

# Rivian In The House

## Members of Rivian Owners Club Northeast to Bring Their Vehicles to Bridgeport on Saturday

The EV startup Rivian, manufacturer of the R1T pickup truck and R1S EUV (along with an electric delivery van for Amazon), will be holding a meetup and showcase on **Saturday, May 14th** in Bridgeport at the Brewport Brewing Company (225 South Frontage Road). There should be a half dozen or so Rivian vehicles. The meeting time is **11 AM – 1 PM**.

While Rivian has had its challenges with its production startup, it has been delivering vehicles. Some of the early reservation holders have been waiting for 3 years. Now they have them, and early reports are that they are thrilled with them.

Here is a chance to take a look and ask questions. At least one of them will have his camping tent set up.

Free registration required.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/north-east-rivian-club-may-2022-meetup-tickets-335374683707>

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## A Return Engagement With

# **Eversource and United Illuminating**

## **Commercial and Multi-Family Residential Is the Focus**

The two major Connecticut electric distribution companies (EDCs), Eversource and United Illuminating, will speak to the club at a virtual meeting to be held on May 10th at 7 PM. (EDC is now the term of art, supplanting utility.) This applies to business fleets, businesses providing workplace charging, municipalities, nonprofits, and apartments/condos with 5+ units.

These incentives are part of the program called the EV Rate Design that was developed by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority.

Free registration is required at this link:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0kd0ysqDgoH9X\\_1SiBnVxnb75LuntzhG-](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0kd0ysqDgoH9X_1SiBnVxnb75LuntzhG-)

The meeting is open to the public.

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## **Direct Sales Bill Is Not Being Called for a Vote**

# Bill Stalled in the Senate

[CT News Junkie](#) is reporting that SB 214 will not be called for a vote in the Senate. This bill is also referred to by opponents, pejoratively, as the “Tesla bill,” though it would apply to any manufacturer of exclusively battery electric vehicles that does not have an existing franchise network and is not majority owned by a company that does (Ford has a minority stake in Rivian), and would allow them to open stores for the sale and delivery of their vehicles in CT.

As quoted to News Junkie, the bill’s sponsor, Senator Will Haskell of Westport, co-chair of the Transportation Committee said, “I think we have the votes in the Senate, I just think we’re out of time.” He also claims there are Republican votes in the Senate, which would be a change from last year.

The bill passed out of the Joint Transportation Committee by a vote of 22 – 12 with one absent and was not exactly along party lines. One Republican senator on the committee voted “yea.” That was John Kissel. Several Senate Democrats voted against the bill in committee: Steve Cassano, Rick Lopes and Norm Needleman. Democratic Representatives Matt Blumenthal and Christine Conley were also no votes. Republican Representatives Tom O’Dea, David Labriola, Irene Haines, and Tami Zawistowski were yes votes.

This bill is considered controversial – but only in Hartford! Consumers overwhelmingly [support it](#). Public testimony given to the committee is also overwhelmingly supportive. Outside experts on the left, right, and center of the political spectrum support direct sales. But there is an entrenched and well-financed local special interest, the dealerships, who vigorously oppose it and marshal a number of specious arguments to do so. Here is a more [detailed explication](#) of our point of view with supporting data.

Whether the votes were there, or one vote short, as was

allegedly the case last year, is immaterial. Opponents have consistently been able to run out the clock on this measure, no doubt working with some legislators behind the scenes to prevent the bill from coming to a vote. If the committee chair can't count a majority, it doesn't get brought up. That way they keep their dealers happy and don't have to directly face their constituents. Also, if a bill does not come for a vote, it does not get counted in the environmental scorecard of the League of Conservation voters, so it is also a form of green-washing. A number of club members aided us in our efforts by contacting their legislators. Many get a response along the lines of, "I am looking at it very closely," a way of saying no politely. Democratic Senator Julie Kushner held a press conference with the United Auto Workers, where part of her statement characterized Elon Musk as "already ruler of the world." Excuse us, Senator, this is not about Elon Musk. It is not even about Tesla. It is about your constituents.

