

Tuesday, February 6, 2024

TO: Marc Korman, Chair of the House Environment and Transportation Committee, and Committee Members

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

POSITION: Support HB 159 Common Ownership Communities - Electric Vehicle Recharging Equipment (Electric Vehicle Recharging Equipment Act of 2024)

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supports HB 159 offered by Delegate Korman. HB 159 will clarify procedures for installing electric vehicle (EV) charging equipment within condominiums and homeowners associations and extends these requirements and procedures to include electric bicycles. This bill is consistent with the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's (MCCC) recommendation in the 2023 Annual Report to align EV infrastructure incentives with owner/tenant responsibilities. The MCCC states that this alignment will support building owner, condo association and commercial tenant responsibility in multi-dwelling units to install charging infrastructure. HB 159 cleans up requirements and procedures for EV charging equipment installation and maintenance for common ownership communities to be more consistent with the state's requirements for this equipment on other types of properties.

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. Clarifying procedures and responsibilities for installing and maintaining charging equipment within multi-dwelling units can reduce delays and create a more efficient process for application review and approval. Overall, this can lead to more charging equipment on the ground at a faster rate.

The EV market is growing – an increasing number of customers are interested in purchasing cleaner and healthier transportation options, including light-duty vehicles and bicycles. Inconsistent requirements and procedures for charging equipment installation poses a barrier to multi-dwelling unit residents interested in purchasing an EV. HB 159 aims to lessen barriers for potential EV purchasers and to create consistent agreements between property owners, homeowners associations, and tenants when it comes to installing and maintaining charging equipment.

TNC commends Delegate Korman on introducing this bill, which seeks alignment and consistency in the requirements and procedures for installing and maintaining EV charging equipment within multi-dwelling units.

Therefore, we urge a favorable report on HB 159.