

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6948

To amend title 49, United States Code, to require each new electric and hybrid vehicle to be equipped with technology that allows the timely extinguishment of an electric vehicle battery fire, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 6, 2026

Mr. LATIMER (for himself and Mr. FITZPATRICK) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend title 49, United States Code, to require each new electric and hybrid vehicle to be equipped with technology that allows the timely extinguishment of an electric vehicle battery fire, 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. ELECTRIC AND HYBRID VEHICLE STANDARDS.**

4 (a) ELECTRIC AND HYBRID VEHICLES.—Subchapter
5 II of chapter 301 of title 49, United States Code, is
6 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

7 **“§ 30130 Electric and hybrid vehicles**

8 “(a) BATTERY SAFETY.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years
2 after the date of the enactment of this section, the
3 Secretary shall promulgate a final motor vehicle
4 standard to mitigate unreasonable risk of fire, explo-
5 sion, reignition, stranded energy, thermal runaway,
6 fire breaching the passenger compartment, loss of
7 electrical power, and any other safety risk related to
8 the battery used in any new electric or new hybrid
9 vehicle manufactured for sale, sold, offered for sale,
10 or introduced or delivered for introduction in inter-
11 state commerce in the United States.

12 “(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall pro-
13 mulgate such standard in consultation with a rep-
14 resentative from each of the following:

15 “(A) Major electric vehicle and hybrid ve-
16 hicle manufacturers.

17 “(B) An accredited standards development
18 organization with expertise in fire protection.

19 “(C) An organization that represents pro-
20 fessional firefighters.

21 “(D) An organization that represents vol-
22 unteer firefighters.

23 “(E) An organization that represents fire
24 chiefs.

1 “(3) MINIMUM STANDARD.—The final motor
2 vehicle standard described in paragraph (1) shall re-
3 quire any new electric or hybrid vehicle manufac-
4 tured for sale, sold, offered for sale, or introduced
5 or delivered for introduction in interstate commerce
6 in the United States to be equipped, at a minimum,
7 with—

8 “(A) first responder access technology that
9 allows immediate access to the battery for pur-
10 poses of timely extinguishment of an electric ve-
11 hicle or hybrid vehicle battery fire;

12 “(B) technology that suppresses thermal
13 runaway if an electric vehicle or hybrid vehicle
14 battery cell is damaged;

15 “(C) safeguards to delay breaching of the
16 passenger compartment by an electric vehicle or
17 hybrid vehicle battery fire, sufficient to permit
18 escape or rescue of the vehicle operator and all
19 passengers within a reasonable period of time
20 from a collision or battery malfunction; and

21 “(D) battery and first responder access
22 placed in uniform, standardized locations within
23 the vehicle, subject to industry standards, in
24 order to assist firefighters in recognizing and
25 responding to battery fires.

1 “(4) GUIDANCE FOR FIREFIGHTERS.—Not later
2 than 1 year after the promulgation of the final
3 motor vehicle standard described in paragraph (1),
4 the Secretary shall publish guidance on responding
5 to fire incidents involving batteries used in electric
6 vehicles and hybrid vehicles to be used as the basis
7 for training firefighters.

8 “(b) MECHANICAL DOOR RELEASE.—Not later than
9 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section,
10 the Secretary shall promulgate a final motor vehicle safety
11 standard that requires any new electric vehicle or hybrid
12 vehicle manufactured for sale, sold, offered for sale, or in-
13 troduced or delivered for introduction in interstate com-
14 merce in the United States to have clearly marked interior
15 and exterior mechanical door releases on each door and
16 hatch that allows safe exit of such vehicle in case of failure
17 of the electric system of such vehicle.

18 “(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

19 “(1) ELECTRIC VEHICLE.—The term ‘electric
20 vehicle’ means a passenger motor vehicle that is pro-
21 pelled by an electric motor drawing current from a
22 rechargeable storage battery, fuel cell, or other port-
23 able source of electrical current, which may include
24 a nonelectrical source of power designed to charge
25 any such battery and component thereof.

1 “(2) HYBRID VEHICLE.—The term ‘hybrid vehi-
2 cle’ means a passenger motor vehicle propelled by a
3 combination of an electric motor and an internal
4 combustion engine or other power source and compo-
5 nent thereof.

6 “(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means
7 the Secretary of Transportation.”.

8 (b) CIVIL PENALTY.—Section 30165(a)(1) of such
9 title is amended by inserting “30130,” after “30127,”.

10 (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
11 for subchapter II of chapter 301 of title 49, United States
12 Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“Sec. 30130. Electric and hybrid vehicles”.

13 (d) APPLICATION.—The amendments made by this
14 Act shall apply to each new electric vehicle or hybrid vehi-
15 cle manufactured for sale, sold, offered for sale, or intro-
16 duced or delivered for introduction in interstate commerce
17 in the United States on and after the date that is 2 years
18 after the date on which the Secretary promulgates the
19 final motor vehicle safety standard pursuant to section
20 30130(a) of title 49, United States Code (as added by sub-
21 section (a)).

1 **SEC. 2. STUDY ON THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF ELECTRIC**
2 **AND HYBRID VEHICLE BATTERY FIRES ON**
3 **FIRST RESPONDERS.**

4 (a) STUDY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of
5 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and
6 Human Services shall conduct a study on the health ef-
7 fects of electric and hybrid vehicle battery fires on first
8 responders.

9 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
10 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and
11 Human Services shall submit to Congress, and make pub-
12 licly available on the website of the Department of Health
13 and Human Services, a report that includes the following:

14 (1) The findings of the study under subsection
15 (a).

16 (2) Input from at least one representative from
17 the following:

18 (A) An accredited standards development
19 organization with expertise in fire protection.

20 (B) An organization that represents pro-
21 fessional firefighters.

22 (C) An organization that represents volun-
23 teer firefighters.

24 (D) An organization that represents fire
25 chiefs.

- 1 (3) Recommendations for legislative action to
- 2 protect first responders from the health effects of
- 3 electric and hybrid vehicle battery fires and improve
- 4 the safety of electric and hybrid vehicle batteries.

