Testimony to the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
HB 834 Electric Vehicle Charging Reliability Act
**Position: Favorable**

March 28, 2023

Senator Brian Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Mr. Chairman,

I am writing in support of HB 834, the Electric Vehicle Charging Reliability Act.

Entities receiving taxpayer or ratepayer funds to increased install and operate electric vehicle ("EV") charging infrastructure should be held to accountability and transparency requirements.

HB 834 will hold utilities participating in the Public Service Commission's ("PSC") EV Pilot Program ("Pilot program") to the same reporting requirements as private entities participating in the federal National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure ("NEVI") program.

In 2019, the PSC approved an EV Pilot Program, allowing BGE, Pepco, Potomac Edison and later SMECO ("utilities") to install and operate public charging equipment in Maryland. The program allow these utilities to install Level-2 ("AC Destination Chargers") and Level-3 DCFC ("DC Fast Chargers") chargers.

The program also allows utilities to offer residential and non-residential EVSE ("Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment", aka "EV Charging Station") rebates to incentivize individuals and commercial entities to install EV Chargers.

The General Assembly needs to evaluate the results of the Pilot program and determine whether utilities are sufficiently capable of installing, operating, and maintaining EV charging stations.
HB 834 requires utilities to provide more detailed information regarding their charging infrastructure, while also expanding the pilot program to account for market failures.
Despite realizing financial losses, utilities have consistently praised their ability to install and opearate reliable chargers. In their February 2023 semi-annual progress report, utilities have reported financial losses of their 202 out of 217 sites, losing over $400,000[1]. Utilities operating EVSE sites at a lose are directly competing with private and Multifamily Dwellings by selling electricity (kWh) below open market prices.

During transition to EV adoption and low utilization of the EVSE, utilities have no financial incentive to provide acceptable uptime of minimum 97% especially when the sites loose money.

1 https://webpsc.psc.state.md.us/DMS/case/9478
*Potomac Electric Power Company and Delmarva Power & Light Company - Case No. 9478 (ML 301131)*
*Baltimore Gas and Electric Company - Case No. 9478 (ML 301120)*
*Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Inc. - Case No. 9478 (ML 301119)*
*The Potomac Edison Company - Case No. 9478. (ML 301116)*

Electric companies are vital partners in the effort to increase adoption of emobility. The size and scope of their participation must be carefully determined by lawmakers in the coming months. Utilities and PSC must focus on providing competitive electric tariffs for all EVSE site operators, especially Multifamily Dwellings in Maryland.

DCFC sites are designed for long distance travel, thus the EV Pilot subsidizes out of state travelers. PSC and utilities must focus on EVSE Tariff serving multifamily dwelling Level-2 installations directly serving Maryland residents. Increased penetration of Level-2 EVSEs at multifamily dwellings will indirectly reduce the need for subsidized DCFC sites.
One EV charging at 150 kW DCFC is equivalent to 20 EVs charging on Level-2 EVSE.
One EV charging at 250 kW DCFC is equivalent to 30 EVs charging on Level-2 EVSE.

HB 834 seeks to increase and specify the data provided by the utilities to the PSC regarding the reliability of their chargers, so lawmakers can make informed decisions regarding the future role of utilities installing EVSEs and the cost of electricity operators pay to the utilities.

Recognizing the failure of private industry to place EV charging stations in underserved communities, due to unpredictable and affordable cost of electricity during the transition period of low utilization. PSC's authorized rebate and installation programs to reduce this disparity has had some success compared to the rebate program for multi-unit dwellings. The program does not provide any post installation cost mediation to keep the cost of electricity predictable and affordable to the owners and operators thus subpar reliability results.

HB 834 seeks to close the gap created by private industry by expressly expanding the Pilot program to allow utilities to install EV charging stations in multifamily dwellings in underserved communities through 2025. Utilities would be required to report the same detailed information for these chargers as all other previously installed utility owned chargers.

HB 834 will ensure all entities that use public funds to install EV chargers are held to a uniform standard to improve consumer experience and incentivize more drivers to switch to EVs.

HB 834 will also allow lawmakers to make more informed decisions regarding the role of utilities in promoting EVs moving forward.

Thank you for your consideration, and I urge a favorable report on HB 834.

Respectfully,

Robert Borkowski