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Karen Blakelock, Policy Advisor
The Nature Conservancy in Maine
Karen.blakelock@tnc.org



Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

LD 1133—An Act to Allow Electric Vehicle Charging Stations by Condominium and Residential Associations

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Karen Blakelock and I am a policy advisor for The Nature Conservancy in Maine. **I appreciate this opportunity to provide written comment in support of LD 1133, An Act to Allow Electric Vehicle Charging Stations by condominium and Residential Associations.**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that both nature and people can thrive. We use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. The Nature Conservancy has been leading conservation in Maine for more than 60 years and is the 12th largest landowner in the state, owning and managing roughly 300,000 acres.

Plug-in EV adoption is a powerful strategy to reduce emissions and can help reduce household transportation costs, but access to charging remains a barrier for potential EV buyers. To look more closely at this and other obstacles, TNC Maine released a report with VEIC, an energy efficiency consultant, titled "Northern New England Rural EV Adoption Toolkit".¹ The results come from statewide polling, virtual focus groups, and interviews with community members and agency leaders.

Charging access remains one of the greatest concerns to those considering an electric vehicle purchase, and TNC supports taking steps towards increasing both public and private charging infrastructure across our state. LD 1133 is a small step towards ensuring that no one is prohibited from owning an EV by their condo or housing association making charging inaccessible.

Beyond the fact that EVs emit zero tailpipe emissions, they have a significantly lower maintenance cost than traditional vehicles with an internal combustion engine. **Rural drivers, especially, are poised to reap significant benefits with a switch to an EV. Rural households drive more miles, often in older, less efficient vehicles. This translates into more potential savings on fuel and maintenance if they were to switch to an EV.**

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https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/TNC_NNE_Rural_EV_Toolkit_April_2022_Final.pdf

EVs might not be the answer for every single driver in Maine, but there is no one size fits all solution to any problem. **What matters most is that we are striving to decarbonize all sectors of our economy in the least costly way possible for the benefit of Maine communities and the Maine environment, and that condominium and residential associations are not an additional barrier standing in the way of EV adoption.**

We urge this committee to **support LD 1133**. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comment.