
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Senator Lena Gonzalez, Chair

2023 - 2024 Regular

Bill No:	SB 30	Hearing Date:	4/25/2023
Author:	Umberg		
Version:	2/27/2023		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Randy Chinn		

SUBJECT: Transportation: zero-emission vehicle signage

DIGEST: This bill requires the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to develop and design light-duty zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) charging and fueling station signage to be placed along state highways.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires Caltrans to adopt rules and regulations prescribing uniform standards for all traffic control devices, including signs and markings, known as the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). All traffic control devices must conform to these standards. (Vehicle Code Section 21400)
- 2) Establishes, through Executive Order, a goal of the State that 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero-emission by 2035, that 100 percent of medium-and heavy-duty vehicles in the State be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible and by 2035 for drayage trucks. (EO N-79-20)

This bill requires Caltrans, in coordination with the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development and the California Energy Commission (CEC), to develop and design light-duty zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) charging and fueling station signage to be placed along state highways.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Author’s Statement.* “SB 30 will require ZEV charging station signage to be placed along state highways. This signage will inform drivers where they can charge their electric vehicles or fuel up their hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. SB 30

will also build awareness for non-ZEV motorists by bringing ZEV infrastructure to the forefront of their minds, helping eliminate range anxiety during daily driving routes and trips throughout the state. SB 30 strives to increase confidence in California's ever-growing ZEV station infrastructure. Adding more ZEVs on the road will improve public health and the environment and adding refueling station signs will help the state meet its transportation goals and help boost local economic development."

- 2) *Falling Far Behind.* Adequate charging infrastructure is essential to achieving our EV deployment goals. A recent survey by Consumer Reports found that concerns about charging logistics (e.g. where and when an EV can be recharged) was the most cited barrier for potential EV buyers¹. Similarly, a recent JD Power study found increasing dissatisfaction with EV charging among EV owners, noting that public charging continues to provide challenges to overall EV adoption and current EV owners alike².
- 3) *Be Aware.* There is increasing awareness of the need to deploy more ZEV charging and to better inform drivers of ZEV charging availability. While most ZEV drivers are made aware of ZEV charging through apps in their vehicle, signage can be helpful and creates awareness among yet-to-be ZEV buyers. The National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program (NEVI), a federal EV charging program created as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, provides that highway signage is an authorized use of NEVI funding. Additionally, California's Clean Transportation Program provides planning grants to local governments for ZEV infrastructure planning and authorizes installation of signage for previously installed chargers.

Caltrans has published a ZEV charging station sign installation guide which includes model signage that has been approved by the MUTCD (see below). Moreover, Caltrans has an existing program which places signs on highways when requested by a local government, or when the CEC identifies a need for signs, at no cost to the requestor. As of September 2022 about 230 signs have been installed on freeways. Given these ongoing efforts, it is not clear what additional effect this bill will have.

¹ Consumer Report; January/February 2022 survey on battery electric vehicles. Question 8: What would prevent you from buying/leasing an electric vehicle? 61% of respondents indicated charging logistics. Other major reasons cited include driving range (55%) and cost of ownership (52%).

² J.D. Power U.S. Electric Vehicle Experience Public Charging Study, August 17, 2022.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

RELATED LEGISLATION:

None

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

Unknown

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday, April 19, 2023.)

SUPPORT:

California Electric Transportation Coalition
California Hydrogen Coalition

OPPOSITION:

None received

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