

Monday, March 4, 2024

TO: Brian Feldman, Chair of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, and Committee Members

FROM: Cait Kerr, The Nature Conservancy, State Policy Manager; Mariana Rosales, The Nature Conservancy, Director of Climate

POSITION: Support SB 695 Building Code - Construction and Significant Renovation of Housing Units - Electric Vehicle Parking Spaces

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supports SB 695, offered by Senator Feldman. SB 695 will set requirements for EV charging parking availability for new or significantly renovated multifamily residential buildings. This bill is consistent with the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's (MCCC) recommendation in the 2023 Annual Report to require new and existing multifamily buildings to meet EV-ready standards and to install EV chargers accessible to building tenants.

As a member of the Mitigation Working Group and the Zero Emissions Vehicles Sub Group, TNC provided funding for a study to examine and design program recommendations for accelerating light-duty zero emission vehicle adoption in Maryland. We recognize that increasing access to EV charging equipment across the state is essential for transitioning the transportation sector to electric.

Population density in multifamily housing developments is high. Multifamily housing also tends to be more affordable than single-family housing. Establishing precise requirements for EV charging parking for housing units can vastly increase access to charging infrastructure and remove barriers for prospective EV buyers living in multifamily housing.

The EV market is expanding – an increasing number of customers are interested in purchasing cleaner and healthier transportation options. Accessible charging infrastructure is necessary to keep up with increasing demand and attract new potential buyers from various geographic regions that may not have previously had reliable access to charging equipment. SB 695 will make EV ownership less challenging for those with limited access to charging infrastructure.

TNC commends Senator Feldman on introducing this bill, which addresses a current obstacle to EV ownership and seeks to expand access to EV charging equipment for multifamily housing residents.

Therefore, we urge a favorable report on SB 695.