

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To standardize and improve safety training specific to electric vehicles for firefighters and other emergency response providers, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. WYDEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To standardize and improve safety training specific to electric vehicles for firefighters and other emergency response providers, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Supporting America’s
5 Firefighters and Emergency Responders to Electric Vehi-
6 cles Act of 2024” or the “SAFER EVs Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

8 In this Act:

1 (1) **ELECTRIC VEHICLE.**—The term “electric
2 vehicle” means a vehicle that draws propulsion en-
3 ergy from a rechargeable energy storage system.

4 (2) **EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROVIDERS.**—The
5 term “emergency response providers” has the mean-
6 ing given that term in section 2 of the Homeland
7 Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101).

8 (3) **SECOND RESPONDER.**—The term “second
9 responder”—

10 (A) means personnel who support the work
11 of emergency response providers ; and

12 (B) includes tow truck operators and sal-
13 vage yard personnel.

14 **SEC. 3. COORDINATION OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE SAFETY**
15 **STANDARDS AND TRAINING.**

16 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Energy shall co-
17 ordinate with the Secretary of Transportation and the Ad-
18 ministrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agen-
19 cy, acting through the United States Fire Administrator,
20 (referred to in this section as the “agency heads”)—

21 (1) to aggregate cross-agency research relating
22 to electric vehicles;

23 (2) to align future research and development ef-
24 forts with respect to electric vehicles; and

1 (3) to plan to effectively deploy electric vehicle
2 training across the United States.

3 (b) EFFORTS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the
4 agency heads shall align and coordinate efforts relating
5 to—

6 (1) the research and coordination of safety and
7 testing standards for electric vehicles and the com-
8 ponents and infrastructure relating to those vehicles,
9 including—

10 (A) electric vehicles;

11 (B) hybrid vehicles;

12 (C) electric buses;

13 (D) hybrid buses; and

14 (E) components and infrastructure relating
15 to replenishing the on-board sources of power of
16 the vehicles described in subparagraphs (A)
17 through (D), including batteries, vehicle charg-
18 ing stations, vehicle battery swap stations, and
19 vehicle-related energy storage units;

20 (2) research and development on emergency re-
21 sponse provider safety and corresponding best prac-
22 tices; and

23 (3) the delivery of safety training course mate-
24 rials to emergency response providers and second re-
25 sponders.

1 (c) TECHNICAL REPORT.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy
3 shall produce a technical report on electric vehicles,
4 and batteries, power storage, and power replenish-
5 ment infrastructure relating to those vehicles, that—

6 (A) documents best practices for con-
7 sumers, emergency response providers, and sec-
8 ond responders in the event of an emergency;

9 (B) identifies gaps in current best prac-
10 tices described in subparagraph (A); and

11 (C) recommends regions of the United
12 States to target for training deployment due to
13 observed increases in the use of electric vehi-
14 cles.

15 (2) UPDATES.—The technical report described
16 in paragraph (1) shall be updated every 3 years.

17 (3) COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION.—In
18 producing the technical report, the Secretary of En-
19 ergy shall—

20 (A) coordinate with the Secretary of
21 Transportation;

22 (B) ensure consultation among, at a min-
23 imum, the Vehicle Technologies Office in the
24 Department of Energy, the National Highway
25 Traffic Safety Administration, the Federal

1 Transit Administration, the Pipeline and Haz-
2 arduous Materials Safety Administration, and
3 the United States Fire Administration; and

4 (C) solicit input from interested parties,
5 including the UL Fire Safety Research Insti-
6 tute, the National Fire Protection Association,
7 the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the
8 International Association of Fire Fighters, the
9 National Volunteer Fire Council, the North
10 American Fire Training Directors, and the
11 International Society of Fire Service Instruc-
12 tors, for the purpose of incorporating important
13 issues from the emergency responder commu-
14 nity that may help shape strategies for devel-
15 oping safety standards, best practices, and ef-
16 fective training materials.

17 (4) FACA EXEMPTION.—Chapter 10 of title 5,
18 United States Code, shall not apply to the coordina-
19 tion or consultation under paragraph (3).

20 (5) PUBLICLY AVAILABLE.—The most recent
21 version of the technical report produced under this
22 subsection shall be—

23 (A) publicly available on the website of the
24 Department of Energy and the Department of
25 Transportation; and

1 (B) linked to on the website of the United
2 States Fire Administration.

3 **SEC. 4. UPDATING SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAMS AND MA-**
4 **TERIALS.**

5 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
7 trator” means the Administrator of the United
8 States Fire Administration.

9 (2) FIREFIGHTING PERSONNEL.—The term
10 “firefighting personnel” has the meaning given that
11 term in section 33 of the Federal Fire Prevention
12 and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229).

13 (3) STATE.—The term “State” has the mean-
14 ing given the term in section 2 of the Homeland Se-
15 curity Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101).

16 (4) STATE FIRE TRAINING GRANT.—The term
17 “State Fire Training Grant” means a State Fire
18 Training Grant issued by the National Fire Acad-
19 emy, as authorized under section 7(f) of the Federal
20 Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C.
21 2206(f)).

