

Feb. 11,

Dear Senator Mazza,

I write to you to express my support for S.47, which will give Vermont consumers greater choice when shopping for electric vehicles. All three major political parties acknowledge that Vermont needs to encourage EV use to reduce our state's carbon footprint.

Current laws restrain access to new EVs. Conventional car manufacturers with traditional dealer networks have been slow to embrace EV technology. Upstart EV companies, such as Tesla, have adopted a different retailing and servicing strategy that does not include dealers. Unfortunately, innovative EV companies are blocked from setting up facilities in Vermont by out-dated dealership laws.

S.47 will level the playing field. Current laws protect a few existing dealers and create a barrier to new companies. Would the state tell game-changing manufacturers of other products that they can't sell their products here? Of course not. S.47 will open up the marketplace to give Vermonters access to the latest in EV technology.

Current dealers are protected. Opponents are concerned that conventional manufacturers could use this bill to circumvent their own dealers. However, Section 3E of S.47 specifically prohibits manufacturers who now have or previously had dealers in the state from setting up their own service facilities.

Consumer protections will remain. S.47 clearly says in Section 3B that manufacturers will have to meet the licensing requirements that are already on the books. Consumer protection laws will apply to all manufacturers and dealers equally. This bill is pro-consumer because it increases purchasing options with the same protections already in place.

EV ownership will be advanced. Prices of EVs are steadily coming down and will continue to fall as more EVs are sold in Vermont and other states. EVs are no longer a curiosity out of reach of the general populace. The Tesla Model 3, for example, costs less than many conventional SUVs and trucks that Vermonters are buying today. Competition will encourage manufacturers to bring new products to market and lower prices.

It is in the state's interest to give Vermonters the opportunity to purchase EVs sold by manufacturers such as Tesla. S.47 can help the state reach its carbon reduction goals. We will all benefit if the market for EVs is expanded in Vermont.

Sincerely,
Paul Carnahan
Montpelier