

Scott Vlaun
Center for an Ecology-Based Economy
LD 2261
131st Legislature

Testimony of Scott Vlaun, Center for an Ecology-Based Economy, 20 March 2024
In opposition to LD 2261

Esteemed members of the committee on Environment and Natural Resources,
My name Scott Vlaun, and I'm the executive director at the Center for an Ecology-Based Economy (CEBE) located in Norway, Maine.

This year our organization, will be hosting our 10th Electric Vehicle Expo in South Paris. This annual "ride and drive" event has put hundreds of people behind the wheel of an EV. We find that once people drive an EV and talk to local EV owners, they want an EV.

CEBE has also installed 26 Level 2 charging plugs in 17 locations throughout our region which spans Bethel to Poland, Fryburg to Buckfield.

Availability of affordable used EVs, combined with abundant public charging and local expertise has led to a boon in Electric Vehicle adoption in western Maine. Our Expo hosts as many as 40 local EV drivers, and we estimate that there are hundreds more in Norway and surrounding communities. I can't think of one EV owner that has abandoned their EV to return to driving a polluting ICE car. What holds back many in our community from driving electric is not lack of trust in the technology, but price.

Electrifying our transportation system is imperative if Maine is to meet its emissions reduction and clean air goals. By adopting ACCII rules, we will assure that Mainers get our fair share of affordable electric vehicles for sale in our underserved rural communities.

Clean Car Standards will expand choices for Maine's rural working class to adopt the same cost-saving, reliable EV technology that may become more affordable and available in neighboring states that have been forward thinking enough to adopt these common-sense rules.

Zero Emission Electric Vehicles are the future. They will play an essential role in the transition to distributed renewable energy as Vehicle to Grid technology matures. They will also help curb the excessive noise and air pollution in our cities, towns and villages, which we witness daily on Main Street Norway.

With half our oil resources already burned and the remainder costly to extract, the fossil fuel age is coming to a close, whether we like it or not, and from a climate perspective, not a moment too soon.

Adopting ACCII rules will benefit all Mainers and keep our great state at the forefront of the transition to a just and equitable renewable energy and clean transportation future.

This bill is nothing less than a last-ditch, retroactive attempt to nullify the passage of Advanced Clean Cars II after a year-long, thoughtful public health and environmental policy-making process, incorporating the hard work, input and comments from thousands of Mainers, including many legislators. The Board of Environmental Protection's decision should stand, and I strongly oppose LD 2261.

Thank you for your time,
Scott Vlaun, Executive Director, Center for an Ecology-Based Economy