

Date of Hearing: April 15, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Juan Carrillo, Chair

AB 1820 (Schiavo) – As Amended March 16, 2026

SUBJECT: EV charging stations: permit fees.

SUMMARY: Establishes permit fee caps for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations until January 1, 2036. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Provides that a city, county, city and county, or charter city (city or county) shall not charge a permit fee for an EV charging station that exceeds the estimated reasonable cost of providing the service for which the fee is charged.
- 2) Provides that the permit fee for an EV charging station shall not exceed \$100 plus \$15 per kilowatt for each kilowatt above 15kW for residential EV charging stations,
- 3) Provides that the permit fee for an EV charging station shall not exceed \$500 plus \$5 per kilowatt for each kilowatt between 51kW and 250kW, plus \$2 for every kilowatt above 250 kW, for commercial EV charging stations.
- 4) Allows a city or county to charge a permit fee for an EV charging station that exceeds the fees specified above if the city or county, as part of a written finding and an adopted resolution or ordinance, provides substantial evidence of the reasonable cost to issue the permit.
- 5) Requires a written finding adopted pursuant to 4), above, to include all of the following:
 - a) A determination that the municipality has adopted appropriate ordinances, permit fees, and processes to streamline the submittal and approval of permits for EV charging stations pursuant to the practices and policies in state guidelines and model ordinances.
 - b) A calculation related to the administrative cost of issuing an EV charging station permit.
 - c) A description of how the higher fee will result in a quick and streamlined approval process.
- 6) Provides the following definitions for the purposes of this bill:
 - a) “Administrative costs” means the costs incurred in connection with the review, approval, and issuance of the permit, and the hourly site inspection and follow-up costs, and may also include an amortization of the costs incurred in connection with producing a written finding and adopting an ordinance or resolution pursuant to this bill.
 - b) “EV charging station” means any level of electric vehicle supply equipment station that is designed and built in compliance with Article 625 of the California Electrical Code and delivers electricity from a source outside an electric vehicle into a plug-in electric vehicle, as specified.

- c) "Permit fee" means the sum of all charges levied by a city, county, city and county, or charter city in connection with the application for an EV charging station that is installed on the property.
- 7) Provides that this bill shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2036, and as of that date is repealed.
- 8) Finds and declares that establishing consistent standards for local permitting fees on EV charging stations is a matter of statewide concern and is not a municipal affair as that term is used in Section 5 of Article XI of the California Constitution. Therefore, Section 1 of this bill adding Chapter 7.7 (commencing with Section 66015.5) to Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code applies to all cities, including charter cities.
- 9) Provides that no reimbursement is required by this bill pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because a local agency or school district has the authority to levy service charges, fees, or assessments sufficient to pay for the program or level of service mandated by this bill, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code.

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill is keyed fiscal and contains a state-mandated local program.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Bill Summary.** This bill establishes fee caps that cities or counties can charge for permitting EV charging stations, as follows:
 - a) For residential EV charging stations, the fee is limited to \$100, plus \$15 per kilowatt for each kilowatt above 15kW.
 - b) For commercial EV charging stations, the fee is limited to \$500, plus \$5 per kilowatt for each kilowatt between 51kW and 250kW, plus \$2 for every kilowatt above 250 kW.

A city or county may charge a permit fee that exceeds these amounts if the city or county provides substantial evidence of the reasonable cost to issue the permit as part of a written finding and an adopted resolution or ordinance. The written findings must include:

- a) A determination that the municipality has adopted appropriate ordinances, permit fees, and processes to streamline the submittal and approval of permits for EV charging stations pursuant to the practices and policies in state guidelines and model ordinances.
- b) A calculation related to the administrative cost of issuing an EV charging station permit.
- c) A description of how the higher fee will result in a quick and streamlined approval process.

This bill applies to all cities, including charter cities, and remains in effect until January 1, 2036. This bill is sponsored by the Coalition for Clean Air and the Electrical Vehicle Charging Association.

