



**Testimony of Eliza Townsend, Maine Conservation Policy Director**  
**In support of**  
**Proposed Chapter 127-A, *Advanced Clean Cars II Program***  
**Maine Board of Environmental Protection**  
**August 17, 2023**

Good morning, Chair Lessard and distinguished members of the Board of Environmental Protection. I am Eliza Townsend, Maine Conservation Policy Director for the Appalachian Mountain Club, whose mission is to foster the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the outdoors. We have 6,600 members in Maine and own 100,000 acres of forestland in the 100-Mile Wilderness region of Piscataquis County, managed for multiple-use including sustainable forestry, backcountry recreation, and environmental education.

I am pleased to speak to you today to ask you to adopt the Advanced Clean Cars II Program by the year's end, with one important amendment: please set a goal of 100% Zero Emission Vehicles by the year 2035, consistent with the other states that have adopted this program.

Last week's tragic loss of life in Hawaii is only the latest example of the dangers of climate change. As reported by the Bangor *Daily News*, Maine has experienced a record number of flash floods this summer, with the resulting damage to infrastructure.<sup>1</sup> The University of Maine's Climate Change Institute found that the hottest days ever recorded in human history took place on July 3 and 4.<sup>2</sup> Partnering with the Mount Washington Observatory to analyze 100 years of weather data, AMC's Research Department has determined that winters in our region are now 3 weeks shorter, and punctuated by periods of warming they refer to as "winter whiplash"<sup>3</sup> which threatens not only safety, but also crops, infrastructure, and the future of our outdoor recreation economy.

We need to act swiftly and boldly to avert the worst effects of climate change. Both Maine's Climate Action Plan<sup>4</sup> and our statutes<sup>5</sup> recognize the urgency and therefore call for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by mid-century. To get there, we must tackle the transportation sector, which accounts for nearly half of Maine's annual carbon pollution. That means adopting the two proposed rules before you today.

We support the proposed Advanced Clean Cars II rule, which requires an increasing percentage of new light-duty vehicle sales to be zero emission vehicles (ZEV) each year, starting with 43 percent ZEV sales in model year 2027, and leading to 82 percent in model year 2032. We ask you to follow the lead of the other states which have already adopted the rule by amending it to include zero-emission vehicle requirements for model years after 2032, culminating with a 100% requirement for 2035 and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bangordailynews.com/2023/08/08/news/infrastructure-damage-flash-flooding-maine/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://umaine.edu/news/blog/2023/07/05/media-cite-umaine-climate-reanalyzer-in-reporting-about-unofficial-hottest-day-on-record/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab54f3>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/MaineWontWait\\_December2020.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/MaineWontWait_December2020.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/statutes/38/title38sec576-A.html>



Mainers will realize additional benefits from the rule in the form of cleaner air and reduced health impacts from particulate pollution<sup>6</sup>, fuel cost savings to electric vehicle owners<sup>7</sup>, reduced utility rates for all consumers<sup>8</sup> and increased clean energy jobs<sup>9</sup>.

The urgent need to act to counter the worst effects of climate change, in addition to the improvements to our economy, health, and quality of life make the choice clear. Please adopt the proposed rule before the end of 2023, extending it as other states have done to include zero-emission vehicle requirements for model years after 2032, culminating with a 100% requirement for 2035 and beyond.

Thank you.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.lung.org/getmedia/13248145-06f0-4e35-b79b-6dfacfd29a71/zeroing-in-on-healthy-air-report-2022.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.consumerreports.org/hybrids-evs/evs-offer-big-savings-over-traditional-gas-powered-cars/>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.synapse-energy.com/sites/default/files/EV\\_Impacts\\_June\\_2020\\_18-122.pdf#:~:text=EVs%20hold%20significant%20potential%20to%20reduce%20electric%20rates,the%20day%20when%20the%20electric%20grid%20is%20underutilized](https://www.synapse-energy.com/sites/default/files/EV_Impacts_June_2020_18-122.pdf#:~:text=EVs%20hold%20significant%20potential%20to%20reduce%20electric%20rates,the%20day%20when%20the%20electric%20grid%20is%20underutilized)

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Jobs, *United States Energy & Employment Report 2023* (Jun. 2023), at vi-vii