SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND COMMUNICATIONS
Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2543	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/2026
Author:	Ransom		
Version:	5/18/2026 Amended		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Sarah Smith		

SUBJECT: Emergency preparedness: direct-current fast-charging station sites

DIGEST: This bill requires the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to identify the types of emergencies during which direct-current fast-charging (DCFC) stations should be required to maintain service using backup power for the station. This bill also requires DCFC station operators to submit an emergency management plan to OES that identifies mechanisms the operator will use to ensure that a charger continues to operate during an emergency.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

Requires the California Energy Commission CEC) to conduct a statewide assessment every two years of electric vehicle (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 zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) on California roads by 2030, and of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. (Public Resources Code §25229)

Requires the CEC to define "uptime" for the purposes of calculating the time when an EV charger is functioning and available for use and requires the CEC to develop uptime recordkeeping and reporting standards for EV chargers and charging stations by January 1, 2024. These recordkeeping and reporting requirements may only apply to EV chargers and stations installed on or after January 1, 2024, and they must apply for a minimum of six years unless the CEC specifies a longer time span is necessary. (Public Resources Code §25231.5)

Requires the CEC to assess the uptime of charging station infrastructure every two years, starting on January 1, 2025. (Public Resources Code §25231.5)

Excludes chargers at residential properties with four or fewer units from the recordkeeping and reporting requirements and authorizes the CEC to consider other reliability metrics. (Public Resources Code §25231.5)

Establishes the Clean Transportation Program (CTP), which is administered by the CEC to fund the development of ZEV technologies and fuels, including the deployment of EV chargers. (Health and Safety Code §44272 et. seq.)

Requires the CEC to set standards by January 1, 2025, to establish requirements for how EV charging stations that receive CTP grants or ratepayer funds will notify customers about the availability and accessibility of publicly available charging infrastructure. Existing law specifies that this requirement does not impact the CEC's existing authority to include reporting or reliability requirements as a condition of obtaining grant funds. (Public Resources Code §25231.5)

This bill:

1) Requires OES to identify and evaluate the types of emergencies during which DCFC should be required to maintain service and which DCFC sites should be required to maintain operations during emergencies.

2) Requires OES to use all the following factors when determining which DCFC sites should be required to maintain service during an emergency:

    a) Population density.
    b) Geographical area.
    c) Number of chargers per station site.
    d) Distance to the next station site.
    e) Safety of accessing the station site during the emergency.
    f) Whether the population using the station site can be adequately served by mobile charger deployment.

3) Requires OES to develop recommendations for the following:

    a) The duration of time for which energy should be maintained to a DCFC site during an emergency.
    b) Requirements that should apply to DCFC sites to ensure those charging stations remain in service during an emergency, including the type of backup power that should be used at the site.

4) Requires OES annually update its evaluations and recommendations regarding DCFC operations during emergencies and requires OES to develop

recommendations and evaluations using a process that provides an opportunity for public comment and feedback.

5) Requires owners of DCFCs that OES determines must maintain power during emergencies to submit an emergency management plan to OES by January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter. This bill requires this plan to include options the DCFC owner uses during an emergency to maintain the DCFC's operation, including options for an earthquake, public safety power shutoff (PSPS) extreme weather condition, or wildfire.

6) Requires OES to review emergency management plans and consult with the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety and CEC.

7) Requires electrical corporations to incorporate EV charging needs in its annual reports and emergency plans pursuant to General Order (GO) 166.

Background

Bill aims to address the availability of DCFCs during emergencies. As EV adoption has increased, more households in California are reliant on EVs as their sole mode of transportation. Increased reliance on vehicles using electricity as fuel may necessitate different types of planning to address Californians' transportation needs during disasters, emergencies, or other events resulting in power outages. In addition to outages caused by damage to electric infrastructure, residents in the investor-owned utility (IOU) service territories also experience outages from PSPS de-energization events. During the 2025 Palisades and Eaton fires, more than four million Californians in Southern California lost power for some duration due to wildfire-related outages, infrastructure damage, and PSPS events. While a fully charged EV generally has more than sufficient range to enable a driver to reach a safe location with electricity to re-charge, the duration of some power outages in the Los Angeles area led some vehicle and charging manufacturers to take unique steps to help EV drivers find reliable charging in the region. Rivian made charging at certain Southern California fast-charging stations free, and General Motors deployed several proprietary mobile fast-charging facilities to various locations in Los Angeles.