22 (b) UPDATING OF SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAMS.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in con-
24 sultation and coordination with the Secretary of
25 Transportation, and in consultation with the Na-

1 tional Fire Protection Association, the International
2 Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Asso-
3 ciation of Fire Fighters, the National Volunteer Fire
4 Council, the National Association of State Fire Mar-
5 shals, and other stakeholders, shall update safety
6 training programs regarding electric vehicles, includ-
7 ing related external components used for recharging,
8 refueling, or replacing the power supply of electric
9 vehicles, for firefighting personnel, other emergency
10 response providers, and second responders based on
11 the reports under section 3(c).

12 (2) FACA EXEMPTION.—Chapter 10 of title 5,
13 United States Code, shall not apply to the consulta-
14 tion under paragraph (1).

15 (c) DISTRIBUTING THE TRAINING.—The Adminis-
16 trator, acting through the National Fire Academy, and in
17 coordination with State fire academies, and other stake-
18 holder organizations shall develop and implement a plan
19 to—

20 (1) accelerate the availability of the safety
21 training programs updated under subsection (b), in-
22 cluding through the use of State Fire Training
23 Grants, with an emphasis on train-the-trainer pro-
24 grams; and

1 (2) provide recurring training to ensure fire-
2 fighting personnel, emergency medical services per-
3 sonnel, other emergency response providers, and sec-
4 ond responders receive the training, including re-
5 sponders in both urban and rural geographic re-
6 gions.

7 (d) STATE FIRE ACADEMIES.—A State fire academy
8 that receives a State Fire Training Grant shall—

9 (1) contact fire departments in the State to
10 provide information about available safety training
11 regarding electric vehicles when 1 or more commer-
12 cial vehicle charging stations are installed within the
13 jurisdiction of the fire department; and

14 (2) collect and submit to the Administrator
15 data and annual statistics about the level of partici-
16 pation in safety training regarding electric vehicles
17 in the State, including the percentage of career and
18 volunteer firefighters and career and volunteer emer-
19 gency medical services personnel in the State who
20 completed electric vehicle safety training each year.

21 (e) AUTHORIZATIONS OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
22 is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator, in
23 addition to amounts otherwise authorized to be appro-
24 priated (such as amounts authorized to be appropriated
25 for State and local fire service training grants under sec-

1 tion 7(f) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act
2 of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(f)), \$10,000,000 for grants to
3 State fire academies under the State Fire Training Grants
4 program for training and education purposes to provide
5 safety training and reporting related to electric vehicles.

6 **SEC. 5. EMERGENCY RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) EMERGENCY RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS.—

9 The term “emergency response instructions” means
10 the emergency response information for a vehicle
11 prepared by the manufacturer of that vehicle.

12 (2) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means
13 the New Car Assessment Program of the National
14 Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

15 (b) CONSIDERATION OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN-
16 STRUCTIONS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—In determining the score of
18 a vehicle under the program, the Administrator of
19 the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
20 (referred to in this subsection as the “Adminis-
21 trator”) shall consider—

22 (A) the completeness of the emergency re-
23 sponse instructions for the vehicle; and

24 (B) whether and the extent to which those
25 emergency response instructions adhere to—

1 (i) International Organization for
2 Standardization standard 17840; and

3 (ii) any other relevant standards.

4 (2) ELECTRIC VEHICLES.—In determining the
5 score of an electric vehicle under the program, the
6 Administrator shall consider whether the emergency
7 response instructions for the electric vehicle contain
8 vehicle-specific information on—

9 (A) fighting high-voltage lithium-ion bat-
10 tery fires;

11 (B) mitigating—

12 (i) thermal runaway; and

13 (ii) the risk of high-voltage lithium-ion
14 battery reignition;

15 (C) mitigating the risks associated with
16 stranded energy in high-voltage lithium-ion bat-
17 teries—

18 (i) during the initial emergency re-
19 sponse; and

20 (ii) before moving a damaged electric
21 vehicle from the scene of an emergency;

22 and

23 (D) safely storing an electric vehicle that
24 has a damaged high-voltage lithium-ion battery.

1 (c) AVAILABILITY AND USE OF EMERGENCY RE-
2 SPONSE INSTRUCTIONS.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—To the maximum extent
4 practicable, the Administrator of the United States
5 Fire Administration (referred to in this subsection
6 as the “Administrator”) shall make the emergency
7 response instructions for each vehicle scored under
8 the program widely available, including through the
9 United States Fire Administration website and Na-
10 tional Fire Academy and State training academy
11 courses, to—

12 (A) all fire departments, emergency med-
13 ical services departments, police departments,
14 and salvage yards;

15 (B) each public or private entity that em-
16 ploys tow operators, bus drivers, or truck driv-
17 ers;

18 (C) national organizations representing law
19 enforcement, fire service, and emergency med-
20 ical services leadership and personnel;

21 (D) each professional association or other
22 organization representing tow operators, bus
23 drivers, or truck drivers; and

24 (E) each Federal agency that provides
25 training under this Act.

1 (2) USE IN TRAINING.—The emergency re-
2 sponse instructions made available by the Adminis-
3 trator under paragraph (1) may be used for any
4 training to which the emergency response instruc-
5 tions are relevant, including off-road applications of
6 electric vehicles, such as material handling equip-
7 ment, mining or agricultural vehicles, and maritime,
8 rail, and aviation applications, including any train-
9 ing carried out under this Act, as the provider of the
10 training determines to be appropriate.