

A Bill for an Act Relating to Electric Vehicles.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State relies primarily on the consumption of imported oil to satisfy its energy needs. The legislature further finds that because oil is a limited resource, the State must develop and implement mechanisms to reduce the consumption of oil and other petroleum-based products in Hawaii.

The legislature further finds that the residents of the State consume a large quantity of gasoline for motor vehicle use. According to recent statistics, there are over nine hundred thousand registered motor vehicles on Hawaii's roads and highways. Because of this, Hawaii's drivers consumed over three hundred seventy-five million gallons of gasoline in 1990.

One possible mechanism of reducing the consumption of petroleum products is to promote the use of newer technologies in everyday life. The legislature recognizes that many advances have already been made in the field of transportation. The emergence of alternatives to fossil-fueled vehicles has the potential to significantly reduce our dependency on petroleum-based products.

The purpose of this Act is to:

- (1) Improve the transportation of people and goods through the expanded use of electric vehicles by undertaking a program of financial and regulatory incentives designed to promote the purchase or lease of such vehicles;
- (2) Obtain the benefits to the state economy of lessened dependence on imported petroleum products through greater reliance on vehicles that utilize domestically-produced electricity as a source of energy; and
- (3) Preserve and enhance air quality by encouraging the widespread use of vehicles that are emissions-free in operation.

SECTION 2. It is the policy of the State to support the development and widespread consumer acceptance of electric vehicles within the State. This policy is intended to accelerate the use of a substantial number of electric vehicles in the State to attain significant reductions in air pollution, improve energy efficiency in transportation, and reduce the State's dependence on imported oil or petroleum products. Exempting electric vehicles from various requirements applicable to conventional, internal combustion engine-powered vehicles may encourage operators to choose electric vehicles.

SECTION 3. The department of transportation shall:

- (1) Establish and adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for the registration of an electric vehicle in this State; and
- (2) Establish and issue a special license plate to designate that the vehicle to which the license plate is affixed is an electric vehicle.

SECTION 4. An electric vehicle on which a license plate described in section 3 is affixed shall be exempt from:

- (1) The payment of parking fees, including those collected through parking meters, charged by any governmental authority, other than a branch of the federal government, when being operated in this State; and
- (2) High occupancy vehicle restrictions or other traffic control measures.

SECTION 5. For a period of five years from the effective date of this Act, the motor vehicle registration fee and other fees, if any, assessed upon or associated with the registration of an electric vehicle in this State, including any fees associated with the issuance of a license plate described in section 3, shall be waived; provided that the department of transportation shall review the incentive program every two years to determine the proper level of incentives for continuation of the program.

SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 1997.

(Approved June 21, 1997.)