EV drivers' range anxiety during an emergency may be improved by increasing the ubiquity of chargers. Charger reliability concerns are a subset of larger consumer concerns about charger availability. EV drivers' range anxiety is exacerbated by the lack of ubiquitously available EV charging. While many EV homeowners charge at home, renters and EV owners in multifamily dwellings are more likely to lack opportunities to charge at home. Additionally, EV drivers with longer

commutes may experience a scarcity of charging opportunities in certain areas, increasing their reliance on a small number of publicly available chargers. California has over 200,000 EV charging ports; however, less than half of those chargers are publicly accessible. Most publicly available charging ports are Level 2 chargers, which provide faster charging than home ports, but provide much slower charging than DCFCs. DCFCs are overwhelmingly publicly accessible where installed, but much fewer DCFCs exist in the state, and they are disproportionately located in a handful of counties with high rates of EV adoption. Approximately 22% of the state's DCFCs are located in Los Angeles County and more than 50% of the state's DCFC are located in six counties. Several counties have no DCFCs. This bill attempts to address EV drivers' charging needs during emergencies by requiring owners of DCFCs to establish emergency plans to keep those chargers operational during power outages. However, maintaining the operation of existing DCFCs during power outages may not help EV drivers in the event of emergencies if they evacuate to locations where DCFCs do not exist. Increasing access to charging infrastructure across the state may better alleviate drivers' range anxiety broadly and during emergencies.

The Legislature has passed multiple measures in recent years aimed at addressing EV charger reliability. A 2022 report by researchers at the University of California at Berkeley indicated that charger outages and malfunctions reduce charger availability significantly. The report studied all publicly accessible DCFCs in the greater Bay Area and found that only 72.5% of the chargers had functional electric vehicle service equipment. To address these concerns, the Legislature passed AB 2061 (Ting, Chapter 345, Statutes of 2022), which required the CEC to define uptime for EV chargers, set uptime recordkeeping and reporting, and assess EV charger uptime every two years. In 2023, the Legislature passed AB 126 (Reyes, Chapter 319, Statutes of 2023), which extended the operation of the CTP and required the CEC to set standards for how stations receiving CTP grants and ratepayer funding will notify customers about the availability and accessibility of public chargers. The Legislature has also passed several recent bills aimed at improving data collection about charger outages and improving drivers' access to chargers.

Bill's backup power provisions for DCFCs may be infeasible. This bill requires OES to identify DCFCs that should remain operational during emergencies that trigger a loss of commercial power. This bill also requires the owners of these DCFCs to file emergency plans with OES identifying how the owner intends to maintain the DCFC's operation during various emergencies. Under this bill, the plan must identify what resources the owner will use to maintain the DCFC's operation during emergencies that include power outages. Various provisions of this bill imply that OES may require plans from DCFC owners that would

necessitate the installation of backup power on an existing DCFC. may be infeasible for existing DCFCs that were not installed with integrated backup power systems in the charger to provide fast charging using mobile backup generators or batteries. DCFCs may also be installed in locations where installing backup power is infeasible. DCFCs rely on a much higher voltage than most commercially available backup generators can provide. Additionally, DCFCs generally require much more complex electrical planning than lower voltage chargers. Since EVs may be able to charge on generators themselves, it is not clear that connecting a generator to a DCFC would provide EV drivers with greater access to emergency power than a generator or battery by itself.

Bill may create new obligations for charging site hosts seeking to expand access to DCFCs. This bill requires operators of DCFCs to establish emergency plans, and it requires OES to regularly review those plans. DCFCs are not necessarily owned and operated by charger manufacturers. DCFCs may be jointly managed by automotive manufacturers like General Motors or with retailers hosting the chargers, like Costco. Other DCFCs may be owned and operated by the property owner where the charger is installed. A small number of gas station owners in parts of the state with high EV adoption rates have started to add DCFCs to these stations. As a result, this bill may require a wide variety of businesses and property owners to file emergency plans with OES. It is not clear whether all the owners of DCFCs have the ability to make these plans. Additionally, establishing an obligation to provide backup power and maintain the operation of a DCFC during a power outage may provide a disincentive to DCFC siting and investment. This bill does not establish a similar planning obligation for gas stations and hydrogen stations. As a result, site hosts of DCFCs may face unique obligations under this bill that are not required for any other fuel provider. While the author of this bill committed to amendments in the Senate Emergency Management Committee to modify DCFC owners' emergency plan filing duties, this bill still retains provisions requiring DCFC owners to submit annual emergency management plans that detail how the owner will ensure the station retains service during a power outage.

Dual referral. This bill passed out of the Senate Emergency Management Committee on June 23, 2026, with a vote of 6-1.

Prior/Related Legislation

AB 2697 (Irwin, Chapter 735, Statutes of 2024) clarified the CEC's authority to adopt roaming standards for EV charging networks. The bill specified that any roaming standards adopted by the CEC shall only apply to major EV charging

network operators, and the standards must enable network managers to choose between different mechanisms to establish roaming agreements.

AB 1349 (Irwin, 2023) would have required EV charger owners and operators that accept state grants to provide certain data about their chargers and charging network to third-party software developers for free, as specified. The bill died in the Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities and Communications.

AB 126 (Reyes, Chapter 319, Statutes of 2023) modified and extended the operation of the CTP until January 1, 2035. The bill also required the CEC to set standards by January 1, 2025, regarding how EV charging stations receiving CTP or ratepayer funds will notify customers about the availability and accessibility of chargers.

AB 2061 (Ting, Chapter 345, Statutes of 2022) required the CEC to define uptime for EV chargers, set uptime recordkeeping and reporting, and assess EV charger uptime every two years.

AB 2127 (Ting, Chapter 365, Statutes of 2018) required the CEC to conduct a statewide assessment every two years of 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.

SB 454 (Corbett, Chapter 418, Statutes of 2013) established the EV Charging Stations Open Access Act, which prohibited EV charger owner-operators from requiring individuals to join clubs or pay subscription fees to use a charger. The bill required chargers to accept credit card payment and authorized California Air Resources Board to establish interoperable billing standards for EV chargers if a national organization has not adopted such standards by 2015.

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

SUPPORT:

None received

OPPOSITION:

ABB E-mobility
California Electric Transportation Coalition
California Fuels and Convenience Alliance

ChargePoint
Electric Vehicle Charging Association
Electrify America, LLC
Forum Mobility
Gateway Fleets
Powering America's Commercial Transportation
Tesla Motors
Workhorse Group
Zeem Solutions

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author:

> Emergency preparedness in the 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.

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: In opposition, a coalition of EV charging providers, including the Electric Vehicle Charging Association, states:

> California relies on a diverse range of fuels for its vehicles. Yet, AB 2543 applies only to electric direct-current fast-charging (DCFC) station sites. Gasoline, diesel, hydrogen, and every other form of retail transportation fuel are not impacted. To properly address emergency preparedness, the state should pursue this policy holistically and address all fuel types. As written, the bill's requirements apply to existing, already-built sites, many of which are hosted by restaurants, hotels, convenience stores, and other small businesses that have made their property available for charging. Most of those sites were never designed to accommodate backup generation, and retrofitting them (building the battery storage or microgrid capability needed to comply) demands substantial capital and equipment with long procurement and energization timeframes. This would divert resources from new site development, disrupt existing charging access, and could lead to sites being shuttered if found non-workable under this bill. Depending on the leasing and ownership model, these small businesses may need to fund this work.

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