Date of Hearing: April 13, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Rhodesia Ransom, Chair
AB 2543 (Ransom) – As Amended March 19, 2026

SUBJECT: Emergency preparedness: electric vehicle fast charging infrastructure

SUMMARY: This bill would require, on or before June 1, 2027, the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to, in consultation with the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (CEC) to establish a working group to evaluate the resilience of publicly available electric vehicle fast charging stations during and following a disaster. The bill would require, on or before January 1, 2028, the working group to issue guidelines to city and county emergency managers on how its recommendations may be incorporated into local emergency plans. Specifically, **this bill**:

1. Define "electric vehicle fast charging station" to mean means a direct current fast charging station that electrical vehicles use for charging purposes.

2. Define "resilience" to mean the safe maintenance and operation of electric vehicle fast charging stations.

3. Requires Cal OES in consultation with the CEC to establish a working group to evaluate the resilience of publicly available electric vehicle fast charging stations during and following a disaster, on or before June 1, 2027.

4. Requires the working group to issue guidelines to city and county emergency managers on how its recommendations may be incorporated into local emergency plans, on or before January 1, 2028.

EXISTING LAW:

1. Establishes the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) within the office of the Governor and makes Cal OES responsible for the state's emergency and disaster response services for natural, technological, or manmade disasters and emergencies. (Government Code § 8550)

2. Defines "state of emergency" and "local emergency" to mean a duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the state or territorial limits of a local government caused by, among other things, a sudden and severe energy shortage. (Government Code § 8558)

3. Requires the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) for managing multiagency and multijurisdictional responses to emergencies in California. State agencies are required to use SEMS and local government entities must use SEMS in order to be eligible for any reimbursement of response-related costs under the state's disaster assistance programs. (Government Code § 8607)

4. Authorizes the Governor, in accordance with the State Emergency Plan and programs for the mitigation of the effects of an emergency in this state, to take all other preparatory

steps, including the partial or full mobilization of emergency organizations in advance of an actual emergency; and order those test exercises needed to insure the furnishing of adequately trained and equipped personnel in time of need. (Government Code §8570)

5. Establishes the Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Open Access Act, prohibiting the charging of a subscription fee on persons desiring to use an electric vehicle charging station and would prohibit a requirement for persons to obtain membership in any club, association, or organization as a condition of using the station, except as specified. (Health and Safety Code § 44268.2)

6. Establishes the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (California Energy Commission (CEC)), consisting of five members appointed by the Governor, and specifies the duties of the CEC. (Public Resources Code § 25200 *et. seq.*)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. A fiscal committee has not analyzed this bill.

COMMENTS:

Author Statement: "Emergency preparedness in the Electric Vehicle (EV) sector during an active emergency remains rather unexplored, underscoring the urgent need for clear guidelines for direct current fast charging (DCFC) operations in the event of an emergency. With climate-driven hazards such as wildfires and extreme weather intensifying and the grid occasionally subject to planned shutoffs like PSPS events, comprehensive emergency plans that explicitly address EV charging infrastructure can help ensure that both personal EV users and fleet operators retain access to critical charging services when they are most needed."

Equity Impact: "Emergency planning requires ensuring that EV-dependent communities have reliable access to charging resources during disasters, so that mobility and safety are not determined by geography. Prioritizing solutions that strengthen charging resilience across all regions helps ensure that California's transition to zero-emission transportation benefits every community, especially during emergencies when access matters most."

Natural, Technological, or Manmade Disasters and Emergencies: California faces an escalating threat from natural, technological, and human-caused disasters, with climate change acting as a major force multiplier that intensifies the frequency, scale, and complexity of emergencies statewide. Rising temperatures, prolonged drought, extreme precipitation, sea-level rise, and record-breaking heat waves are accelerating life-threatening historic wildfires, vanishing Sierra snowpacks, stressing water and energy systems, degrading air quality, and increasing risks to public health and critical infrastructure are all major intensifiers of disasters. These issues demonstrate that California's climate emergencies are growing with frequency and intensity. California faces heightened risks of mass casualties, large-scale infrastructure failure, economic disruption, community displacement, and irreversible ecological damage

Cal OES' Emergency Preparedness and Response: Cal OES is responsible for addressing natural, technological, or manmade disasters and emergencies, and preparing the State to prevent, respond to, quickly recover from, and mitigate the effects of both intentional and natural disasters. As part of their overall preparedness mission, Cal OES is required to develop a State Emergency Plan (SEP) and State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP); maintain the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the Emergency Management Mutual Aid System (EMMA); and assist counties with their local Emergency Operation Plans (EOP). Cal OES, in

coordination with FEMA and local partners, has developed four Catastrophic Plans to augment the State Emergency Plan.

State Emergency Plan: The SEP describes how response to natural or human-caused emergencies occur in California. The plan is a requirement of the California Emergency Services Act (ESA), and describes methods for conducting emergency operations, the process for rendering mutual aid, emergency services of government agencies, how resources are mobilized, how the public is informed, and how continuity of government is maintained during emergencies. The SEP further describes hazard mitigation, as well as emergency preparedness for disasters. The SEP defines Emergency Support Functions (ESF) which are discipline-specific groups that develop functional annexes to set goals, objectives, operational concepts, capabilities, organization structures, and related policies and procedures. Under the SEP, there are 18 ESFs led by a state agency and represent an alliance of state government and other stakeholders with similar functional responsibilities.[1].

State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (California Energy Commission): The California Energy Commission (CEC) is the primary state agency responsible for planning, funding, and advancing California's public electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. Through programs such as the Clean Transportation Program and federal National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) implementation, the CEC supports the build-out of direct current fast charging (DCFC) networks along highways and in communities statewide. [2,3] It conducts market assessments, infrastructure gap analyses, and technical studies to guide strategic deployment of chargers and ensure alignment with statewide zero-emission vehicle goals. The CEC also administers competitive grants to expand charging access in underserved and rural communities, helping ensure equitable infrastructure distribution. In coordination with utilities, the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and local governments, the CEC develops statewide charging plans that integrate grid needs, reliability considerations, and long-term transportation electrification objectives.

Emergency Preparedness in EV Space: Emergency preparedness for electric vehicles, including personal EVs and truck fleets that rely on direct current fast charging (DCFC) stations, requires integration of charging infrastructure into broader disaster planning and utility emergency response frameworks.

DCFCs are vulnerable to power interruptions as they depend on real-time electricity delivery from the grid. Outages from Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) or unplanned grid failures render them inoperable when needed. Natural hazards such as wildfires, severe storms, earthquakes, or other disruptive events can damage grid infrastructure or trigger protective shut-offs, preventing DCFC stations from delivering power. Utilities and planners in some states are beginning to integrate EV charging considerations into emergency planning. For example, the Florida Department of Emergency Management deployed temporary mobile DC fast chargers along hurricane evacuation routes ahead of Hurricane Milton to support EV drivers fleeing dangerous weather conditions, demonstrating proactive inclusion of EV charging infrastructure

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[1] California Emergency Support Functions, https://www.caloes.ca.gov/office-of-the-director/operations/planning-preparedness-prevention/planning-preparedness/california-emergency-plan-emergency-support-functions/
[2] National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program, https://afdc.energy.gov/laws/12744
[3] Clean Transportation Program, https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/clean-transportation-program

in disaster response efforts. [4] The Alternative Fuels Data Center (AFDC) updated the Alternative Fuel Station Locator to include mobile electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, provided by Garner Environmental Services, along evacuation routes to help EV driving Floridians evacuate. Similarly, Florida utilities such as Florida Power & Light (FPL) have developed mobile EV charging trailers that can be deployed during storms to provide charging capacity when stationary infrastructure is compromised. During Hurricane Milton, these smaller trailers were instrumental, offering power for 20 charging sessions at a time.

Working Groups: Working groups are typically established to bring together subject matter experts and stakeholders to collaboratively analyze complex issues, share knowledge, and develop informed recommendations or guidelines. They can enable coordination across federal and state agencies, industry partners, and other relevant entities, ensuring that different perspectives and a wide breadth of technical expertise are incorporated into decision making processes. FEMA's guidance on national preparedness emphasizes coordinated, inclusive approaches to emergency preparedness and management improve planning outcomes and support more effective policy and program implementation. [5] State agencies like the CEC and California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) provide strategic planning, technical expertise on grid impacts of transportation electrification, and data on infrastructure capacity and charging deployment. Emergency management authorities such as Cal OES and local emergency managers bring operational experience, incident coordination capabilities, and insights into hazard response and resource allocation across jurisdictions.

In the electric vehicle charging space, industry stakeholders may play a critical role in shaping effective emergency management planning by contributing operational expertise, real-time system visibility, and deployable resources. For example, electric vehicle charging network operators maintain network operations centers (NOCs) that monitor charging station performance, grid conditions, and outages in real time, enabling rapid identification of disruptions and can assist with coordinated response during emergencies. These NOCs can support situational awareness, prioritize restoration of high-traffic or evacuation corridor DC fast charging sites, and communicate directly with field teams to expedite repairs or deploy mobile charging solutions. Incorporating these industry capabilities into planning frameworks strengthens preparedness by aligning emergency response with the realities of how charging networks are operated and maintained.

Participation by utilities may ensure practical understanding of electrical system constraints, critical infrastructure interdependencies, and the feasibility of backup power or grid hardening measures. Inclusion of local governments, first responders, and community representatives supports geographic diversity and ensures plans reflect on-the-ground needs and risks across urban, rural, and disadvantaged areas. Academic, industry, and nonprofit experts can contribute specialized hazard modeling, resilience research, and community engagement perspectives that improve planning outcomes.

Committee Amends: The author's office, in consultation with Committee staff, has decided to take the following as committee amendments that strike the original text:

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[4] Florida Deploys Emergency Mobile Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Along Hurricane Evacuation Routes, https://driveelectric.gov/news/florida-mobile-charging
[5] National Preparedness, https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness

An act to add Section 8570.7 to the Government Code, and to add Section 590.5 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to emergency preparedness.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows

SECTION 1. Section 8570.7 is added to the Government Code, to read:

8570.7. (a) On or before July 1, 2027, the Office of Emergency Services, in consultation with the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety, shall do both of the following:

(1) Determine direct current fast charging station sites that are important to maintain during an emergency based on, but not limited to, all of the following factors:

(A) Population density.
(B) Geographical area.
(C) Number of chargers per station.
(D) Distance to the next direct current fast charging station.
(2) Develop recommendations on how long backup power would be necessary during an emergency.

(b) On or before January 1, 2028, an operator of a direct current fast charging station site identified pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) shall submit an emergency management plan to the Office of Emergency Services and the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety that considers backup power options to be used during and after the event of an emergency, including, but not limited to, a seismic event, public safety power event, extreme weather condition, or wildfire.

(c) For purposes of this section, "backup power" means anything that may be used to provide off-grid power to direct current fast charging stations, including, but not limited to, backup generators and mobile charger deployment.

SEC. 2. Section 590.5 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

590.5. An electrical corporation shall consider electric vehicle charging stations in its annual report and emergency response plan prepared pursuant to Public Utilities Commission General Order No. 166.

SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIIIB of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIIIB of the California Constitution.

The bill, in summary, would direct Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), in consultation with the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety, to identify direct current fast charging (DCFC) stations that are important to maintain during an emergency and develop recommendations on how long backup power is necessary during an emergency, by July 1, 2027. This bill also

requires operators of identified DCFC stations to submit emergency management plans considering backup power to Cal OES and the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety by January 1, 2028. This bill also requires utility companies to consider electrical vehicle charging stations in their annual report and emergency response plan prepared pursuant to the Public Utilities Commission General Order No. 166.

Double Referral: Should this bill be approved, it will be referred to the Assembly Committee on Utilities and Energy.

Related Legislation

SB 454 (Corbett), Chapter 418, Statutes of 2013. This bill created the Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Open Access Act, prohibiting the charging of a subscription fee on persons desiring to use an electric vehicle charging station and would prohibit a requirement for persons to obtain membership in any club, association, or organization as a condition of using the station, except as specified.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

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