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

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Bill No:** | SB 1215 | **Hearing Date:** | 4/21/2026 |
| **Author:** | Cortese | | |
| **Version:** | 4/9/2026 Amended | | |
| **Urgency:** | No | **Fiscal:** | Yes |
| **Consultant:** | Nidia Bautista | | |

**SUBJECT:** Electrical corporations: electric vehicle charging stations: multifamily residential properties

**DIGEST:** This bill requires the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to direct electrical corporations to submit advice letters to install electric vehicle charging stations and associated equipment at multifamily housing with a goal of tripling the number of EV chargers for this sector and with specified parameters, such as requiring electric utility ratepayers to pay for all costs for these projects, including all the costs on the customer-side of the meter.

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

1) Establishes and vests the CPUC with regulatory authority over public utilities, including electrical corporations. (Article XII of the California Constitution)

2) Authorizes the CPUC to fix the rates and charges for every public utility, and requires that those rates and charges be just and reasonable. (Public Utilities Code §451)

3) Requires the CPUC, in consultation with the California Energy Commission (CEC) and California Air Resource Board (CARB), as part of the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015, to direct electrical corporations to file applications for programs and investments to accelerate widespread transportation electrification, as defined, to achieve specified results. (Public Utilities Code §740.12)

4) Requires each electrical corporation, not later than February 28, 2021, to file an advice letter for, and requires the CPUC, not later than June 30, 2021, to approve, a new tariff or rule that authorizes each electrical corporation to design and deploy all electrical distribution infrastructure on the utility side of the customer's meter for all customers installing separately metered infrastructure

to support charging stations, other than those in single-family residences. Requires the advice letter and the CPUC's approval to provide that costs incurred by the electrical corporation between January 1, 2021, and the implementation date of rates approved in the next general rate case decision for that electrical corporation, to be tracked in a memorandum account and recovered, subject to a reasonableness review, in the decision adopting the next general rate case revenue requirement for that electrical corporation. (Public Utilities Code §740.19(c))

5) Authorizes the CPUC to revise the interim policy, known as the Common Treatment for Excess PEV Charging, after the completion of the general rate case cycle of the electrical corporation following the one during which the advice letter was filed if a determination is made that a change in the policy is necessary to ensure just and reasonable rates for ratepayers. (Public Utilities Code §740.19 (d)(3))

This bill:

1) Deletes the authorization for the CPUC to revise the interim policy, known as the Common Treatment for Excess PEV Charging, to ensure just and reasonable rates for ratepayers.

2) Defines "electric vehicle charging infrastructure" to mean any level of electric vehicle supply equipment station that is designed and built in compliance with Article 625 of the California Electrical Code, as it read on January 1, 2019, and that delivers electricity from a source outside an EV into a plug-in EV.

3) Defines "multifamily housing" to mean residential housing with five units or more.

4) Requires the CPUC, on or before March 1, 2027, to direct electrical corporations to submit Tier 3 advice letters to install EV charging stations and associated equipment and facilities at multifamily housing, with certain parameters, including, among other things:

   a) Require that each electrical corporation install enough EV charging stations, on or before December 31, 2037, to at least triple the amount of EV charging stations in existence, as of January 1, 2027, at multifamily housing in its service territory.
   b) Require that an electrical corporation recover all costs, to the extent not covered by nonratepayer funding, for deploying the EV charging stations and associated equipment and facilities, including the costs for

administration and implementation and for equipment, installation, and maintenance on the customer side of the meter, as operations and maintenance costs rather than as capital costs.

c) Require each electrical corporation focus on deploying EV charging stations in areas likely to have the highest use rates and where the electrical distribution system would support operation of the EV charging station without a capacity upgrade.
d) Authorize an electrical corporation to own, maintain, and manage the EV charging stations.
e) Require the users to be charged the retail electricity rate and requires the rate to be a time-of-use rate.
f) Require the electrical corporation to only contract with contractors using electricians with EV Infrastructure Training Program certification.
g) Requires each electrical corporation to recover all costs for deploying the EV charging stations and associated equipment and facilities including the costs for administration, implementation, and the cost for equipment, installation, and maintenance on the customer side of the meter, as operations and maintenance costs rather than capital costs.

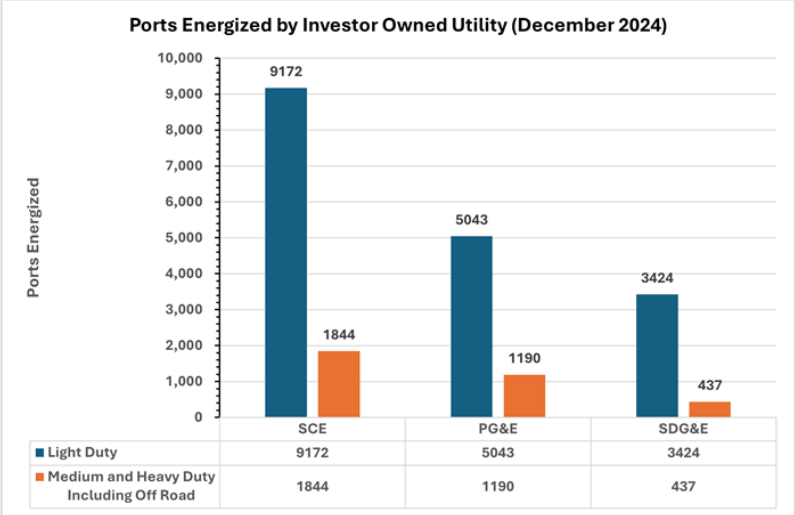
5) Requires the CPUC to approve an advice letter within 90 days of submittal by the electrical corporation.