## **This Is an Election Year**

Changes are afoot. Senator Haskell is leaving the legislature. He represents what is considered a swing district that was represented by Republican Toni Boucher for 10 years before Haskell defeated her in 2018. She has announced her candidacy. Republican Senator Kevin Witkos, who was rumored to be a possible yes vote, is not standing for re-election. Representative Laura Devlin, who was a no vote in committee, is GOP gubernatorial candidate Bob Stefanowski's running mate.

Consider your vote carefully. Don't hesitate to ask candidates for a direct response on their stance on this issue. Direct sales is the single most impactful measure that can be taken to accelerate the pace of EV adoption. The data are clear from the experience of other states.

We will come back to membership next year asking for support. Despite the discouragement of this and past years, we will

need to respond in force. There are more of us every year. They can't ignore us forever.

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## **SB-4 Passes the Legislature**

### **Major Changes to CHEAPR Incentive Program Coming**

The big environmental omnibus bill with 16 parts to it passed the legislature today. It awaits the signature of the governor.

### **CHEAPR Highlights**

- Eliminates the program's sunset date, which was December 31, 2025.
- Expands the board and turns into a strictly advisory body. In other words, DEEP makes all the decisions.
- MSRP cap is raised from \$42,000 to \$50,000. (It remains at \$60,000 for FCEVs.)
- Loosens eligibility for income limited (known as LMI) rebate eligibility. The current program, which has awarded very few rebates, requires someone to be using certain government assistance programs, such as SNAP (food stamps), Operation Fuel, and others. It now adds an income threshold of 3 times the poverty level, which translates to \$83,250 for a family of 4 or \$40,770 for an individual.
- Adds a minimum \$500 rebate for e-bikes (DEEP has

discretion to modify it) for an e-bike costing no more than \$3,000. This rebate is intended for income limited individuals. (The legislation isn't totally clear – it says “prioritize granting incentives” to these individuals.)

- Raises the CHEAPR budget considerably. CHEAPR will now receive the entirety of the GHG fees collected during registration. This would yield roughly \$8 million compared to the current \$3 million budget. But that's not all. The program, beginning in 2024, will also get proceeds from the RGGI (regional power plant cap and trade) program that previously went to the Green Bank.
- Incentive amounts are not addressed in the bill. They are set by DEEP.
- Expands eligibility from the current residential owner only to include municipalities, businesses, nonprofits, and tribal entities. These new entities can receive up to 10 incentives in any one year with a total cap of 20. Entities operating entirely in environmental justice communities can be allocated additional incentives by DEEP.
- DEEP is required to submit a report on program performance to the legislature on an annual basis.

## **A Number of Other provisions Are in the Bill.**

Here are some of them.

- Accelerates the transition to EV school buses. There is a requirement that by 2030 in environmental justice communities and by 2040 elsewhere, all school buses must be electric or “alternative fuel.” (Alternative fuel includes natural gas, hydrogen, propane, or biofuels. These are not zero-emission vehicles and we don't agree with this aspect of the legislation.) A major change is that school districts are able to enter into contracts

that have a maximum 10-year duration, up from 5. This enables EV school buses pencil out. The bill establishes a grant program to help municipalities fund the transition, which is administered by DEEP.

- Prohibits purchase of diesel-powered transit buses as of 2024.
- Requires 50% of the state's vehicle fleet to be electric by 2026.
- Adoption of the California emission standards for medium and heavy-duty vehicles. This made it through after failing last year and it is a big deal. It includes a voucher program to offset some of the cost for fleet owners to make the transition, funded out of the CHEAPR account. These same fleet operators will be able to tap the utility incentives to offset the cost of charging infrastructure and mitigate demand charges.
- Traffic signal matching grant program. This helps municipalities fund smart traffic lights (which really do reduce emissions).
- Right to charge legislation. The objective is to prevent condo associations or landlords from unreasonably refusing a request from a resident to install an EV charging station. We will be examining this in more detail to understand the various use cases.
- The discount that all of us EV owners have enjoyed with respect to vehicle registration goes away.
- In general, it makes available funds to leverage federal matching grants, something that last year's failed TCI legislation would have done.

