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February 11, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve  
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee  
251 House Office Building  
Annapolis MD 21401

***Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 592 – State Vehicle Fleet – Conversion to Zero-Emission Electric Vehicles***

Dear Chairman Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 592 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

House Bill 592 would prohibit all State agencies, including MDOT, from entering into a contract for the purchase or lease of fleet vehicles unless they are zero-emission electric vehicles.

MDOT supports the goal of replacing the State's light-duty vehicle (LDV) fleet with zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs), but the timeline proposed in House Bill 592 is difficult to achieve. Currently, light-duty ZEVs are significantly more expensive than conventional fuel vehicles. The State purchases approximately 400 LDVs per year (41 percent are sedans; 59 percent are light-duty trucks). Of the sedans about half are used for law enforcement. The current average price difference between a ZEV and conventionally powered vehicle is about \$9,000. Due to the limited operating budgets of State agencies and the limited ZEV model options, it would be difficult to achieve the legislation's stated goal of full 100 percent ZEV purchases beginning in Fiscal Year 2023. It is expected that this will change with time but not in the next year and a half.

In addition, this quick shift in procurement policy in Fiscal Year 2023 required by House Bill 592 does not factor in the significant cost, needed planning, or construction challenges associated with the infrastructure required for widespread ZEV adoption. The State must invest in electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) to ensure the proper charging of the fleet as it transitions to ZEV vehicles.

The MDOT is also concerned with the lack of clarity or specificity in House Bill 592 as it relates to the definition of the State Vehicle Fleet. The State of Maryland, including MDOT, maintains a vast fleet of light-duty, heavy-duty, and off-road vehicles. Many of these vehicles, such as dump trucks, snow removal equipment, law enforcement, and emergency response vehicles are

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not currently available in zero-emission electric models. These vehicles are also critical to maintaining the safety and security of Maryland's transportation infrastructure. The State must maintain flexibility to purchase the vehicles needed for our essential operations.

Per recommendations from the Maryland Commission on Climate Change and the Zero Emission and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Council, Maryland State agencies, including MDOT units such as MVA, MDE, DGS, DBM, MEA, and others, are currently working on a plan to responsibly accelerate the turnover of the State LDV fleet to ZEVs. Medium and heavy duty fleet conversion has an even longer timeline to allow for conversion.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 592.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Einhorn  
State Legislative Officer  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1102