GOVERNOR'S VETO
AB 2543 (Ransom)
As Enrolled August 27, 2026
2/3 vote

SUMMARY

This bill directs the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to consult with the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (CEC) and the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (OEIS) to submit an assessment to the Legislature, by July 1, 2028, that evaluates the impact of emergencies on fuel and transportation access, identifies critical resources, and recommends state actions to ensure public safety and evacuation capabilities, as specified.

Senate Amendments

1) Strike requirements that require Cal OES to identify direct-current fast-charging (DCFC) station sites that are important to maintain operations during identified emergency types, recommendations on how long energy should be maintained to operate DCFCs during emergencies, and mandatory emergency management plans submissions by operators.

2) Strike the requirement for electrical corporations to consider electric vehicle charging stations in its annual report and emergency and disaster preparedness plan prepared pursuant to Public Utilities Commission General Order No. 166.

3) Requires Cal OES, in consultation with the CEC and OEIS, to submit an assessment to the relevant policy committees of the Senate and Assembly that does all of the following:

    a) Identifies and evaluates the types of emergencies during which Californians' access to fuel and transportation resources may be limited in a manner that would impact public health and safety during the emergency. The emergency types the Office of Emergency Services shall evaluate include, but are not limited to, a seismic event, a deenergization event, an extreme weather condition, and a wildfire.

    b) Identifies fuel and transportation resources that are important to maintain, and maintain access to, during each emergency type identified pursuant to paragraph (a) based on considerations that shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following factors:

        i) Population that is reliant on the fuel and transportation resources.

        ii) Geographical location of the fuel and transportation resources.

        iii) Types of fuel and transportation resources used by populations impacted by emergencies, including the rate of electric vehicle adoption in a region prone to emergencies.

        iv) Evacuation fuel and transportation resources needed for different types of emergencies.

        v) Safety of accessing the fuel and transportation resources during the emergency.

vi) Whether the population using the fuel and transportation resources can be adequately served by alternative fuel and transportation resources during an emergency.

c) Provides recommendations for actions the state should take in the event of an emergency to ensure that fuel and transportation resources necessary for public health and safety are available during the emergency, including recommendations for any fuel and transportation resources that should be made available to Californians under evacuation orders.

4) Requires Cal OES to provide opportunities for public comment and feedback when conducting the activities required pursuant to the bill.

Governor's Veto Message
I am returning Assembly Bill 2543 without my signature.

This bill would require the Office of Emergency Services (OES), in consultation with the California Energy Commission and the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety, to produce, by July 1, 2028, a statewide assessment evaluating how emergency events affect Californians' access to fuel and transportation resources, identifying essential resources across emergency types, and recommending actions the state should take to ensure fuel and transportation availability during disasters.

I appreciate the author's intent to strengthen California's emergency preparedness and ensure continuity of critical mobility resources during emergencies. Maintaining access to fuel and transportation is essential to public health, safety, evacuation readiness, moving goods, and operation of critical infrastructure.

However, a study of this scale would require substantial new staffing and technical expertise and far longer timelines than those set in the bill, and would divert the OES from core public safety missions by assigning work more appropriately led by agencies with energy systems expertise such as the California Energy Commission.

My administration remains committed to ensuring that Californians have access to essential transportation and fuel resources during emergencies. We will continue pursuing approaches that strengthen resilience through existing statewide systems and partnerships.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

COMMENTS

Impacts on Fuel and Transportation Resources during an Emergency: It is well documented that natural disasters disproportionately impact vulnerable communities, such as low-income families, older adults, people with disabilities, and rural residents. Some emergency response systems rely on evacuations via private vehicles owned by individuals, but these systems may result in vulnerable groups stranded during disasters. A recent study on wildfire response, recovery, and resilience for resource-constrained and vulnerable communities noted that

households relying on public or government-provided transit frequently face evacuation delays.[1] A report from the Legislative Analyst Office enumerates the many ways climate change impacts transportation, such as infrastructure deterioration due to an increase in natural disasters, which will require modification or relocation to remain usable. [2] During a natural disaster, severe ground movement, flooding, or structural collapse can cause automated seismic valves to trigger, or force utility companies to deliberately cut off fuel networks or initiate Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events (also known as deenergization events) to prevent catastrophic fires from broken pipelines or downed power lines.[3, 4]Additionally, a 2023 report from the Natural Hazards Center looked at transportation as a social determinant of health during Hurricane Idalia, a destructive tropical cyclone that caused significant damage across Northern Florida and parts of the southeastern United States. The report noted that there were disparities in access to public assistance in vulnerable areas, with interviewed participants who had transportation and food insecurity reporting they had less access to disaster aid provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Red Cross, and community-based organizations.[5] Strengthening California's emergency preparedness requires a clear understanding of how fuel and transportation shortages jeopardize public health and safety.

