

Meret Bainbridge, 26 Cleveland Street, Saco, ME 04072

Testimony AGAINST LD 2261 for PH 3/20/24

Dear Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich and Honorable Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Meret Bainbridge, I am a resident of Saco and a member of the Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network which opposes this bill. I am testifying on my own behalf. I fiercely oppose LD 2261, An Act Designating New Motor Vehicle Emissions Rules as Major Substantive Rules.

I live in Saco, 4.5 miles from Camp Ellis. I don't have to educate you on what climate change is doing to Camp Ellis and our entire beautiful Maine Coastline, including Old Orchard Beach and Scarborough which are represented by the chairs of this committee. Each storm gets worse, more violent and destructive with huge tides washing away the coastline, destroying personal and public property and our natural resources which are a major source of revenue for the fishing and tourism industry. The connection of these devastating storms to human-made climate change is evident. Climate change is accelerating much faster than previously anticipated. We need to respond by speeding up our response to mitigate climate change, not by slowing it down.

LD 2261 would take a big step backward from implementing clean car standards which are necessary 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 due to the rural nature and lack of clean public transit in our state.

Transitioning to EVs and hybrid vehicles is one of the most effective actions we can take in Maine to mitigate effects of future climate disasters.

Maine has been well served by the non-partisan process of letting the Board of Environmental Protection (BEP) adopt stronger emission standards for vehicles. Adding the requirement to go through the legislature for this process would politicize this process and slow it down at a time when we need to speed it up.

I understand that transitioning to more expensive EVs is a financial challenge for many Mainers, including myself. Yet, I purchased a used plug-in hybrid last year – during the height of prices for both new and used cars – because this is one of my most urgent priorities. I want to leave a livable and beautiful world for my children and grandchildren, and I am willing to pay the price for it. I'd rather pay up front and make a change than paying for the future damage of more devastating storms that we all will have to pick up. It's the smart thing and the right thing to do.

I urge you to vote ONTP on LD 2261.

Thank you, Meret Bainbridge