- 2) **Author's Statement.** According to the author, "To achieve a clean transportation transition, California will need to build hundreds of thousands more chargers by 2030. However, the cost to permit chargers can vary wildly county by county, sometimes far above the actual cost to issue the permit. AB 1820 is an important step towards preparing our electrical vehicle infrastructure for the needs of tomorrow This measure will standardize the cost of permit fees for electric vehicle chargers making their development and installation more affordable for the public and more predictable for developers."
- 3) **Background.** California has been steadily expanding its policies supporting the adoption of EV technology and infrastructure, beginning with incentives for purchasing EVs and requirements on automakers to manufacture specified percentages of EVs in relation to their production of conventional cars. This was followed by statutes governing the degree of authority Common Interest Developments (CIDs) can exercise over the installation of EV charging infrastructure, and prohibitions against specified membership and fee requirements for the privilege of using an EV charging station.

In 2012, the Governor issued an Executive Order directing the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the California Energy Commission (CEC), the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and other relevant agencies working with the California Plug-In Electric Vehicle Collaborative and the Fuel Cell Partnership to develop benchmarks to help support and facilitate the rapid commercialization of zero emission vehicles (ZEVs). The order directed these agencies to establish benchmarks to help the state's ZEV infrastructure support 1.5 million EVs by 2025. Furthering this goal, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and the State Architect published guidelines to address physical accessibility standards and design guidelines for the installation of EV charging stations throughout California.

To further these efforts, at the end of 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order (EO) N-79-20, which required 100% of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks to be zero-emission by 2035. This EO tasked CARB with developing and proposing passenger vehicle and truck regulations requiring increasing volumes of new zero-emission vehicles sold in the State towards that goal. The EO also directed the CEC to update the biennial statewide assessment of zero-emission vehicle infrastructure required by AB 2127 (Ting) Chapter 365, Statutes of 2018, to support the level of EV adoption required by the EO.

- 4) **AB 1236 of 2015.** Responding to the patchwork of California's EV permitting structure and the uncertainty it posed to installers, AB 1236 (Chiu), Chapter 598, Statutes of 2015, placed significant new requirements into law regarding applications to install EV charging stations. AB 1236 required counties and cities to administratively approve an application to install EV charging stations through the issuance of a building permit or similar nondiscretionary permit, and limited review of an application to whether it meets all health and safety requirements of local, state, and federal law. Requirements of local law were limited to those standards and regulations necessary to ensure that the EV charging station will not have a specific, adverse impact upon the public's health or safety. AB 1236 allowed a county or city to require an applicant to apply for a use permit under certain circumstances.

AB 1236 also required local agencies to adopt an ordinance that creates an expedited, streamlined permitting process for EV charging stations. Local agencies must adopt a checklist of all requirements with which EV charging stations must comply to be eligible for

expedited review. An application that satisfies the information requirements in the checklist is deemed complete. A local agency must approve the application and issue all required permits once the local agency confirms the application and supporting documents are complete and meet the requirements of the checklist. If a local agency receives an incomplete application, it must issue a written correction notice detailing all deficiencies in the application and any additional information required to be eligible for expedited permit issuance.

- 5) **2019 GO-Biz Guidebook.** GO-Biz in July 2019 published the first edition of its “EV Charging Station Permitting Guidebook.” The 2019 GO-Biz Guidebook noted, “To support California’s ambitious ZEV deployment goals – 5 million ZEVs in California by 2030 – the state is prioritizing the development of infrastructure to support these vehicles, in the form of plug-in EV charging stations and hydrogen fueling stations. At the most fundamental level, infrastructure enables the deployment of ZEVs. When consumers look to buy a new or used car, they need confirmation that it will be able to take them where they want to go. Widespread availability of infrastructure ensures that Californians will have that confidence... Ultimately, a successful transition to zero emissions hinges on success at the local level.”

According to the 2019 GO-Biz Guidebook, “Plug-in EVs (PEVs) as a percentage of new passenger car sales continue to increase. PEV sales exceeded 5% of all new passenger car sales in California in 2017 and comprised approximately 8% of sales in 2018. In total, well over 600,000 PEVs have been sold in California as of the publishing of this document. With the increasing popularity of ZEVs and increasing ZEV sales, the need for ZEV infrastructure is increasingly important.”

