

May 1, 2025

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



Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

RE: LD 1138—An Act to Reduce Pollution Associated with Transportation in Alignment with the State's Climate Action Plan

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Karen Blakelock and I work as the climate and energy policy advisor for the Nature Conservancy in Maine. I appreciate this opportunity to comment in **support of LD 1138**.

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 work in more than 70 countries, and use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners.

TNC Maine had several staff members involved in the development of the 2024 Climate Action Plan. Our State director, Kate Dempsey, served as a member of the Climate Council, and our Government Relations Director, Kaitlyn Nuzzo was a member of the transportation working group. Additionally, several other members of TNC staff served on various other working groups and subcommittees, contributing their science-based knowledge and professional expertise to the development of the plan.

TNC supports LD 1138 as it aims to limit greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector in accordance with recommendations made in the Climate Action Plan. TNC's mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends while working to address the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. As the largest share of emissions in Maine comes from the transportation sector,¹ it is essential for Maine to implement creative solutions to achieve decarbonization in this area, and to coordinate across government to achieve the objectives identified in Maine Won't Wait:

1. Accelerate Maine's transition to light-duty electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (EVs)
2. Accelerate Maine's adoption of zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles (MHDVs)
3. Invest in public, active, and shared transportation
4. Improve the resilience of Maine's transportation system.

¹ Maine Won't Wait, 2024, https://www.maine.gov/climateplan/sites/maine.gov.climateplan/files/2024-11/MWW_2024_Book_112124.pdf "Transportation is responsible for 49 percent of Maine's carbon emissions from fossil fuels, making the sector one of Maine's largest opportunities to combat climate change." Page 13.

Requiring the Department of Transportation to adopt rules necessary to ensure compliance with annual greenhouse gas reductions levels is a key first step towards achieving our state goals in this sector. Additionally, TNC supports that the bill requires DOT to develop a plan to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in accordance with the climate action plan, as alternative modes of transport such as walking, biking, and public transportation options can benefit both the climate and local communities.

The Nature Conservancy in Maine is grateful to the sponsor for bringing this bill forward and appreciates that this committee is considering LD 1138 to support both neighborhood-scale and state level climate solutions throughout the transportation sector that offer a well-rounded and well-thought-out approach to decarbonization. I ask that you **vote Ought to Pass on LD 1138 and would be happy to answer questions at any time.**