

Climate change is one of the most critical and urgent issues of our time. As a young person, I am seriously concerned with the worsening effects of the climate crisis that are impacting our world today, and the impact it will have on the future of the planet. I have grown up climbing trees and mountains, swimming in the ocean and running around in my backyard. I want future generations to be able to have these same experiences. To be outside without fear of harm from dangerously hot temperatures. To have a forest to play in that isn't destroyed by wildfires. To be able to spend time on the coast that hasn't been flooded by the rising sea levels. In order to protect this future and mitigate current impacts, it is crucial that the world acts now to address the climate crisis on the timescale and level that science and justice requires. I therefore urge you to adopt the Advanced Clean Cars Program II through 2035 to help Maine do its part in tackling the climate crisis.

Transportation is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 49% of emissions in Maine. Therefore, it is critical to take action now to reduce these emissions to meet Maine's goals around addressing the climate crisis and increasing electric vehicles. The ACC II program will accelerate the current shift toward more electric vehicles by making these vehicles more accessible and increasing the supply to meet the growing demand. This ruling can help create good, high paying jobs in the electric vehicle industry. It also has the potential to promote climate justice and save lives by reducing other toxic emissions that can cause lung damage and other health issues and often disproportionately impact low income communities and communities of color.

It is important not only that the ACC II program is adopted, but that it is carried through until 2035 so the full extent of these benefits can be realized. The current proposal to end in 2032 with an 82% zero emission vehicle requirement is not sufficient to meet Maine's emission reduction goals or address the climate crisis at the scale required. I therefore urge you to help Maine meet its goals and address the climate crisis by adopting the Advanced Clean Cars Program II through 2035.

- Audrey Hufnagel, Damariscotta