



June 30, 2021

The Honorable Mike McGuire
Chair, Senate Governance & Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 5061
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 970 (McCarty) – OPPOSE
As Amended May 10, 2021**

Dear Senator McGuire:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), League of California Cities (CalCities), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties Caucus (UCC), and the California Building Officials (CALBO), we respectfully must oppose Assembly Bill 970 (McCarty).

AB 970 will require applications to install electric vehicle (EV) charging stations to be deemed complete within five business days by municipal jurisdictions, and also requires such applications to be deemed approved within 20 business days after the application was submitted, as specified. Unfortunately, these provisions would apply to all local jurisdictions, including those that comply with an expedited streamlined permitting process.

Existing law, via Assembly Bill 1236 (Chiu, 2015), requires all cities and counties to adopt an ordinance by September 30, 2017, creating an expedited, streamlined permitting process for EV charging stations. Municipalities also have to adopt a checklist for applicants that satisfies the information required to be deemed complete, and therefore eligible for expedited review. While we regret that not all 58 counties and 482 cities have complied to date, model ordinances and guidance documents providing technical assistance to local governments were not available until recently. In July 2019, the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) published the Electric Vehicle Charging Station Permitting Guidebook, including a compliance toolkit

with best practices for EV permit streamlining. Since then, our organizations have undergone education and outreach to our members encouraging compliance with AB 1236.

Rural/low-population cities and counties face many challenges in reviewing EV charging applications. Some of these challenges include, incomplete or poor-quality permit applications, a high volume of permit applications at any given time, lack of adequate staff capacity, and the need for infrastructure upgrades as the result of new device installation. Additionally, EV charging retrofits can be very complex, costly, and technical making a 20-day approval time difficult regardless of jurisdiction type (rural, urban, suburban). AB 970 creates a separate and unequal permitting and inspection process specifically for EV charging stations, and would apply to all local jurisdictions, including those that comply with AB 1236.

For cities and counties with finite resources, having to focus on certain permit types with very short turnarounds results in less resources to expedite other types of permits. AB 970 would unfairly prioritize EV charging applications for permits over all permittees, including projects related to affordable housing, health and safety, and other established or emerging industries. Additionally, this approach would not take into account the differences in permittee—whether they are a homeowner seeking a building permit for their plug-in vehicle, or a more complicated installation of a large public charging station.

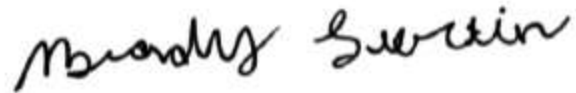
While we urge our members to get familiar with the recent AB 1236 guidelines to come into compliance with AB 1236, it must be noted that municipal governments have been issuing EV charging permits regularly and will continue to do so.

For these reasons, we respectfully oppose AB 970.

Sincerely,



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Regulatory Affairs Advocate
RCRC



BRADY GUERTIN
Public Affairs Manager
CALBO

The Honorable Mike McGuire
Assembly Bill 970
June 30, 2021
Page 3



DAMON CONKLIN
Legislative Representative
CalCities



CHRIS LEE
Legislative Representative
CSAC



JEAN HURST
Legislative Representative
UCC

cc: The Honorable Kevin McCarty, Member of the State Assembly
The Honorable David Chiu, Member of the State Assembly
The Honorable Phil Ting, Member of the State Assembly
Members of the Senate Governance & Finance Committee
Consultant, Senate Governance & Finance Committee
Ryan Eisberg, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus