

February 24, 2022

Testimony on SB 687
Zero-Emission Truck Act of 2022
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Position: Favorable

Tina Slater of Silver Spring MD supports SB 687.

This proposed legislation would require that the Maryland Department of Environment adopt the Advanced Clean Truck rule by December 1, 2022. This rule requires that vehicle manufacturers sell an increasing annual percentage of medium and heavy duty vehicles including pickup, delivery, and semi trucks as well as school buses between Model Year 2026 (for states that adopt in 2022) and 2035. These vehicles represent 10% of vehicles on the road but disproportionately contribute to 30% of carbon emissions, 45% of toxic nitrogen oxide emissions, and 57% of health harming particulate matter emitted by the entire transportation sector in the US.

While automakers have detailed plans to electrify large portions of their fleets over this coming decade, now several truck manufacturers are joining the party! Ford plans to develop an all-electric version of its popular Transit cargo van. Volvo Trucks has a zero-emission semi truck, the VNR Electric, with a 150-mile range, speeds up to 65 mph on the highway, and get this --- an 80% charge for the vehicle takes 70 minutes (that's enough time for lunch and a mini-nap!).

This bill phases-in the requirements for electric medium and heavy-duty trucks, starting four years from now. By that time, there will certainly be many electric vehicles to choose from. These newer larger vehicles will come with better batteries, advanced technologies, and provide extended range at a lower cost.

Under Section 177 of the Clean Air Act, states other than California are not allowed to set their own emissions standards. However, states can choose to follow and adopt vehicle standards that California has enacted. Maryland first adopted California's clean car standards for personal vehicle electrification through legislative action in 2007. Maryland has the opportunity to enact similar standards again and clean up large dirty diesel vehicles that continue to harm our health and exacerbate climate change.

This legislation would help Maryland follow through on its commitment for 30% of all medium and heavy duty vehicles sales to be electric by 2030 and could create high quality green jobs in the process. Maryland would also be included in the growing number of states adopting California's standards, including Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Washington, and Oregon.

I encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation.