

Townsend, Erle

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To: DEP Rule Comments
Subject: chapters 127-a and 128

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Ladies and gentlemen of the BEP,

My name is Robert Wessels and I am running for Maine Governor in 2026. I am coming to you on behalf of the many Maine citizens that I have heard from as I have been around the State since this policy has come to the public's attention.

As I talk to Mainers throughout the state, I consistently hear financial concerns. Throughout the US, but in Maine especially our personal budgets are stretched to the max. Our paychecks do not go as far as they used to.

The cost of food has soared due to the recent increase in inflation.

The cost of housing, including both home ownership and rent, has skyrocketed in recent years. I have heard from a number of renters who have seen 20-25% increases in their rent prices.

During and after Covid we saw a substantial increase in the cost of used vehicles, building materials, fuel, and other necessary items and prices have still not returned to earlier levels, and due to inflation, they likely won't.

Due to prior poor legislative decisions that have prioritized Mainers **below** environmental agendas, such as the 100 mega-watt cap for cheaper sources of power, the current cost of electricity in Maine is among some of the highest in the country. I can't imagine what you would do to this rate by significantly increasing demand for electricity as more Mainers have to charge their cars daily.

Maine is currently one of the most-taxed states in the nation as well. This is not a coveted position, but little by little, decision by decision, we keep making the most expensive decisions possible, and they are adding up.

I mention all these things in this EV public hearing because it is the reality that is the backdrop behind your landmark historical decision. This is potentially the biggest decision a non-elected board of citizens has made that will dramatically impact everyday Mainers for decades to come.

You have heard arguments that Maine does not have enough EV chargers. You have heard arguments that Maine's electrical infrastructure is not ready. I have even heard responses from some of you that seem to acknowledge the reality that Maine is not ready YET. Maine has a lot to do to get ready for such an audacious policy change and all of these changes will cost millions upon millions to roll out. The additional costs incorporated in this policy change will result in increased taxes on an already over-taxed people. Why?

Many in favor of this decision are looking at it as an environmental decision, and that is one side of it. But bigger than that, it is a financial and taxation decision. A quality-of-life decision. It is a fork in the road decision about government overreach. Will our government single-handedly decide what is right for all Mainers to drive for vehicles? Please take the time to acknowledge that this is not just an environmental decision. And if you insist on looking at it only from an environmental side, then acknowledge that the batteries in all EV's are not environmentally friendly. The Lithium mines are not humane, and when the batteries need to be disposed of at the end of their life, their disposal is not environmentally friendly.

In conclusion, last time you opened this up to the public 660% more people were against it, than were for it. Please be open enough to consider the people of Maine and the impact you will have on them while making such a huge decision

for the state. When seen in context of the whole picture, this decision is at best only questionably beneficial to the environment. While the reality is that it is guaranteed to have a negative impact on Mainer's quality of life, at the cost of our Freedom and liberty. While the pursuit of a cleaner and more sustainable environment is a noble goal, it is crucial to address the potential drawbacks and infringements on personal liberties that come from such a mandate. Thank you.

Robert Wessels