## **When Will CHEAPR Changes Be Implemented?**

There is an open question regarding when the changes in the CHEAPR program will take effect. The bill has language about July 1, but that is unrealistic. The implementation logistics take time. The last time there were significant changes to CHEAPR, particularly the addition of the LMI incentives, it

took 6 months to develop the back-end. Now they need to get into income-verification, which is something they tried hard to avoid previously. Aside from the restrictiveness of the current LMI eligibility, one of the barriers to its use is that unlike the main CHEAPR rebate, which is cash on the hood, it is provided after the fact, forcing an income limited individual to float the cash. If there is any way to make this a credit on the invoice, that would be a big improvement. There was a lengthy discussion at the board meeting in March about the administrative burden of doing that. The next CHEAPR board meeting is in June and perhaps some of these details will be addressed.

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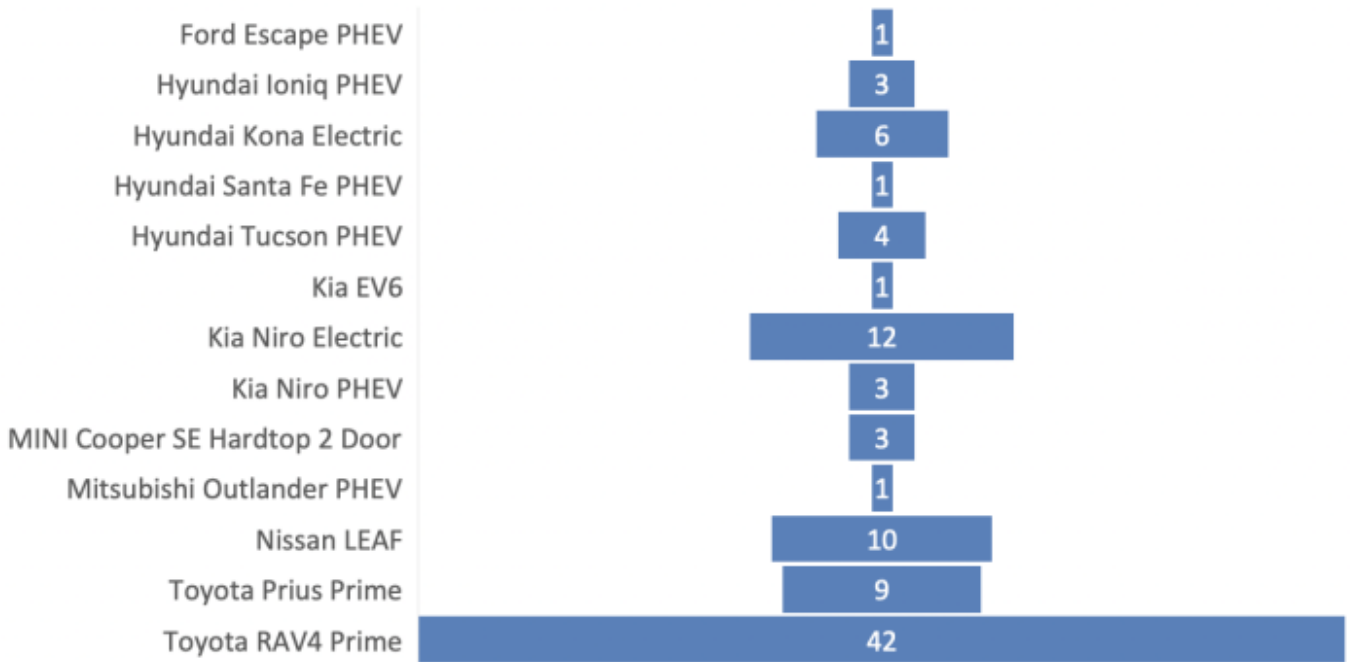
## **CHEAPR – Update and SB-4 Passes Senate**

### **Modest Increase in March Rebates**

The CHEAPR rebate count was up modestly to 96 rebates, 64 of them PHEVs. The big gorilla was the Toyota RAV4 Prime, continuing its run as by far and away the rebate leader. It is quite amazing to see how much the RAV4 has cannibalized the Prius Prime, which was down to only 9 rebates. The Kia Niro placed a distant second with 12 rebates, and the first rebate for the new Kia EV6 appeared. Below is the disposition of all the rebates by model.



## Rebate by Model - March 2022



## Legislation

The major news is that SB-4, the big environmental omnibus bill which includes significant changes to CHEAPR has passed the Senate. The vote was largely along party lines with only one Republican voting in favor. It now goes before the House. Momentum seems to be with it. Since this is a short session, we'll know in less than a week. We will give a more detailed summary of the changes for CHEAPR if it passes, but the headlines are an increase in the MSRP cap to \$50,000, loosening the requirements for the income-limited incentives, and extending eligibility to businesses, fleets, municipalities, and tribal entities.

