

**Before the House Transportation Committee  
Presented by Zack Pistora, Kansas Sierra Club  
Written-only Opponent Testimony on HB 2004  
January 31, 2023**



Chairman Francis and Honorable Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide oppositional testimony on HB 2004. This bill would place fees at charging stations. However, registration fees for electric vehicles were previously added to take care of this problem.

So as you can see, all-electric vehicles pay over 3 times more into the State Highway Fund (via registration fees) than conventional ICE vehicles regardless of vehicle-miles driven or wear-and-tear on the road. Plug-in hybrid vehicles pay almost twice as much, and they still pay into the State Highway Fund per their gas fill-ups. In other words, the Kansas Legislature passed the 2019 law to resolve the EV road repair concern and EVs already pay into the State Highway Fund.

Certainly, this scheme would better capture funds upon out-of-state EV drivers for their road use, so this policy approach may be preferable ONLY if registration fees were equivalent.

EVs contribute more - pound for pound - into the State Highway Fund than conventional vehicles. See the registration fees below that were installed in 2020.

(C) for passenger vehicles, other than motorcycles, used solely for the carrying of persons for pleasure or business, and for hearses and ambulances a fee of:

- (i) For those having a gross weight of 4,500 pounds or less, \$30;
- (ii) for those having a gross weight of more than 4,500 pounds, \$40;
- (iii) for those motor vehicles that are electric hybrid or plug-in electric **hybrid vehicles, \$50**; and
- (iv) for those motor vehicles that are **all-electric vehicles, \$100**

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**Want Equity in Road Repairs? Increase Fees on the real "Road Wreckers" (Semi-Trucks):**

Compared to traditional fuel-combustion vehicles, electric and hybrid vehicles are advantageous to their heavyweight counterparts when it comes to road damages, road safety, air pollution, congestion, noise, and more. According to a report by the Government Accountability Office, backed by information from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, heavy trucks constitute a disproportionate impact of road damage compared to lightweight vehicles. Their data concludes that the road damage of an 80,000 lb. truck would be the equivalent impact of 9,600 ordinary automobiles. In contrast, 2017 Federal Highway Administration data shows that on average, heavy trucks use the roads 2.5 times more (an average of 25,037 vehicle miles per year vs. 11,507 miles/yr for light-duty vehicles) at about ¼ of the fuel efficiency of a car. Electric and hybrid vehicles comprise the preferred set of vehicle traits, being lightweight and quiet, and often travel a shorter amount of miles due to range limits. They produce much less noise than diesel motors, emit much less air pollution, and are also better for overall road safety

compared to big trucks and SUVs too. Furthermore, electric vehicles may help the broader needs of increased demand to the electrical grid, which would lower the cost of overall costs of electricity.

**Road Repair costs have presumably gone up, but the State's Gasoline Tax has stayed the same for 2 decades:**

According to KS Dept of Revenue data, the Kansas Motor Fuels Tax has stayed at 24 cents per gallon since 2004. Meanwhile, the cumulative price increase from 2004 to today is 57 cents on the dollar. [The average price of gasoline has risen about \$1 over that same time period, but that additional cost doesn't really affect the gas tax]. Put another way, while the cost value of road repair has gone up with inflation through the years, the amount collected per gallon for the road repair has been lagging. So, if we want to have a real conversation about the future of the State Highway Fund, lawmakers need to consider increasing the gas tax, perhaps as high as 37 cents to be consistent with inflation.

**Unless bill sponsors want to equalize registration fees, put a pollution tax on gas guzzlers, increase fees on heavy trucks/semis, or consider increasing the gasoline tax, then I think this particular legislative proposal is unfair and perhaps premature.**

Thank you,

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*The Sierra Club is the largest grassroots environmental organization dedicated to enjoying, exploring, and protecting our great outdoors. The Kansas Chapter represents our state's strongest grassroots voice on environmental matters for more than forty years.*