

Joshua Franklin
Gray
LD 622

My name is Josh Franklin. I'm 32, and live in Gray.

I'm reaching out to voice my opposition to LD622 (HP 390) which would charge an additional \$250 annually, at the time of registration, for owners of electric vehicles. In 2022, needing a new vehicle, I remember weighing my options. If I could afford it, buying an EV felt like the right thing to do. I ended up purchasing a 2023 Chevy Bolt, which is one of the more affordable options for EVs, and truly the max that I could afford. I could have chosen to buy a less expensive vehicle powered by gasoline, but I paid the extra because I felt that if I could make it work, it was the right thing to do. I made my decision knowing that the government (local, state, and (at the time) federal) was encouraging the public to consider buying electric, and trusting that that support would continue, and that EV infrastructure would continue to improve.

As you know, purchasing a new vehicle in Maine means paying a very high excise tax for several years, and it's still a tough pill to swallow every year. You can imagine my dismay when I learned that Maine is now considering charging EV owners an extra \$250 every year to maintain our registration.

I understand that the goal is to maintain tax revenue for our highways, which is usually paid for by taxes at the gas pump, but I would argue that this fee unfairly overtaxes EV owners compared to those who drive combustion vehicles. The gas tax is incremental; how much Mainers pay into it is based on how often they drive (how often they're using the road). The more they drive, the more gasoline they buy, the more tax they pay. EV owners would be required to pay a flat fee no matter how little they drive their vehicle. This puts one at a tax disadvantage for owning an EV.

Honestly, for a state trying to encourage a shift to electric vehicles, this bill doesn't make sense. Knowing that your vehicle registration will always be \$250 more, every year, if you buy an EV, is very discouraging, and becomes another reason to not buy an EV (or to regret buying one).

There may be an idea that EV owners are wealthier and can afford extra costs, and some data may support that trend for now. But there are constituents like me, making under 70k a year, who stretch to afford EVs to do what's right for our shared climate. And as incentives dry up and additional fees are placed on EV owners, and the political climate becomes less supportive, it will ensure that EVs really are just a niche product for those who can afford it.

Wouldn't it be more prudent to wait until EV adoption becomes more affordable and mainstream before implementing taxes which would slow said implementation down? If this tax passes, that already expensive annual registration will be even more of a financial stressor, and another moment to wonder, as I swipe my credit card despite the pit in my stomach, if we're really moving as a society over to EVs, or if I made a mistake.

Please oppose this bill.

Thank you,