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# If You See Something, Say Something

## EVSE Out of Order

I just hate when I see signs like the one in the above photo. I refer to the spelling, but yeah, that, too.

Maintenance of charging stations can be a mixed bag. It seems like funding is obtained to acquire chargers without budgeting for future maintenance.

The charger in the photograph is one of two installed in downtown Westport at the Tri-Town Teachers Credit Union (TTTCU). Both are down. As far as I can tell, based on app check-ins, they've been out of service for roughly two months. These level 2 chargers were paid for by Karl Chevrolet of New Canaan in return for signage, a tasteful wooden sign, and for taking the tax credit for the solar array on the TTTCU building (TTTCU is a non-profit).

We reached out to the TTTCU and they report that the company that made the chargers is out of business and they have enlisted the town to help find someone who can service them, if they are repairable. When we have more news, we will update.



The chargers at the nearby Westport library have also been down, literally. It looks like there was a close encounter of the first kind. They, too have been out for a while. (Update to this: The town is going to buy new equipment for this location; we'll update again when we have an ETA.)

This happens at way too many places. It is a contributor to “range anxiety” among prospective EV adopters. Which brings us to the call to action. Many of us use apps to locate chargers. For those of you who use Plugshare or other popular apps that allow check-ins and comments, please make an effort to call out when you see a broken charger. Even if you aren't in need of a charge, pay a visit to the ones that are local to you and do a check-in. The more data for other EV drivers, the better. And the more visibility, the better the chances of motivating the owner to make a repair.

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## **Aptera FAQ – Additional Details About the Aptera EV Autocycle**

[FAQ Aptera](#)

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# Aptera Presentation to EV Club

[Aptera w Edits](#)

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## Park New Haven Keeps You Moving

Post by Barry Kresch

The following is from a conversation with executives of the New Haven Parking Authority (or Park New Haven, as they brand themselves) – Executive Director, Doug Hausladen, COO, Sammy Parry, and Chief Engineer, Jim Staniewicz.

We all know the need for more public charging. And is it too much to ask that the chargers be kept in good working order and the spaces policed? It was thus a pleasant surprise to come across the facilities of the New Haven Parking Authority, which is setting a great example of how to support EVs, emission-free transportation, and the community, broadly speaking.

The Authority runs 11 facilities with a total of 43 chargers. And they work. And they're not ICed. They have an electrician on staff who services them, as well as security that has the authority to ticket interlopers. The garage at Union Station has a handicapped EV charging space.

All of the facilities are paid garages. They charge the going rate for New Haven. There is no extra charge to charge.

The Public Utility Regulatory Agency (PURA) charging incentives are coming along at just the right time as they have plans to add 40 more charging stations. The incentives will be used to upgrade electrical service beyond what is currently needed to be ready for future installations. Also, they will offset a significant part of the cost of an installation that is currently in the design phase that will have a mix of Level 2 and Level 3 chargers, 20 ports in all, located at Orange and Elm Streets in downtown New Haven. This location will offer a discounted \$3 flat rate for evenings and weekends. The idea is to be a magnet for EV drivers and support local businesses.

So why and how is the agency doing this? As an authority, they can move faster than a public agency. The commissioners to whom they report, and who they describe as very engaged and a great cross section of New Haven, are interested in a sustainability agenda.

Beyond parking, Park NH is a partner in the city bike share program and they have been awarded an \$18,000 grant to start an electric cargo e-bike share. They are also looking to set up e-bike charging stations.

Finally, Park NH has their own vehicle fleet. Their first EV purchase occurred last summer – a Chevy Bolt. Plans are to turn over the entirety of the fleet to electric. If SB-4 passes, the new vehicles could potentially come with CHEAPR rebates.

This is a model that every parking authority should emulate. This is the future of parking.

