

TESTIMONY

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Support

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Testimony of Sal Risalvato

Chairman Smith, members of the Committee, I am pleased to support this bill on behalf of the members of the existing motor fuel retail community. I believe that my members can and in fact must be a part of the clean energy transportation revolution that this Committee, the Administration, and the State's new Energy Master Plan are focused on.

Over the last decade that I have been leading this association, I have consistently told my membership that they should not think of themselves as being in the gasoline or petroleum business; they are in the motor fuel business, and it just so happens that for right now (and for the last several decades) the only motor fuels demanded by the motoring public were petroleum products. I have instead asked my members to think of themselves as being in the "Transportation Energy Business".

One thing everyone should understand about the current motor fuel market is that oil companies play very little role anymore (for which small business owners are very grateful). With the exception of Speedway (all locations owned by refiner Marathon), the oil companies have divested themselves of virtually every fuel retailer in this and just about every other state. Every Shell, Exxon, BP, or other branded location you see is an independent operator, most often a small business owner who has signed up for a franchise agreement with one of the well-known oil company brands. Their desire is to sell products the consumer demands, and there is very little romantic attachment left for gasoline. Alternative fuels are safer, cleaner, more reliable, and easier to maintain than massive underground storage tanks filled with a potentially serious pollutant.

Market forces have already determined where the best locations are for the transportation refueling infrastructure: it's the location fuel retailers already are and have survived at for decades now. For some motorists, a dedicated station to recharge this vehicle quickly will be the most convenient, most plausible, or perhaps only way for them to recharge their battery electric vehicle. I am confident the market will provide for it—if it is allowed to.

There are enough forces working against the more widespread adoption of EV charging, especially the DC fast chargers my members are interested in. Local government red tape should not be one of them. This is especially important because sometimes the installation of these charging stations is dependent on some form of outside grant which often is tied to some kind of timeline for installation and the provider may not be interested in waiting around for local officials to act.

This bill is a simple way to ensure that the government is not needlessly preventing independent business owners from investing in the future of their business. I ask that you support it. Thank you.