

February 25, 2020

The Honorable Kumar Barve
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Opposition of House Bill 1316 (Residential Construction - Electric Vehicle Charging)

Dear Chairman Barve:

The Maryland Building Industry Association (MBIA), representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, supports House Bill 1316 (Residential Construction - Electric Vehicle Charging).

This measure requires new residential buildings to include either a dedicated electrical line for electric vehicle charging stations, or the electric vehicle charging stations themselves. While we support technological advancements that will improve the health of the environment, this legislation is too expensive and forces market trends before the market is prepared to change with insufficient data to support such a significant change.

This measure was modeled after Howard County's electric vehicle charging station legislation, but since the program is so new, there is no evidence yet that it is or will be successful. It could also have a significant impact on State funds; Chapter 402 of 2011 established an electric vehicle recharging equipment tax credit program to encourage electric vehicle purchases, but the decrease in gasoline purchases takes money away from the Transportation Trust Fund. A statewide policy should not be implemented without considering all the factors.

Additionally, the character of and market in Howard County is not indicative of the market throughout the State. The comparatively few electric vehicles registered in Maryland are located in higher-density areas, and they are not common. Areas like the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland do not have a market for electric vehicles yet, but this measure would apply to all new construction across the State, whether such infrastructure will be needed in the near future or not. The Statewide market simply isn't ready for such far-reaching legislative mandates in this area.

Furthermore, the infrastructure required by this bill is advanced technology, which isn't cheap, and will continue to rapidly develop. It will be expensive for builders to keep up with technological advancements, and the increased costs will have to be built into the price of the home. Increasing the cost of building will increase the cost of housing, and the current market will not support it. Requiring builders to install this infrastructure for it to change again in a few years, for residents who won't utilize it anyway, is not an efficient use of time or resources.

Finally, the current draft is unclear as to whether this requirement will count towards parking spaces that developers are required to provide or will be additional spaces.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: House Environment and Transportation Committee Members