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AARP MAINE TESTIMONY NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 347, AN ACT TO FACILITATE MAINE'S CLIMATE GOALS BY ENCOURAGING USE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Chairs Lawrence and Berry and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. I am Lori Parham, State Director for AARP Maine. I also am a member of the Maine Climate Council.

AARP is a non-profit, non-partisan social mission organization with more than 200,000 members across the state. We work on a range of energy issues at the state level. The core principles we approach this work with include:

- Ensuring service affordability for all—utility rates should be based on prudent use of ratepayer money. Costs and savings should be distributed fairly among consumers. Households with lower incomes must be taken into account.
- Securing and expanding service access for all—all consumers should have access to utility services regardless of factors such as geography, race, ethnicity, and income.
- Improving quality—consumers should be able to rely on high-quality utility services.
- Enhancing accountability—any changes in utility service, policy, or rates should be open and transparent. The process should provide a wide range of opportunities for input from the public and independent groups.

AARP Maine strongly supports climate change initiatives. However, this support comes with caveats and concerns about the need to ensure equity and affordability for essential electricity service for all customers; particularly those whose basic income is insufficient to meet their needs for food, shelter, medicines, and essential energy services. While AARP Maine recognizes the potential long-term benefits from electrification of Maine's transportation system, a key driver of carbon emissions, the steps needed to pursue this objective should not be imposed through regressive electricity prices. Too many Maine families are struggling to meet their basic needs. Any subsidy shifted from one group of customers to another group of customers falls hardest on those with the least income or ability to afford higher electricity bills.



We have questions about the lack of any indication of the degree to which the EV charging rate must be incentivized or of the additional costs that this bill would shift to other non-EV customers. For example, would this rate shift generation supply costs? Regulated delivery charges? Federally imposed transmission charges? We are uncomfortable with the precedent set by this proposed legislation that has no boundaries to the cost shift that is intended or that fails to recognize and clearly describe the nature of the incentive that is desired.

We also believe it is important that EV charging prices reflect the proper incentive to “fill the tank” during non-peak hours so as to prevent adding to peak energy and incremental T&D costs. It would not be appropriate to set rates that fail to send the proper price signal to EV owners since the promised benefits of EV charging rely on the use of energy on off-peak hours.

In closing, I would like to note the recommendation in the Maine Climate Council report *Maine Won't Wait* for further analysis of beneficial electrification. See: Maine Climate Council. A Four Year Plan for Climate Action: Maine Won't Wait. 2020.

https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov/future/files/inline-files/MaineWontWait_December2020.pdf

Thank you for the opportunity to offer feedback. I would be happy to answer any questions and can be contacted at lparham@aarp.org or 207-776-6304.

Lori Parham, State Director
AARP Maine