

Ohio House could vote soon to thwart in-state electric vehicle mandates

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COLUMBUS, Ohio – Republicans on a state House committee sent legislation to the floor that would bar the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency or local governments from blocking the sale of gasoline-powered cars in favor of electric vehicles.

With the blessing of House leadership, the full chamber could soon vote on [House Bill 201](#), which blocks Ohio governments from restricting the sale or use of a car “based on the energy source used to power” the vehicle.

The bill passed committee with backing from the oil and gas industry and the Ohio arm of the Affiliated Construction Trades union. Its GOP sponsors pitched it as a bulwark against inflation, given that “unnecessary market restrictions” increase costs. Plus, they cited the electric vehicle industry supply chain’s reliance on Chinese parts.

Only one person, Mike Halaiko, a retired teacher, spoke against the bill. He questioned how lawmakers plan to transition the state toward an electric vehicle fleet to thwart one of the biggest sources of climate emissions. He said the legislation serves only to promote the oil and gas industry, not Ohio customers.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, transportation sources [emitted the largest share of America’s carbon emissions](#) by economic sector (28%) in 2021, more so than producing electricity, industry, or cooling and heating buildings.

The administration of [President Joe Biden has proposed federal emissions standards](#) that aim to force an estimated 67% of new light-duty vehicle sales and 25% of heavy duty trucks to be electric by 2032. Mandates or not, car manufacturers are significantly increasing electric vehicle production, with General Motors [pledging](#) an all-electric fleet by 2035.

The new law’s effects may be minimal. Federal law or market forces could still force a transition of Ohio’s vehicle fleet. And legislative budget analysts [wrote](#) that they are “unaware and have no evidence of any governmental entity in the state enacting such restrictions.”

State Rep. Brett Hudson Hillyer, a Uhrichsville Republican who sponsored the bill, said in committee it would function similarly to recently enacted legislation that blocks local governments from banning natural gas hookups on new buildings.

After the committee passed HB201 on Tuesday, Rep. Josh Williams, a Toledo-area Republican, pitched lawmakers on a resolution urging the Biden administration to back off on its emission standards and encourage “consumer choice” in the marketplace over “government-preferred vehicle technology mandates.”