The 2019 GO-Biz Guidebook also reported that there were 20,653 public chargers in California as of June 25, 2019. This included:

- a) Level 1 (4–5 miles of range per hour) – 367 chargers at 169 sites;
 - b) Level 2 (12–70 miles of range per hour) – 17,216 chargers at 4,764 sites; and,
 - c) DC Fast (3–20 miles of range per minute) – 3,070 chargers at 685 sites.
- 6) **2019 GO-Biz Guidebook’s Findings and Recommendations on Permitting.** The 2019 GO-Biz Guidebook stated, “When AB 1236 was being developed, permitting processes and actual timelines varied widely – in many cases adding considerable delay to the station development process. Delays continue to come from both sides of the equation. Both (local governments) and station developers have reported frustrations with incomplete information... Unfortunately, due to lack of awareness, enforcement, and inconsistent application across the state, a wide variance in permitting processes persists.”

The Guidebook generally recommended as best practices that local agencies determine if an application is complete within five business days, and provide approval to build within 15 business days. It did note, however, that “it is important to consider the unique circumstances of some typical installations.” For fast-charging stations in particular, the Guidebook pointed out some of the additional considerations not associated with single-family residential

charging stations, such as potential requirements for more power, a dedicated power drop, and complex trenching and associated rights-of-way issues.

- 7) **AB 970 and AB 2427.** In response to the 2019 GO-Biz Guidebook's recommendations, AB 970 (McCarty), Chapter 710, Statutes of 2021, established specific time frames in which local agencies must complete and approve permits for EV charging stations. Under the bill, an application to install an EV charging station is deemed complete if the building official of the city or county has not either deemed the application complete or written a correction notice detailing the deficiencies in the application within specified time periods. Applications are deemed approved 20 business days after the application was deemed complete for an installation of up to 25 charging stations at a single site, or 40 business days for an installation of more than 25 charging stations, if certain conditions are met.

AB 2427 (McCarty), Chapter 567, Statutes of 2024, expanded on the law enacted via AB 970 by requiring local agencies to: develop a permitting checklist that includes all information required to permit the installation of EV charging stations in the public right-of-way; identify all applicable fees and charges as part of the permitting process; and, identify criteria of the local agency to determine appropriate locations within the public right-of-way for installation of an EV charging station.

- 8) **Solar Energy System Permit Fees.** The Legislature has approved a series of bills limiting the fees that a city or county can charge for solar energy systems:
- a) **SB 1222 (Leno), Chapter 614, Statutes of 2012.** SB 1222 placed caps on the amount of permit fees a city or county can charge for residential or commercial rooftop solar energy systems. For a residential rooftop solar energy system, a city or county was precluded from charging a permit fee that exceeded \$500 (plus \$15 per kW for each kW above 15kW). SB 1222 bill also prohibited, for a commercial rooftop solar energy system, a city or county from charging a permit fee that exceeded \$1,000 for systems up to 50kW (plus \$7 kW for each kW between 51kW and 250 kW, and \$5 per kW for each kW above 250 kW). These caps were limited specifically to rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems, and did not apply to PV systems installed elsewhere on a building, or to solar thermal systems.
- SB 1222 allowed a city or county to charge permit fees exceeding these caps, provided the city or county made a written finding and adopted a resolution or ordinance showing substantial evidence of the reasonable cost to issue the permit. SB 1222 contained a sunset date of January 1, 2018.
- b) **AB 1414 (Friedman), Chapter 849, Statutes of 2017.** AB 1414 made a number of additional changes to these permit fee caps. It reduced the fee cap to \$450 and applied the cap beyond rooftop solar PV installations only, to include any PV systems and solar thermal systems, with specified size limitations. The bill maintained the permit fee cap of \$1,000 on commercial rooftop solar energy systems, but applied the cap beyond rooftop solar PV installations to include PV systems generally and solar thermal systems, also with specified size limitations.

AB 1414 continued to allow a city or a county to charge a permit fee that exceeds the specified caps if the city or county makes a written finding and adopts a resolution or

ordinance that provides substantial evidence of the reasonable cost to issue the permit. However, this bill required additional elements in the written finding.

AB 1414 also amended the meaning of “solar energy system” to specify that a solar energy system includes any PV device or technology that is integrated into a building, including, but not limited to, PV windows, siding, and roofing shingles or tiles. The bill also added an explicit cross-reference to this amended definition (which is contained in Civil Code § 801.5) to the code section containing the permit fee caps (Government Code § 66015), thereby explicitly applying the permit fee caps to this expanded definition of “solar energy system.”

