

Thank you, (Mr. Chair and) Committee Members. My name is Deborah Doyon, I am a native Vermonter and reside in St. Johnsbury, Vermont.

I believe that the Vermont vehicle inspection program is flawed and should be eliminated entirely. Requiring state inspections every other year is not solving the problem. It will compound it.

The costs associated with each inspection go well beyond the \$50-75 fee for the inspection itself. They often include repairs mandated by inspection results, which are an added financial burden on vehicle owners. Some of these repairs seem arbitrary and unnecessary.

There is a significant conflict of interest when the individuals performing inspections also profit from the repairs. This arrangement raises serious questions about the objectivity and fairness of the process.

For example, I experienced a situation where my two-year-old vehicle failed inspection due to surface rust on some areas of the brake rotors. ~~Senate Bill S.309 states:~~ The inspection requirements state:

“the presence of rust or pitting on brake rotors, by itself, does not constitute a failure for the purpose of the annual safety inspection required under 23 V.S.A. § 1222”

I took my car to another mechanic to validate this finding and they agreed that it was only surface rust, no pitting, and not on the areas where the brake pads contact the rotors. However, because my vehicle was flagged as failed in the inspection system, I was unable to obtain an override to pass the inspection.

My options were to drive with an expired inspection sticker and risk fines, or to pay approximately \$1,600 for new brakes and rotors to ensure passing the inspection. I felt my options were unfair and that I was being taken advantage of within the current system. ✓

Additionally, I encountered issues with the required repairs, such as having brake pads installed improperly, and braking problems when aftermarket parts were used instead of OEM parts. It took six weeks and multiple visits to correct these issues. I should make it clear that my vehicle had dealer-installed components and was braking great prior to failing the inspection.

The inspection process did not make my car safer!

Changing the inspection frequency to every other year does not address these systemic problems; it's merely a superficial change; you're just rearranging the deck-chairs.

A straightforward solution would be to eliminate vehicle inspections altogether. If inspections are to continue, they should be conducted by independent, state-operated facilities with no ties to repair shops to prevent these clear conflicts of interest.

I urge the legislature to consider these issues and take action to reduce the financial burden on Vermont residents.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Deborah Doyon
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