

Submitter: Nella Mae Parks

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2961

My name is Nella Mae Parks, and I am a farmer in Cove (northeastern Oregon), population 800.

I heard many questions and concerns about HB 2961 during the hearing on February 4th concerning the usefulness of EV chargers to lower income people and rural people. I want share a personal experience with EVs in a rural place that might surprise you.

In a nutshell, I just want to say lower income people and rural people do use EVs and need charging stations. I am one of them.

One committee member made the comment that HB 2961 would increase the cost of development and that he wanted to "see the numbers on how many low income people have EVs because they still cost \$50-\$60K."

My husband works in town (La Grande) which is a 30 minute drive. We are lower middle class, working people. When our old car hit 300,000 miles, we started looking for a new one.

After two years of research (our car was now up to 350,000 miles), we decided to get a used Chevy Bolt--a fully electric car. The state tax rebate for used EVs allowed us to put a good down payment on it and the federal tax credit helped too. My farm CPA encouraged us to go for it.

I have never owned such a new car in my life. I have never had a car payment until now, but it is manageable--\$271 per month. That's about four tanks of gas in our little pickup, but the electric bill increase has only been a few dollars a month.

In a rural place, a reliable car can be more important and take precedence over housing and other costs. We can't get to work, the doctor, school, etc without a reliable car.

We chose to get a small, efficient, electric car because my husband drives at least 30 miles a day. We chose to put our money into paying off the car faster rather than gas, and we aren't the only ones. Many folks in my town have bought used electric cars in the last few years.

A farmer neighbor of mine even went in for a Ford Lightning and swapped out his diesel pickup because of the rebate and his math on the gas savings.

EV charging stations are a challenge in rural Oregon. We need more reliable and abundant stations as more and more people choose to make the switch. And these are not just "Tesla people." They are people like me who will probably never own a new car but are looking for ways to save money and gas.

Thanks for considering my perspective.

Sincerely,
Nella Mae Parks
Cove, Oregon