



SIERRA CLUB

MAINE CHAPTER

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To: Joint Committee on Transportation
From: Andrew Blunt, Sierra Club Maine
Date: April 11, 2025
Re: **Testimony in Support of L.D. 1242: *An Act to Incentivize the Construction of Solar Carport Canopies and Solar Chargers at Highway Picnic Areas***

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

I write on behalf of Sierra Club Maine, representing over 22,000 supporters and members statewide. Founded in 1892, Sierra Club is one of our nation's oldest and largest environmental organizations. We work diligently to amplify the power of our 3.8 million members nationwide as we work towards combating climate change and promoting a just and sustainable economy. To that end, we urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on L.D. 1242.

This bill directs the Department of Transportation to enter into no-cost leases for the installation of solar-powered electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at all highway picnic areas. The bill also allows a person who builds a solar carport canopy housing at least two EV charging stations to amortize the sales and use tax assessed on materials and equipment used to construct the canopy and any EV charging stations under it.

Expanding our EV charging network is a critical piece of our state's electrification journey. Transportation continues to be Maine's largest source of carbon emissions, much of which is from light duty passenger vehicle transportation. Therefore, EV adoption by average consumers across Maine must be a top climate priority. There are various barriers to adoption that stop Mainers from making the switch to an EV, but perhaps the most common is limited access to EV charging infrastructure.

This bill leverages publicly-owned land to improve access to EV charging statewide. Even better, it encourages load-neutral chargers powered by co-located solar arrays. This is precisely the type of creative public policy needed to accelerate the rate of beneficial electrification in Maine. We strongly encourage you to vote "Ought to Pass" on L.D. 1242.

Sincerely,

Andrew Blunt
Sierra Club Maine Chapter
Legislative and Political Strategist