

Rhode Island Needs Advanced Vehicle Standards

Rhode Island must adopt two key advanced vehicle standards out of California, Advanced Clean Cars II (ACCII) and Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT), in order to meet the 45% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 statutorily required by *An Act on Climate*. Without these standards, there is no clear path for the emission reductions needed in the transportation sector to meet the 2030 mandate or subsequent requirements for 2040 and 2050.

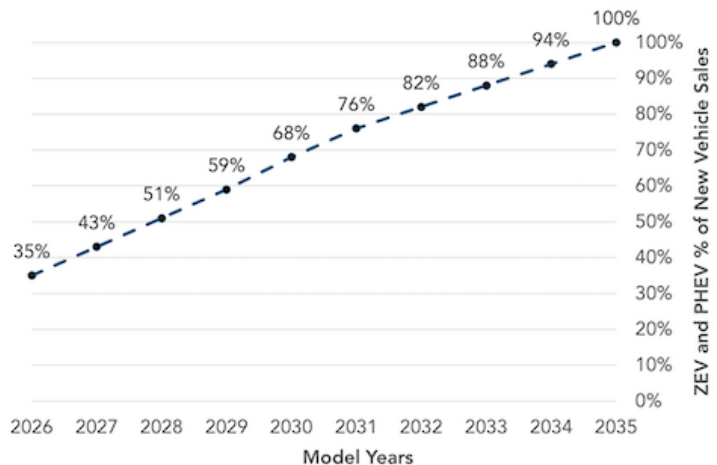
ACCII and ACT will increase consumer choice, deliver significant public health benefits to the Ocean State, and bring Rhode Island on-par with several other states that have already adopted or proposed to adopt these key standards – California, Oregon, Washington, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Vermont. Europe is also phasing out petroleum-fueled vehicles by 2035.

[H6055/S0195](#), *An Act relating to motor and other vehicles – motor vehicle emissions inspection program*, directs the Department of Environmental Management to adopt all motor vehicle emissions standards out of California that are more stringent than federal standards, including ACCII and ACT.

ACCII and ACT both regulate vehicle manufacturers, not consumers.

Advanced Clean Cars II (ACCII)

ACCII requires **automakers** to steadily increase the percentage of vehicles they sell that are electric from 35% in model year 2026 to 100% in model year 2035, per the trajectory illustrated in [this graph](#) from the California Air Resources Board. At the same time, ACCII requires smog-forming emissions from new gas-powered cars to decrease.



Rhode Island must adopt ACCII to:

1. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions as required by the *Act on Climate*.

Transportation is the largest source of GHGs in the state. Rhode Island’s Executive Climate Change Coordinating Councils (RIEC4) 2022 Update to the GHG Reduction Plan estimated that the state will need roughly 86,000 registered electric vehicles (EVs) on the road by 2030. Currently, there are fewer than 7,000 EVs registered in the state. The only state policy currently advancing vehicle electrification in the state is the DRIVE rebate program, which is quickly running out of funding. ACCII would steadily increase the supply of EVs in the state; without it, Rhode Island will not be able to reach 86,000 EVs by 2030 or 45% GHG reductions.

2. Increase consumer choice.

Auto manufacturers are producing EVs for sale on the global market and send supply to those areas with the most supportive policies. That's why, for example, there are many EV models available for sale in Europe that aren't available in the United States, or why within the US there are more options in California than Rhode Island. Adopting ACCII will put Rhode Island on the map and force automakers to send EV models to the Ocean State, benefiting *dealerships* and *consumers* by making sure the full range of choices is available to Rhode Islanders.

3. Protect public health.

Gas-powered cars cause a huge amount of public health harm by releasing particulate matter and other localized air pollution. The [American Lung Association estimates](#) that the cumulative health benefits of electrifying transportation will amount to nearly \$4 billion by 2050 in Rhode Island alone.

Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT)

ACT will require that manufacturers sell [an increasing number of zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles \(MHDVs\)](#), vehicles greater than 8,500 pounds, from 2024 to 2035. The sales target varies according to the size of the vehicle. Specifically, by 2035, the standard will require that electric vehicles make up 55% of Class 2b to Class 3 annual sales, 75% of Class 4 to Class 8 straight truck annual sales, and 40% of truck tractor annual sales. Secondly, ACT will require emissions reductions from new diesel-powered MHDVs still sold during this time period. Rhode Island must adopt ACT to:

1. Decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

MHDVs make up 6% of the vehicles on the road in Rhode Island but contribute [24%](#) of the transportation sector's greenhouse gas emissions. Every new fossil-fuel powered vehicle locks the state into years of further climate-warming emissions.

2. Protect public health.

MHDVs have a disproportionate impact on public health: despite making up only 6% of the vehicles on the road in Rhode Island, they are responsible for [50% of nitrogen emissions and 44% of particulate matter](#) (PM2.5) emissions within the transportation sector. These pollutants are detrimental to human health and have been specifically linked to heart attacks, lung cancer, and the exacerbation of asthma. The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that adopting ACT will lead [to \\$150 million in health savings](#) for the state.

3. Deliver savings to Rhode Island fleets.

EVs are cheaper to operate than fossil fuel powered vehicles. The Union of Concerned Scientists finds that adopting ACT will deliver over [\\$15 million](#) in annual savings to commercial fleets by 2050.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why does Rhode Island need to adopt these standards *out of California*?

Generally, only the federal government has the authority to regulate vehicle emissions or efficiency. However, under the Clean Air Act, the state of California has the right to adopt emissions/efficiency standards that are stricter than federal law – and other states have the right to adopt California's standards. Massachusetts General Law has required the state to adopt California's advanced vehicle standards since the 1990s; it's time for Rhode Island to follow suit.

2. Why do we need *legislation* to adopt ACCII and ACT?

An Act on Climate gives the executive branch the authority to adopt these regulations. However, so far, the executive branch has failed to act. Rhode Island has not moved to adopt the Advanced Clean Trucks or Advanced Clean Cars II standards, both of which other states have already adopted or moved to adopt. H6055/S0195 requires the executive branch to act as soon as possible.

3. What vehicles qualify as “electric” under ACCII?

To count towards the percentage, the vehicles sold by manufacturers must have at least 200 miles of electric range and warranty 80% of the original all-electric range for 10 years or 150,000 miles (whichever comes first). Primarily, ACCII focuses on pure battery-electric vehicles, but 20% of the mandate can be met by plug-in hybrids as long as they have at least 50 miles of electric range. And across the board, there are battery labeling requirements to support recycling and reuse, requirements to allow independent repair shops to service the vehicles, and warranty requirements to create a healthy used market.

4. What will the impact of ACCII be on Rhode Island dealerships?

Rhode Island dealerships will have access to more electric models, as their manufacturers will have to send EV models to Rhode Island to comply with the regulations.

5. What will the impact of ACCII be on Rhode Island consumers?

Consumers in Rhode Island will have access to more vehicle choices. As it stands, many Rhode Islanders drive to Massachusetts to find the electric models they're looking for. By adopting ACCII, the state will make sure that manufacturers send EV models to Rhode Island so that Rhode Island drivers have access to more choice. The regulations DO NOT prevent Rhode Island drivers from owning, selling, or operating new or used gas-powered cars.

Contact

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