

**Testimony to the House Environment and Transportation Committee
HB 1225 Weights and Measures - Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment -
Registration Fees**

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6300 Brookville Rd
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The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Position: Favorable with amendments

Honorable Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

My name is Wiley Hodges. I have been an EV driver since 2019, and a resident of Maryland and member of the EV Association Greater Washington DC. I also serve today on the Drive Electric Board of the Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition. I thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony on the proposed bill. I am supportive of the bill's aim to reduce the burden on charging infrastructure providers that would be imposed by the current program proposed by the Department of Agriculture.

That said, I would urge the committee to seriously consider the issues around EV charging equipment inspections at a more basic level, and with that, to consider several amendments to the proposed legislation.

As you have heard in testimony from EVADC, EV drivers continue to see the number one charging infrastructure issue as reliability, not metering accuracy. In my own experience having driven over 120,000 EV miles spanning the entirety of the continental United States I have never encountered a metering accuracy issue, but I have had countless struggles with broken or malfunctioning chargers.

I applaud the aim of protecting consumers and assuring that Maryland provides the best, most reliable EV charging infrastructure possible. But I would caution that the current proposed inspection regime is unnecessarily complex and burdensome, while still failing to address the most urgent issues facing EV charging consumers in our state.

I therefore echo the recommendations made by EVADC to adopt a reduced per-port fee, and adopt a phased approach to inspections focusing on operational status first, and deferring metering accuracy inspections until such time the data shows that they are necessary and effective. I would go even further to propose that this committee

seriously consider exempting Level 2 chargers from the inspection program entirely, at least for the next few years.

As you consider the path forward on this issue, I think it's important to start with the observation that EVs do not 'fuel' the same way as internal combustion engine vehicles. While a gasoline car requires a gasoline station with mechanical pumps to dispense its highly-flammable toxic fuel, EVs can add power using solid state electronic devices at virtually any place with an electrical outlet. That means that EV drivers have the potential to charge their cars at night while they sleep at home or in a hotel, while they dine at a local restaurant, or in a parking lot or garage while shopping or near their office during the day. These long-duration charging opportunities are where Level 2 charging infrastructure comes into play.

While DC fast chargers are more akin to gas stations—located near roadways and designed to refuel in minutes rather than hours—they are also expensive to install and operate, costing anywhere for tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars. In addition to being more than an order of magnitude cheaper to install and operate, Level 2 chargers have also typically been concomitantly cheaper for consumers to access, usually charging half or less of the per-kilowatt-hour rates of DC fast chargers. It is not unusual to see businesses and public parking garages install Level 2 chargers as an amenity to help attract customers while encouraging EV use. It seems to me that this is a unique win-win opportunity in the world of environmental and transportation policy: a form of infrastructure that is quick and easy to install, often installed for selfish reasons by private operators, and available at relatively low cost.

It's also what experts at the Department of Energy's National Laboratory of the Rockies have estimated we need the most. Their projections for US EV charging infrastructure requirements in the year 2030 call for over a million level 2 plugs in public charging, versus just 182,000 DC fast charging plugs. That means that 85% of public infrastructure should be Level 2.

That's what we need; my concern is that without changes such as the proposed fee reduction in HB 1225 Maryland is currently poised to implement a regulatory regime that will prevent us from achieving it. It is my opinion that any metering accuracy regulation of Level 2 chargers is both unnecessary and overly burdensome.

Charging service provider EV Connect estimates that the typical lifetime of a Level 2 charger is around 10 years. According to the US Department of Energy's Alternative Fuels Data Center, a typical commercial Level 2 charger can cost around \$2500 per plug for equipment and initial installation. Annual maintenance costs are projected by the same sources to be around \$400-\$500 per year, and cost of electricity is typically passed through to users. That means that the current proposed Weights and Measures EV registration and inspection program for Level 2 chargers becomes a significant portion—at least 20 percent—of the total operating expense, and can make the difference between break-even and money-losing operation. Unfortunately I haven't

seen any actual data-driven analysis of this cost burden associated with the state's proposed regulation to date.

This brings me to the heart of what I ask of this committee: as you consider this legislation and proposed amendments, please consider a data-driven approach to this policy. Ask for people making proposals to show their numbers and their sources. Make sure that the policy you legislate solves the real problems facing Maryland's citizens, and does so cost effectively.

I believe that HB1225 is a good start at fixing a bad policy, but I also believe that we can and should go further to help assure a cleaner, better Maryland in the future.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Wiley Hodges