



April 27, 2021

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2136
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable David Chiu
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 4112
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 970 – OPPOSE
As Introduced February 18, 2021**

Dear Assembly Members McCarty and Chiu:

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. This measure also requires such applications to be deemed approved within 15 business days after the application was submitted if the municipality has not issued a permit and if the building official has not made findings that the proposed installation could have adverse impacts.

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

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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 15-day approval time difficult regardless of jurisdiction type (rural, urban, suburban). AB 970 places an untenable burden on local governments and creates a separate and unequal permitting and inspection process specifically for EV charging stations.

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.

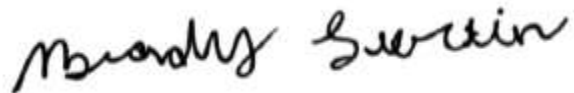
While we urge our members to get familiar with the recent AB 1236 guidelines to come into compliance with AB 1236, it must be noted that municipal governments have been issuing EV charging permits regularly and will continue to do so.

For these reasons, we respectfully oppose AB 970.

Sincerely,



STACI HEATON
Acting Vice President Governmental
Affairs
RCRC



BRADY GUERTIN
Public Affairs Manager
CALBO

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MELANIE PERRON
Deputy Executive Director, Advocacy
and Public Affairs
League of California Cities



CHRIS LEE
Legislative Representative
CSAC



JEAN HURST
Legislative Representative
UCC

cc: The Honorable Phil Ting, Member of the State Assembly
Angela Mapp, Chief Consultant, Assembly Local Government Committee
William Weber, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus