

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING  
AB 1820 (Schiavo)  
As Amended March 16, 2026  
Majority vote

## SUMMARY

Establishes permit fee caps for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations until January 1, 2036.

### Major Provisions

- 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.

## COMMENTS

The California Energy Commission (CEC) projects California will need one million chargers to support seven million light-duty electric vehicles in 2030 and two million chargers by 2035. Today there are approximately 91,000 publicly available charging stations throughout the state.

In 2019, GO-Biz published the first edition of its EV Charging Station Permitting Guidebook, which generally recommended, as best practices, local agencies determine complete and approve EV charging station applications within specified time frames. In response to the 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.

AB 2427 (McCarty), Chapter 567, Statutes of 2024, expanded on 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.

The Legislature has approved a series of bills limiting the fees a city or county may charge for solar energy systems, including SB 1222 (Leno), Chapter 614, Statutes of 2012, that limited permit fees for rooftop solar systems and contained a January 1, 2018, sunset date, and AB 1414 (Friedman), Chapter 849, Statutes of 2017, that reduced the maximum permit fees, applied the caps to a broader range of solar energy systems, and extended the sunset date to January 1, 2025, which was subsequently extended to January 1, 2034. The language in this bill is modeled largely after these laws governing permit fees for solar energy systems.

### **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.

### **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."

### **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."

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

No state costs. Local costs to cities and counties to implement the permitting fee caps are not reimbursable by the state because local agencies have general authority to impose fees sufficient to cover administrative costs associated with planning and permitting mandates.

However, to the extent the capped permit fees are insufficient to cover a local agency's costs, local costs would continue to be subsidized, through January 1, 2036, from the local agency's General Fund, unless a city or county provides a written finding and adopts a resolution or ordinance providing substantial evidence the reasonable cost to issue a permit exceeds the statutory cap, in which case a city or county may charge a higher fee sufficient to cover its costs.

**VOTES****ASM LOCAL GOVERNMENT: 6-0-4**

**YES:** Carrillo, Ta, Johnson, Stefani, Ward, Wilson

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Pacheco, Ramos, Ransom, Blanca Rubio

**ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 13-0-2**

**YES:** Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Arambula, Pacheco

**UPDATED**

VERSION: March 16, 2026

CONSULTANT: Angela Mapp / L. GOV. / (916) 319-3958

FN: 0002516