Cal OES' Emergency Preparedness and Response: In California, 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 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. [6,7]

Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (Energy Safety): Energy Safety is responsible for advancing the safety and resiliency of California's electrical infrastructure, focusing on reducing utility-caused wildfire risk. Energy Safety reviews, evaluates, and approves wildfire mitigation

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[1] Wildfire Recovery and Resilience Strategies for Resource-Constrained and Vulnerable Communities, https://its.ucla.edu/publication/wildfire-recovery-and-resilience-strategies-for-resource-constrained-and-vulnerable-communities/
[2] Climate Change Impacts Across California Transportation, https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4576#Major_Climate_Change_Impacts_on_Transportation
[3] Automatic Gas Shutoff Valves, https://basc.pnnl.gov/resource-guides/automatic-gas-shutoff-valves
[4] Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS), https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/psps/
[5] Transportation as a Social Determinant of Health During Hurricane Idalia, https://hazards.colorado.edu/health-and-extreme-weather-research/transportation-as-a-social-determinant-of-health-during-hurricane-idalia
[6] National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program, https://afdc.energy.gov/laws/12744
[7] Clean Transportation Program, https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/clean-transportation-program

plans submitted to the agency by investor-owned utilities, while also monitoring compliance with state laws, regulations, and approved safety measures. The agency also conducts compliance audits, enforcement activities, and technical evaluations to ensure wildfire mitigation plans are implemented appropriately and effectively.

According to the Author

California faces increasingly frequent and severe emergencies, including wildfires, floods, earthquakes, extreme weather events, and Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). These events can disrupt transportation networks and limit access to fuel resources that Californians rely on to safely evacuate, access essential services, and maintain daily activities. The importance and role of fuel and transportation resources, including electrical vehicle (EV) resilience, during natural disasters is recognized at both the federal and state level, through California's clean transportation goals and the Federal highway Administration's National Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program, which encourages consideration of reliability and emergency preparedness, with recognition of charging networks. As California's transportation sector continues to evolve, emergency preparedness efforts must account for how emergencies affect all transportation and fuel resources used by the public. AB 2543 would gather information related to relevant resources, identify potential vulnerabilities, and ensure that state emergency planners have a clearer understanding of how transportation and fuel resource disruptions affect Californians during emergencies. By providing a comprehensive assessment of transportation and fuel-related challenges during emergencies, this bill will help inform future emergency planning efforts, strengthen statewide preparedness, and support the development of practical recommendations that enhance public safety and community resilience before the next disaster occurs.

Arguments in Support
None on file.

Arguments in Opposition
None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee

1) OES estimates costs of $1,883,000 in the first year and $1,108,000 ongoing to complete the assessment (General Fund). This estimate includes costs for 4.0 positions and $775,000 in one-time consulting costs.

2) CEC estimates total one-time costs of $267,000 (Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program Fund or Energy Resources Programs Account) , which includes:

    a) $72,000 for a limited-term Electric Generation System Program Specialist I in the Fuels and Transportation Division to assist with the study of direct current fast charging stations.

    b) $95,000 for a limited-term Research Data Specialist II in the Energy Assessments Division to assist with the study of liquid fuel service stations.

c) $100,000 in one-time contracting costs to build a statewide service station dataset.

VOTES

ASM EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: 6-0-0
YES: Ransom, Hadwick, Arambula, Bains, Bennett, Calderon

ASM UTILITIES AND ENERGY: 18-0-0
YES: Petrie-Norris, Patterson, Boerner, Calderon, Chen, Davies, Mark González, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Kalra, Papan, Rogers, Schiavo, Schultz, Ta, Wallis, Zbur

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4
YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache
ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 72-1-7
YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
NO: DeMaio
ABS, ABST OR NV: Dixon, Flora, Johnson, Lackey, Macedo, Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

SENATE FLOOR: 31-2-7
YES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener
NO: Choi, Seyarto
ABS, ABST OR NV: Alvarado-Gil, Dahle, Grove, Jones, Niello, Strickland, Valladares

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 74-0-5
YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Elhawary, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
ABS, ABST OR NV: Dixon, Ellis, Garcia, Johnson, McKinnor

UPDATED

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