

HB 23: Ohio Transportation Budget 2024-2025
Proponent Testimony of Drive Electric Columbus
for the Reduced Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle Registration Fee

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Ohio Senate Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 23, the 2024-2025 Ohio Transportation Budget. I am Mryia Williams, Executive Director of Drive Electric Columbus. We are a non-profit organization that offers education and outreach programming to foster Electric Vehicle adoption and ownership. Our membership is comprised of Electric Vehicle enthusiasts and owners who volunteer their time and personal electric vehicles for showcases, ride-and-drives, and speaking engagements. We also support owners by bringing them together to: socialize with others who have a common interest, learn about new Electric Vehicle (EV) policies, celebrate charging infrastructure launches, and offer discussions on various topics about services for EV owners.

Today, I am writing on behalf of Drive Electric Columbus to support the reduction of the Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle's (PHEV) additional registration fee (R.C. 4503.10; Section 803.10). The bill reduces, from \$200 to \$100, the additional motor vehicle registration fee that owners must pay when registering a PHEV. This fee reduction is appropriate because a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle is powered for the majority of its mileage range by gasoline and only in a small part by a battery system that can be recharged via an external source of electricity.

Electric Vehicle owners of all types; Hybrid, Plug-In Hybrid, and Battery Electric Vehicles, recognize that we use Ohio roads and therefore need to pay towards their care and creation. We are glad to see the more reasonable fee for PHEVs while continuing to support road maintenance and new projects. The reduced fee included in the 2024-2025 Transportation Budget for PHEVs is one step towards a more equitable distribution of EV Registration Fees.

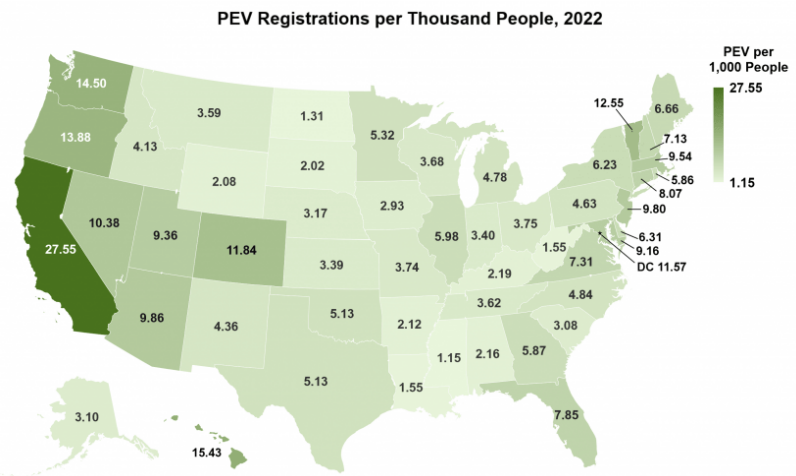
As adoption rates increase, Ohio will need to evaluate the fee structure and take additional steps to make sure our roads continue to receive the required funding. According to the

Department of Energy, Ohio currently has 3.75 Electric Vehicles per 1000 registered vehicles. The included map from the Vehicle Technologies Office shows Electric Vehicle Registration Data as analyzed by Argonne

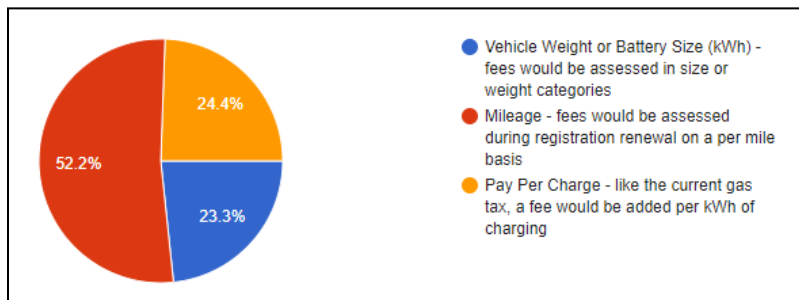
National Laboratory (published February 2023). The current Electric Vehicle fee structure supplements the gasoline tax appropriately but as adoption rates increase, the fee structure could allow for shortfalls. When the time comes to start evaluating the next

Transportation Budget in Ohio, it would be beneficial to consider a different fee system. Implementing a per-mile fee structure, would not only allow

for a more equitable distribution of expenses based on actual road use but would also allow for high-mileage drivers of fuel-efficient vehicles and EVs to pay their fair share. We can lean into knowledge gained from programs like OReGO, Oregon’s enrollment program for vehicle registration based on a normal plate fee plus a 1.9 cent per mile tax to cover road usage.



In the 2023 Drive Electric Columbus Annual Membership Survey, we asked our members if they



were designing a new Ohio EV fee structure to select which one of three methods they would prefer. The results show a majority (52.2%) would prefer a per-mile fee that would be assessed during registration renewal. Our members know the most equitable way to pay for road use is by mileage. The

current fee structure doesn’t take into account EVs which are used as short-distance commuter vehicles nor does it properly charge high-mileage drivers. Equitably distributed fees for road usage would benefit both the vehicle owners and the Transportation Budget, especially once we see an increase in the EV adoption rate.

On behalf of Drive Electric Columbus, I again want to express our support and appreciation for the reduction of the fee for Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicles in the 2024-2025 Ohio Transportation Budget. We hope that we can work together with you in the future to establish a better fee structure for electric vehicles which will support our roads in 2026 and beyond.

References

Department of Energy, Vehicle Technologies Office. (n.d.). *Plug-In Vehicle Registrations per*

Thousand People in 2022. Energy.gov. Fact of the Week #1279

OReGO: Oregon's Road Usage Charge Program. (2023). Oregon.gov.

<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/programs/pages/orego.aspx>

Drive Electric Columbus. (n.d.). *EV Fee Application Method Preference*.

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