AB 1414 extended the sunset date in SB 1222, from January 1, 2018, to January 1, 2025.

c) **AB 1124 (Friedman), Chapter 235, Statutes of 2021.** Among other provisions, this bill again revised the definition of “solar energy system” to additionally include any structural design feature by eliminating the provision that the structural design feature be a feature of a building. The bill added the following structural design features in the definition of “solar energy system,” regardless of whether the feature is on the ground or on a building:

- i) Solar racking.
- ii) Solar mounting.
- iii) Elevated solar support structures, including, but not limited to, solar carports, shade structures, awnings, canopies, and patio covers. This includes both the aboveground superstructure and associated foundation elements that support solar energy devices or collectors.

AB 1124 specified that a solar energy system must be designed to serve one utility retail customer on the same property, more than one utility retail customer on the same property, one utility retail customer on the same, adjacent, or contiguous properties, or more than one utility retail customer on the same, adjacent or contiguous properties. The solar energy system must not be designed for procurement of electricity by an electric utility.

The bill also revised several additional definitions, including:

- i) “Commercial permit fee” to mean the sum of all charges levied by a city or county in connection with the application for a commercial solar energy system, including, but not limited to, a solar energy system that is installed on the property of multifamily housing that has more than two family dwellings.
- ii) “Residential permit fee” to mean the sum of all charges levied by a city or county in connection with the application for a solar energy system that is installed on the property of a single- or two-family dwelling.

The language in this bill is modeled largely after these laws governing permit fees for solar energy systems.

- 9) **Previous Legislation.** AB 2427 (McCarty), Chapter 567, Statutes of 2024, required local agencies to: develop a permitting checklist that includes all information required to permit the installation of EV charging stations in the public right-of-way; identify all applicable fees and charges as part of the permitting process; and, identify criteria of the local agency to determine appropriate locations within the public right-of-way for installation of an EV charging station.

AB 2559 (Petrie-Norris) of 2024 would have required GO-Biz to create and maintain a publicly accessible internet website to collect information and report delays and denials regarding permitting for zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) infrastructure. AB 2559 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 1132 (Friedman), Chapter 357, Statutes of 2023, extended the sunset date on provisions of law that limit the permit fees a city or county can charge for solar energy systems, from January 1, 2025, to January 1, 2034.

AB 1504 (McCarty) of 2023 would have required cities and counties to complete a plan for the installation of EV charging stations in the public right-of-way, and made changes to the statewide assessment of EV charging infrastructure the CEC must prepare pursuant to existing law. AB 1504 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 507 (Gonzalez) of 2023 would have expanded the scope of information the CEC must consider when assessing the state's need for EV charging infrastructure. SB 507 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 970 (McCarty), Chapter 710, Statutes of 2021, established specific time frames in which local agencies must approve permits for EV charging stations.

AB 1124 (Friedman), Chapter 235, Statutes of 2021, revised the definition of "solar energy system" as that term is used for the purpose of local permitting of such systems, including the allowable fees a local agency may charge, and clarified the permit fees local agencies may charge for commercial and residential solar energy systems.

AB 2700 (Friedman) of 2020 was substantially similar to AB 1124. AB 2700 was held in this Committee.

AB 1414 (Friedman), Chapter 849, Statutes of 2017, reduced the maximum permit fee a city or a county may charge for residential rooftop solar energy systems, applied these caps and commercial permit fee caps to a broader range of solar energy systems, and made additional changes to existing law governing permit fees for rooftop solar energy systems.

AB 2127 (Ting), Chapter 365, Statutes of 2017, required the CEC to conduct a statewide assessment of the EV charging infrastructure needed to support the levels of EV adoption required for the state to meet its goals of putting at least five million ZEVs on California roads by 2030 and of reducing emissions of GHG to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030.

AB 1236 (Chiu), Chapter 598, Statutes of 2015, required counties and cities to administratively approve applications to install EV charging stations, and create an expedited, streamlined permitting process for EV charging stations.

AB 2188 (Muratsuchi), Chapter 521, Statutes of 2014, required every city and county to adopt an ordinance that creates an expedited, streamlined permitting process for small residential rooftop solar energy systems.

SB 1222 (Leno), Chapter 614, Statutes of 2012, limited the fees that cities and counties charge for permits related to the installation of rooftop solar energy systems.

