

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM THE OFFICE OF: REPRESENTATIVE PETER Y. FLYNN (D-BRIDGEWATER) HOUSE CHAIRMAN
SENATOR EDWARD L. BURKE (D-FRAMINGHAM) SENATE CHAIRMAN

SPECIAL COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ANNUAL AUTOMOBILE
EMISSIONS INSPECTION PROGRAM

"The automobile is the nation's number one polluter. By weight, more than half of all the nation's man-made air pollution can be attributed to the internal combustion engine. In some urban areas, it reaches as high as 85 percent of the total," according to the Conservation Foundation's A Citizen's Guide To Clean Air.

In recognition of the problems associated with achieving clean air, Congress amended the Clean Air Act in 1977 to require that states not meeting air pollution standards establish regulatory programs, which are designed to address the causes of air pollution. Such programs will operate to reduce levels of pollutant emissions in order to insure that the national ambient air quality standards set by the E.P.A. are attained and maintained. In the case of automotive related pollutants, the Massachusetts General Court has established a study commission to review the inspection and maintenance (I & M) programs initiated in other states and to explore new program concepts that may be better suited to our motoring public. According to EPA guidelines, the General Court must enact a vehicle emission inspection and maintenance program by July 1, 1979. Passage of a program would forestall the economic sanctions that the EPA could impose on many federally funded state programs.

As with the current safety inspection program, an emissions inspection program would require all registered autos in the state to pass certain emission standards that would vary with the age of the vehicle. Vehicles that fail to meet the appropriate standards would be required to have the necessary maintenance or repair work done and then pass a retest.

The special legislative commission, comprised of members of the legislature, governmental officials, and representatives of the private sector will be thoroughly investigating all of the options available to the state in establishing an emissions inspection and maintenance program during the next few months. For example, some states, which have initiated emission inspection programs have opted

to include the new emission test as part of their existing safety inspection program conducted by private garages and service stations; other states have contracted with one or more private firms to construct and operate regional testing centers; still other states have constructed a number of state operated regional test centers.

In order to solicit public opinion, the commission has scheduled four public hearings throughout the Commonwealth. The public hearing agenda is as follows:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Council Chambers City Hall, Worcester	Monday, November 20, 1978 @ 7:00 p.m.
Springfield Tech. Com. College Armory Square, Springfield	Tuesday, November 21, 1978 @ 7:00 p.m.
Tewksbury Hospital Auditorium East Street, Tewksbury	Tuesday, November 28, 1978 @ 7:00 p.m.
Private A. Poirier VFW Post 3260 281 Appleton Street, New Bedford	Wednesday, November 29, 1978 @ 7:00 p.m.

It is anticipated that adoption of an I & M program will yield numerous benefits to the residents of Massachusetts. It will not only improve the quality of the air that we breathe and thereby reduce the enormous medical expenses associated with air pollution but it will also succeed in improving fuel economy because a well tuned vehicle runs more efficiently, uses less gasoline, and has a longer engine life. Based on studies conducted by the E.P.A., the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering reports that a simple carburetor adjustment or a general tune-up can be expected to improve fuel economy by as much as 8%. For the average motorist who drives 12,000 miles a year, this can mean a savings of up to 80 gallons, or \$48.00 a year. On a statewide basis, this fuel savings would be substantial.

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Committee on Natural Resources - 727-2023

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