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# Feb CHEAPR Roundup

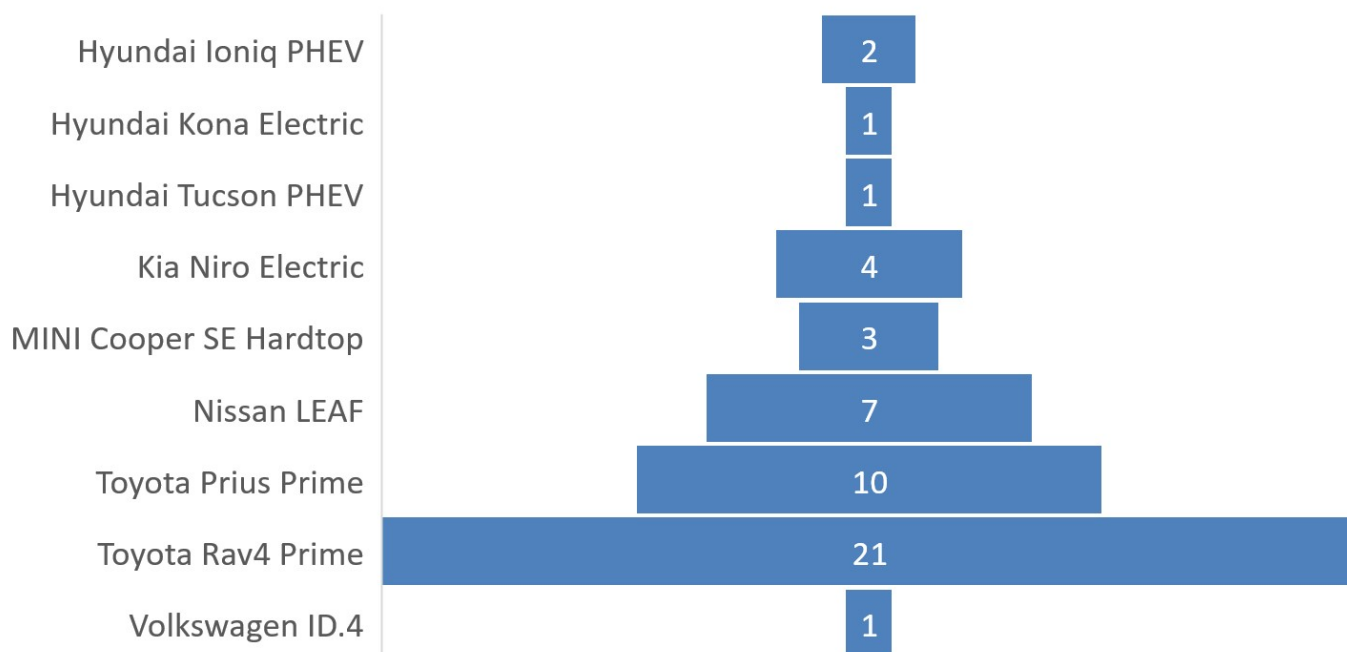
## Low Rebate Levels Continue

There were 50 total rebates awarded in February 2022. January was restated from 40 to 52. There were no LMI (income limited) rebates as far as we can discern. These rebates are of a different amount than the standard rebate and that is how we can identify them.

There were no actions taken to modify the program at the March board meeting. Of course, even if there were, it would take some time to implement. SB-4, the big environmental omnibus bill raised in the legislature has passed out of committee and is now before the Senate. This bill has several CHEAPR related components that would significantly change the program, in particular by raising the MSRP cap and loosening the LMI criteria. (More details [here](#).) It will be known before the next board meeting in June if this bill will become law. Many bills are written for changes to take place in the fall. Realistically, whether it is legislation or DEEP-driven, that is probably the earliest timeframe we are looking at.

The RAV4 Prime dominant distribution of rebates by model continues. Driven by this, the program remains PHEV top-heavy with 34 of the 50 rebates.

### Rebates by Model Feb. 2022



The appearance of the VW ID.4 was nice to see but we have not seen evidence of many of this trim level being delivered. We expect this pattern to continue absent an MSRP cap increase. Nissan, maker of the budget-friendly Leaf, is getting ready to introduce its new Ariya EUV, but the starting MSRP is \$46K. To the best of our knowledge, GM has still not resumed production of new Bolts as it is still working its way through the recalled vehicles and dealer inventory, though it should be coming to the closing stage of that. The forthcoming Equinox EUV is projected to have a similar price point to the Bolt, but it is 18 months away.