles.

Greenhouse gas emissions and related air pollutants have a lifelong and damaging impact on our community’s health. According to the American Lung Association, four Maryland counties earned an ‘F’ grade based on observation of ozone and particle pollution. These counties included Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford, and Prince George’s County.<sup>2</sup> Most particles in the atmosphere are a result of a complex reaction of chemicals such as nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide, which are emitted from

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<sup>1</sup> “About the VEIP Program ,” Maryland Department of the Environment, n.d., <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/mobilesources/pages/veipaboutourprogram.aspx>.

<sup>2</sup> “American Lung Association Report: Many Marylanders Exposed to Less Ozone Smog Air Pollution, But Four Counties Still Earn ‘F’ Grades; Most Counties in Metro Area Ranking Among Worst 30 in Nation,” Press Releases | American Lung Association | American Lung Association, April 19, 2023, <https://www.lung.org/media/press-releases/md-sota-2023>.

automobiles.<sup>3</sup> In turn, these toxic air pollutants irritate the hearts and lungs of residents and worsen the effects of asthma, especially among children and elderly.<sup>4</sup> In Maryland alone, as many as 390 premature deaths are anticipated each year as a result of fine particles and ground-level ozone.<sup>5</sup>

To be clear, this bill simply requires those exempt from emissions testing pay their **fair share** towards the environmental health and overall well-being of the state. If a vehicle does not pass inspection, all the owner must do is pay the \$14 fee and they are still permitted to drive their vehicle. In addition, I would like to note that via an amendment, if the MVA has granted a repair order waiver to a vehicle that failed to pass emissions inspection, the owner is not required to pay the \$14 fee stipulated in this bill, as they've already paid for emissions testing. This would prevent vehicle owners from being charged twice for fees they've previously paid. The bill also exempts people who drive motorcycles from having to pay the \$14 fine through an amendment.

By excluding vehicles from emissions testing, we fail to ensure that all vehicles are held to the same emissions standards. HB 150 addresses this issue by charging specific exempt vehicles the same cost acquired at a VEIP station, fourteen dollars, biannually to be deposited into the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund. The fees would fund promotion of electric vehicles as a sustainable alternative to typical motor vehicles. By transitioning to electric vehicles, Maryland would make a great stride in achieving its carbon emissions goals and upholding environmental justice. It is only fair that everyone pays the same fee for the shared interest of pure, clean, and breathable air.

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<sup>3</sup> "Particulate Matter (PM) Pollution," Environmental Protection Agency, n.d., <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/particulate-matter-pm-basics#:~:text=Some%20are%20emitted%20directly%20from,power%20plants%2C%20industries%20and%20automobiles>

<sup>4</sup> Kevin X. Shen, "Exposure to Diesel Particulate Pollution in Maryland," Union of Concerned Scientists, 2022, <https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/diesel-pollution-md#read-online-content>.

<sup>5</sup> "The Maryland Healthy Air Act," Maryland Department of the Environment, n.d., [https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/pages/md\\_haa.aspx#:~:text=In%20Maryland%20alone%2C%20as%20many,visibility%20and%20damage%20sensitive%20ecosystems](https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/pages/md_haa.aspx#:~:text=In%20Maryland%20alone%2C%20as%20many,visibility%20and%20damage%20sensitive%20ecosystems).