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**Committee: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs**

**Testimony on: HB784 - “Residential Construction - Electric Vehicle Charging”**

**Position: Support**

**Hearing Date: March 31, 2021**

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly supports HB784, which would support installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging equipment in new single-family detached homes and townhouses being built.

The bill specifies that when new housing units are being constructed, the builder or builder’s agent shall provide each prospective buyer with the option to have the garage, carport or driveway of the housing unit include an EV charging station capable of providing at least level 2 charging, or a dedicated electric line of sufficient voltage to support the addition of an EV charging station at a later date. The builder or builder’s agent also shall give to each prospective buyer of a housing unit specific information about any available rebate programs related to the purchase or installation of EV charging stations.

More than 345,000 electric cars were sold in the U.S. last year, and 2.3 million were sold worldwide. More and more consumers recognize the growing value and quality of plug-in vehicles. Automakers have many more EV models on the way. However, a significant limitation on continued growth of EVs is the availability of charging infrastructure.

Encouraging the growth of EVs is critically important because transportation is now the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland and the country. Tailpipe emissions from gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles also are hazardous to human health and are linked to various cancers, heart disease, asthma, emphysema, and other respiratory diseases. As more coal plants are retired, and more clean renewable sources of power are brought online, the emissions from utilities providing electricity to charge electric vehicles will continue to decline.

In summary, this bill is a common-sense approach to making electric vehicle charging equipment available to more individuals at their homes. The bill’s passage would encourage more EV usage in our state, which would reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions and improve our environment. We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on this legislation.

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Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 75,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.