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April 4, 2025

Testimony of Representative Laurie Osher in support of
LD 1133, An Act to Allow Electric Vehicle Charging Stations by
Condominium and Residential Associations
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am Laurie Osher and I represent District 25, the majority of Orono. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of LD 1133, An Act to Allow Electric Vehicle Charging Stations by Condominium and Residential Associations.

I am a scientist, and my focus over my entire career has been to provide input to those seeking to use land for some type of development. My work was to provide input on how they could minimize the environmental impacts while proceeding with economic development. After over a decade of working for private companies and then government agencies as a soil and watershed scientist doing environmental impact assessments for individual projects, I went back to graduate school. I enrolled at UC Berkeley, and I investigated the role of land use on soil carbon sequestration and loss to better understand humans' contributions to the atmospheric pollution we call greenhouse gases. I went from focusing on individual site use to having a scope that is more regional in scale. Now, in my other job outside the Legislature, I advise municipalities on ways to be more resilient to extreme weather events, and I assist them to get funded for projects that increase their energy efficiency and lower their fossil fuel use.

Transitioning the vehicles driven in Maine from those powered by combustion engines to those powered by electricity (EVs) is an important part of Maine's transition to a cleaner energy future. When looking at the contributions of greenhouse gases to Maine's "C footprint", transportation is the most polluting sector, contributing about half of our annual greenhouse gas emissions.

The municipalities that begin transitioning their fleets to EVs report lower maintenance costs in addition to the lower costs for fuel. Municipalities that purchase EVs put chargers on their properties. Individuals that purchase EVs can have chargers installed if they own their properties, but if they live in condos, they will be prevented from doing so if the condo associations are allowed to prevent the installation of EV chargers. Preventing the installation of chargers thus undermines the state's goal of transitioning to a cleaner energy.

When I was in graduate school, I lived in a condo, and for three years, I was the president of the homeowners association. I understand that there are many issues that the association leaders must balance, just as we legislators do. I also know that lack of EV charging infrastructure is one

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of the top five barriers to EV adoption and, similarly, “increasing access to EV charging at home and work” is one of the top five ways to increase EV adoption in Maine.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1133. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.