



March 19, 2024

Good afternoon, Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee. My name is Sam Hight. I am a resident of Norridgewock, and I am the Dealer Principal at Hight Ford in Skowhegan as well as Hight Chevrolet in Farmington. Our family also operates Hight Chevrolet GMC in Skowhegan and Hight Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram in Madison. We have been in the automobile business for 113 years. Our businesses serve a mostly rural area in Somerset, Franklin, Piscataquis, and northern Kennebec Counties. We sell new Ford, General Motors and Stellantis/Chrysler vehicles, used vehicles, and offer service and parts.

I appear here today to strongly support LD 2261, An Act Designating New Motor Vehicle Emissions Rules as Major Substantive Rules.

The purchase of a vehicle is the choice of the consumer. Our businesses are built around working with customers to match their needs and wants in an automobile to vehicles we have to offer. The purchase and operation of a vehicle is a major financial choice. The customer's personal, family, work and recreational considerations are the major components of that customer's choice of vehicle. In the areas we serve, many customers are interested in pickup trucks and SUVs. Many live outside of urban areas and drive great distances for work and recreation. Many of our customers are small business owners that rely on trailering equipment and plowing and sanding as a primary source of income. These needs vary from some other areas of Maine, and certainly from major population centers of California, Washington DC, New York and the like.

The conversation around new motor vehicle emissions systems is currently focused on electric. In considering this option, our customers are very concerned with the relevant factors of electricity supply – how reliable and robust is the electric grid, monthly electric bills, charging infrastructure – where and at what cost and how reliable are the charging stations – how far can I travel on a charge in Summer and Winter, as well as vehicle costs including purchase and maintenance. AND can I do my job effectively and efficiently with an electric vehicle? To date,



there is very little interest in our area with respect to electric vehicles – there are way too many uncertainties and unknowns. From personal experience, I test drove a Mustang Mach-E, rated for a 300 plus mile range, for several months. In the summer months, at best I could get 280 miles (as displayed by the vehicle); and in the cold Maine winter months, 180 miles. During neither season, I never got close to the range end point, because the vehicle warns that basic functions like heat and air conditioning will shut off to conserve battery range. I, of course, have the fortunate ability to have access to other automobiles and a short commute, but many of my customers do not.

As Maine considers how to address emissions from motor vehicles and other sources, it must take into account the significant geographic, economic, and demographic differences present within Maine, never mind the chasm that separates Maine from other regions. That is why the full Legislature needs to be the body which considers, discusses and decides the appropriate course for Maine – for all of Maine and its people. Please support LD 2261.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sam Hight, Hight Family of Dealerships, Since 1911