AB 2473 (Wolk), Chapter 789, Statutes of 2004, required cities and counties to permit the installation of solar energy systems by right if the system meets specified requirements, and redefined the term “significantly” in regard to restrictions on solar systems that raise costs or decrease efficiency.

- 10) **Arguments in Support.** The Electric Vehicle Charging Association (EVCA), sponsor of this bill, writes, “The urgency of expanding California’s charging network cannot be overstated. The California Energy Commission (CEC) projects that the state will need 1.01 million public and shared private chargers by 2030 and 2.11 million chargers by 2035. Today, California has approximately 91,000 of these chargers installed. Meeting the state’s climate and clean transportation goals will require deployment at a scale and pace that depends on removing every barrier to installation, including excessive permitting costs.

“Unfortunately, in some jurisdictions, EV charging station permit fees have increased tenfold in only two years, with no corresponding increase in the cost of permit review. These inconsistent fees drive up project costs, reducing the number of chargers that can be economically deployed.

“AB 1820 addresses this problem by establishing a fair permit fee schedule for residential and commercial EV charging stations that caps fees to a reasonable cost of permit processing. The bill preserves appropriate local flexibility: a jurisdiction may exceed the fee schedule if it makes a written finding of the permit’s actual cost. This approach mirrors the structure of AB 1132 (2023), which capped solar permit fees, and extends the same commonsense principle to EV charging infrastructure.

“By ensuring fees reflect true administrative costs, AB 1820 will lower a meaningful deployment barrier and help California maintain its leadership in the clean transportation transition.”

- 11) **Arguments in Opposition.** The League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties, and the Rural County Representatives of California write in opposition, “Cities and counties are already under strict constitutional limitations on fees. Local governments are already constitutionally required to ensure that permit fees do not exceed the reasonable cost of providing the service. AB 1820 departs from this longstanding principle by establishing fee caps that are frequently below the actual cost of permit processing, plan review, and inspection. For residential EV charging installations, the proposed cap of \$100 plus \$15 per kilowatt will not cover the staff time required for application intake, plan check, and field inspection, particularly where electrical panel upgrades or load calculations are involved. For

commercial and high-capacity installations, including direct current fast chargers, the disparity is even more pronounced. These projects often require multidisciplinary review involving building, fire, and sometimes public works departments, as well as coordination with utilities. The bill's proposed cap of \$500 plus limited per-kilowatt adders falls well short of the actual costs cities and counties incur, which can reach several thousand dollars for complex installations.

“By preventing full recovery, AB 1820 effectively shifts the burden of permitting private development onto local taxpayers. Cities and counties would be forced to subsidize EV infrastructure permitting through their general funds, diverting limited resources away from essential public services such as police, fire protection, and parks. Moreover, smaller and rural jurisdictions, where permitting volumes are lower and per-project costs are higher, would be disproportionately impacted by the bill's one-size-fits-all fee caps...

“While the measure allows jurisdictions to exceed the caps upon making written findings supported by substantial evidence, doing so would require the adoption of formal resolutions or ordinances, increasing the administrative burden and exposing cities and counties to potential legal disputes over fee justification. This added process is unnecessary given that existing law already requires fees to reflect actual costs and provides mechanisms for accountability. Constraining fee revenue below cost-recovery levels will limit local governments' ability to maintain adequate staffing and invest in permitting technology, potentially resulting in slower processing times and reduced service quality...

“Simply put, there is no evidence that local permitting fees are a primary barrier to EVCS deployment. The real bottlenecks are private investments, grid capacity, and infrastructure readiness and cities and counties stand ready to partner with the state to further meet our state's ZEV's goals.”

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Coalition for Clean Air [SPONSOR]
Electric Vehicle Charging Association [SPONSOR]
Abb E-mobility, INC.
Alliance for Automotive Innovation
American Ev Jobs Alliance; the
American Lung Association of California
Autel
California Apartment Association
California Center for Sustainable Energy
California Hydrogen Coalition (if amended)
Chargie
Epic Charging
Evgo
Evmatch
Green Latinos
Green Water & Power
Green Wealth Energy

Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
Switch
Terawatt
Union of Concerned Scientists
Xeal

Opposition

California Building Officials
City of San Mateo
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities
Rural County Representatives of California
Solano County Board of Supervisors (unless amended)

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