



# SIERRA CLUB

## MAINE CHAPTER

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To: Members of the Joint Committee on Energy Utilities and Technology  
From: Patricia Rubert-Nason  
Date: April 26, 2023  
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to *An Act to Prohibit All State Subsidies for Electric Vehicles***

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Senator Lawrence, Representative Ziegler, and the members of the Joint Committee on State and Local Government

I am submitting the following testimony on behalf of Sierra Club Maine, representing over 22,000 supporters and members statewide. Founded in 1892, Sierra Club is one of our nation's oldest and largest environmental organizations. We work diligently to amplify the power of our 3.8 million members nationwide as we work towards combating climate change and promoting a just and sustainable economy. To that end, we urge you to vote Ought Not To Pass on LD 1623: An Act to Prohibit All State Subsidies for Electric Vehicles.

Climate change is a pressing concern that will have a profound impact on life in Maine. From coastal areas facing inundation, to increased tick populations, to impacts on our forests, fisheries and wildlife (including the possibility of steep declines in iconic species like moose and lobster) everyone will be impacted.<sup>1</sup> It is in all of our interests to reduce emissions and do our part to address climate change.

In Maine, addressing climate change means addressing transportation. Transportation accounts for 49% of Maine's greenhouse gas emissions,<sup>2</sup> by far the biggest segment of any sector. And one of the most effective ways to reduce transportation emissions is by accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles. Rebates, incentives and subsidies are a key tool for making that happen. Without them, we are tying one hand behind our back when it comes to addressing climate change. Moreover, in addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increased adoption of electric vehicles can improve air quality and improve the health of Mainers.

Rebates, incentives and subsidies for the purchase of electric vehicles can also increase equity. Electric vehicles are generally less expensive to operate than internal combustion

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/climateplan/climate-impacts>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/dep/news/news.html?id=8474333>

vehicles and, increasingly, may have a lower total cost of ownership.<sup>3</sup> In other words, in some cases, it may be cheaper over the lifetime of the vehicle to own an electric vehicle than a traditional internal combustion vehicle. However, the initial purchase price is still significantly higher. This presents a significant barrier to entry for many Mainers and can potentially prevent some Mainers from accessing a lower-cost transportation option. Appropriately designed incentives and subsidies can help lower these barriers.

Banning rebates, incentives and subsidies for electric vehicles in Maine would dramatically decrease our options for meeting climate goals and remove a tool for increasing equity within our state. Moreover, slower adoption of electric vehicles means poorer air quality and worse health for Mainers. Therefore we strongly urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1623: An Act to Prohibit All State Subsidies for Electric Vehicles.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Rubert-Nason

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Volunteer, Legislative Team  
Sierra Club Maine Chapter

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.caranddriver.com/shopping-advice/a32494027/ev-vs-gas-cheaper-to-own/>