



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, ROOM 22, BOSTON, MA 02133-1054

JONATHAN HECHT
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Committees:
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Election Laws
Global Warming and Climate Change
Public Health

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May 31, 2019

The Honorable Smitty Pignatelli
House Chair, Joint Committee on
Environment, Natural Resources and
Agriculture
State House, Room 473F
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Anne Gobi
Senate Chair, Joint Committee on
Environment, Natural Resources and
Agriculture
State House, Room 513
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Pignatelli and Chair Gobi,

I am writing respectfully to request your Committee's favorable consideration of H.799, *An Act to update the Massachusetts Rideshare Program*.

Currently in Massachusetts, over 4 million passenger vehicles are driven approximately 50 billion miles per year. Too often these vehicles carry just a single passenger, putting our roads over capacity and making traffic congestion among the worst in the nation. Several recent studies have documented the negative impact of this on economic activity, household expenses, air quality, and climate. For our economy, health, and environmental sustainability, we need to find a way to move more people in fewer vehicles.

At a conference on the Future of Transportation Commission report in early April 2019, MassDoT Secretary Stephanie Pollack challenged the audience to "reinvent sharing" for the 21st century. It is incumbent upon us to respond to Secretary Pollack's challenge.

There will be no single solution, but one place to start is by strengthening the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Rideshare program. Currently, the program requires only very large businesses and educational facilities to develop plans and set goals for reducing single-occupancy commutes. H.799 requires DEP to revise the relevant regulations (310 CMR 7.16) to expand the program to include more employers. In addition, it would reduce unnecessary reporting requirements so employers can spend more time and resources on the goal

itself: reducing drive-alone rates. Lastly, H.799 directs DEP to make public reports on the statewide drive-alone rate and the percentage of covered facilities that have drive-alone rates under 75% so that we can better understand commuting patterns and what further steps are needed to improve ridesharing and realize its benefits.

I thank the Committee for its work on this critical issue and respectfully request a favorable report.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Hecht', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jonathan Hecht
State Representative
29th Middlesex District