

**Testimony in Support of LD 1324, An Act to Protect Maine Consumers Shopping for
Electric Vehicles from Deceptive Advertising and Marketing Practices**

**To the Committee on Housing and Economic Development
by Josh Caldwell, Climate and Clean Energy Policy Advocate for NRCM
May 2, 2025**

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Committee on Transportation, my name is Josh Caldwell, and I am here on behalf of the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) in support of LD 1324, An Act to Protect Maine Consumers Shopping for Electric Vehicles from Deceptive Advertising and Marketing Practices. NRCM is Maine's leading nonpartisan membership organization dedicated to protecting Maine's environment, with nearly 20,000 supporters statewide and beyond.

I serve on the Transportation Working Group for the Maine Climate Council. Reducing emissions from our transportation sector is "Plan A" in Maine's Climate Action Plan, and that strategy hinges on rapidly increasing adoption by making EVs more available and affordable in the coming years. In addition to the climate imperative, EVs save drivers money and are a critical tool for the continued development of a flexible electric grid. EVs cost significantly less to drive than gas cars due to far lower fuel costs and fewer maintenance requirements,¹ and are set to reach upfront cost parity with internal combustion engine vehicles by next year.²

Mainers who drive EVs now save between \$19-\$30 every time they charge an EV instead of filling up a tank of gas.³ Further, Maine's Energy Plan published this year by the Governor's Energy Office finds that EVs offer a "significant opportunity for flexible load management" and are a critical tool for reducing electricity rates in the coming years.⁴

¹ Atlas Public Policy, *Comparing the Cost of Owning the Most Popular Vehicles in the United States*, March 2024, <https://atlaspolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Comparing-the-Cost-of-Owning-the-Most-Popular-Vehicles-in-the-United-States.pdf>

² Kelley Blue Book, *Study: EVs Could Reach Price Parity in 2026*, December 2024, <https://www.kbb.com/car-news/study-evs-could-reach-price-parity-in-2026/>

³ Washington Post, *Is it cheaper to refuel your EV battery or gas tank? We did the math in all 50 states*, August 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/interactive/2023/electric-vehicle-charging-price-vs-gasoline/>

⁴ Governor's Energy Office, *Maine Energy Plan 2025*, January 2025, <https://www.maine.gov/energy/sites/maine.gov.energy/files/2025-01/Maine%20Energy%20Plan%20January%202025.pdf>

Misleading advertising and marketing damages Maine's progress toward our climate action goals and undermines the necessary transition to EVs. It is crucial that when Mainers make a purchase as significant as a new vehicle that they do not have the wool pulled over their eyes. Older Mainers, low-income families, and new Mainers are especially susceptible to unfair business practices. Trust is a significant issue when it comes to advancing new technologies, and misleading marketing practices erode that trust.

We have seen evidence that large automakers have been misleading consumers to indicate that their gas-powered hybrid vehicles are fully electric. They use terms like "electrified" and "beyond zero" and "to each their own electric" to deceive consumers into believing that their gasoline-powered hybrid vehicles are electric. They also use lightning bolts and plugs and words like "range" to describe vehicles with internal combustion engines that do not plug in.

EVs present immense climate pollution reductions and cost savings for Mainers. People in Maine should not be subject to messaging that seeks to trick them into a purchase that is not what they thought it would be. To advance our climate goals and save money for Mainers on transportation costs, we cannot allow these intentionally misleading messages to be used in Maine.

For these reasons, we urge the Committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1324.