

Chair Lessard and other Members of the Board,

Dutch Gap Auto was established as a small family business decades ago as a personal and commercial mechanic shop. Eventually, we broadened our services to include 24-hour light, medium and heavy-duty towing services covering most of Franklin County. Our Rural community is already in a state of survival as far as our economic status, as we currently rank 42 in Cost of Living by state in the US. Conforming Maine to these types of emission systems will further hurt our economy and local businesses. The start-up costs to convert all vehicles will wipe many businesses out completely, which will drive the cost of goods even higher than the doubled, and sometimes even tripled, rates we're already seeing over the last few years. It simply isn't feasible in our current economy, even if we were given a large timeframe to continue.

We service vehicles from all over the country because we also work in the Heavy industry. Many of the companies we tow for and work for are already experiencing difficulties with emission systems on their Heavy trucks because the technology hasn't gotten into Maine and New England enough currently. In our area, seeing these systems in personal and light duty vehicles is few and far between.

We don't have the infrastructure needed to support this transition also. Our state is VERY rural, and there are not nearly enough charging ports located across the state to support this transition. Many of our mechanics lack the education and knowledge of electric vehicles, and tow trucks are not equipped with the right supplies to assist in roadside situations. Which would increase customer wait time and compromise their safety in most situations.

In our opinion, we should not move forward to adopt MHDV electrification mandates until the trucks have been tested and proven reliable. Keeping fossil fuel vehicles in use for another 10 to 20 years to allow ample time to test the safety and reliability would be the best plan for our state. This bill could always be revisited but cannot be as easily undone, and Maine is not ready to take on such changes at this time.

Thank you for reading this, and please take all our thoughts into consideration upon making your decision.

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