



Environmental Priorities Coalition

Testimony of the Environmental Priorities Coalition
in Opposition to LD 2261
*“An Act Designating New Motor Vehicle Emissions Rules
as Major Substantive Rules”*
March 20, 2024

Good afternoon Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich and esteemed members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Beth Ahearn and I am testifying on behalf of the Environmental Priorities Coalition (EPC) in opposition to LD 2261, “An Act Designating New Motor Vehicle Emissions Rules as Major Substantive Rules.” Maine’s EPC is an inclusive statewide alliance of 34 conservation, climate action, and public health organizations. Each year the EPC collectively identifies a slate of policy priorities to act on the climate crisis, further environmental justice, protect land, water, and wildlife, and cultivate healthy Maine communities. This is a late breaking defensive priority.

Maine needs to implement clean cars standards to reach our climate goals and reduce emissions from our most polluting sector. Transportation accounts for nearly half (49%) of Maine’s annual greenhouse gas emissions, more than any other sector. Clean Cars and Trucks Standards are the best option to get more Electric Vehicles (EVs) on the road in Maine and to successfully address climate change as a state. Maine’s Clean Transportation Roadmap, developed in 2021 to evaluate all of our policy options to reduce emissions from cars and trucks, listed these standards as the number one recommendation.

This last-minute bill is intended to second-guess the non-partisan process to implement these clean cars standards, based on misinformation about what these standards do. For decades, Maine has followed a nonpartisan process through the Board of Environmental Protection (BEP) to adopt stronger emissions standards because we value clean air and healthy people. The year-long, thoughtful public health and environmental policy-making process currently underway has already incorporated input and comments from thousands of Mainers, including many legislators. This bill also presents concerns regarding the constitutional separation of powers, a principle that Maine has long respected. The doctrine states that the three branches

of government are distinct and that clear responsibilities are given to each; a system of checks and balances that keeps our democracy strong and prevents the concentration of power in one branch.

Slowing the adoption of zero emission cars and trucks will hurt Maine people – ensuring new, cheaper EV models go to other states first, leaving us with what's left over: Dirtier and more expensive gas cars. Defeating LD 2261 will save Mainers money, improve health, and reduce pollution. Climate change is impacting local communities now and the last thing we need to do is delay progress in addressing the biggest environmental crisis of our time.

For these reasons, please vote “Ought Not to Pass” on LD 2261. Thank you for your time and thoughtful attention.