**Background**

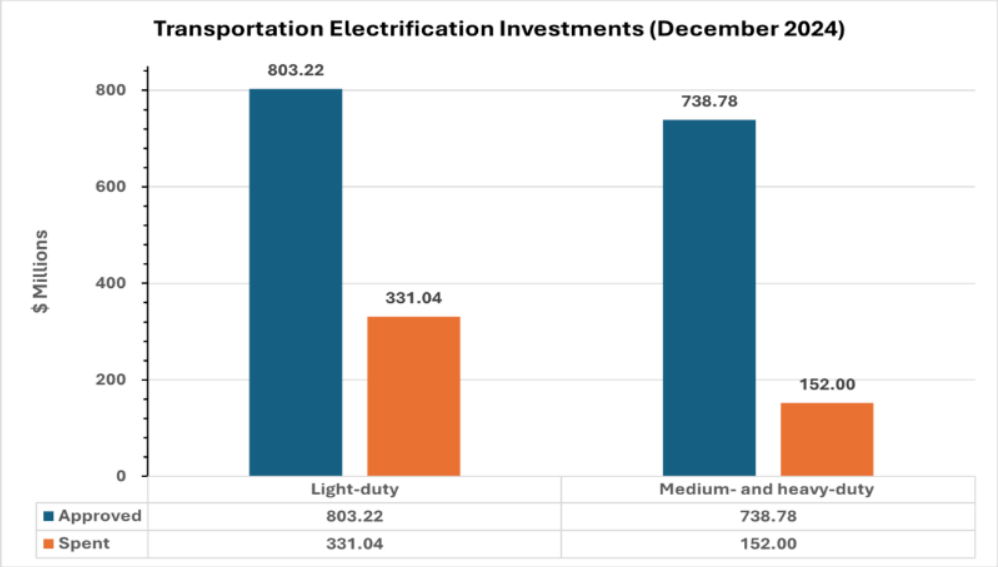
*State's zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) goals*. California has adopted ambitious climate and air quality goals, including policies to reduce emissions from the transportation sector, the state's largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The state has adopted a combination of regulations of vehicle emissions standards, incentives for the purchase of clean vehicles, as well as state incentives for deployment of charging infrastructure. California has adopted policies for the widespread deployment of ZEV and near-ZEVs, including a goal of 1.5 million ZEVs by 2025 and 5 million by 2030. Additionally, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-79-20 which among other provisions, sets a goal that 100% of in-state sales of new passenger vehicles will be zero-emission by 2035. According to the CEC, as of October 2025, the state has surpassed 200,000 publicly available and shared EV charging ports across the state (across all sectors: light-, medium-, and heavy-duty vehicles).

*EV charging infrastructure by electric investor-owned utilities (IOUs)*. SB 350 (De León, Chapter 547, Statutes of 2016) required electric IOUs to support the widespread adoption of transportation electrification, building off previously authorized CPUC-approved pilot programs. Specifically, Public Utilities Code

§740.12 requires electric IOUs to file applications with the CPUC for programs and investments to accelerate widespread transportation electrification to achieve the state's specified emissions goals. The statute further requires the CPUC in reviewing the electric IOU applications to ensure the programs proposed in the applications: minimize overall costs and maximize overall benefits, ensure a reasonable cost recovery mechanism, do not unfairly compete with nonutility enterprises as required by Public Utilities Code §740.3, include performance accountability measures, and are in the interests of ratepayers. Additional legislation required pilots for EV charging stations at state parks, beaches, and schools. The electric IOU ratepayer funded programs include widespread projects for EV charging at multi-unit dwellings and workplaces; pilots for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles; public charging at schools, parks, and beaches; rebates for residential installations; charging infrastructure for municipal transit bus fleets, charging for port-related vehicles, and others. Below is a table from the CPUC's website noting the charging ports that have been energized by the electric IOUs as of December 2024.




*CPUC review of electric IOU applications.* To date, the CPUC has authorized nearly $2 billion dollars, in the aggregate, among all the electric IOUs for EV charging infrastructure projects–likely the largest state authorized funding of any other EV charging infrastructure programs, including state grants/subsidies. These costs are shouldered by ratepayers of the electric IOUs. Given that electric IOUs can recoup a rate of return on infrastructure investments and since these are projects funded by electric ratepayers, a thorough review by the CPUC is in-line with the traditional regulatory compact to ensure electric IOU investments are deemed just and reasonable. Below is a chart from the CPUC's website noting the authorized funding for EV charging infrastructure by electric IOUs as of December 2024.




In accordance with a CPUC required review and the other requirements of the electric IOUs' applications, the CPUC has at times modified or denied applications to ensure they meet the requirements adopted in SB 350, including that they are in the interests of ratepayers and do not unduly compete with nonutility enterprises, among others. The efforts to review each application can contribute to limiting the speed at which electric IOUs can deploy infrastructure. However, it also affords parties, including those representing ratepayers, private enterprises, environmental organizations, and others, to inform and help shape the applications.

*AB 841 transportation electrification components*. AB 841 (Ting, Chapter 372, Statutes 2020) made significant policy changes to how costs for electric IOU investments would be recovered by electric IOU ratepayers. The bill:

1) Required each electrical corporation, by February 28, 2021, to file an advice letter and required the CPUC to approve, by June 30, 2021, a new tariff or rule that authorizes each electrical corporation to design and deploy all electrical distribution infrastructure on the utility side of the customer meter for all customers installing a separately metered infrastructure to support charging stations, and provide for cost recovery procedures to fold these costs into the electric IOUs' distribution to be considered core utility business, instead of the practice whereby the CPUC determined whether these costs are just and reasonable within the specific application.

2) Required the CPUC to apply the interim policy, the Common Treatment for Excess PEV Charging, originally adopted by the CPUC in 2011 to support widespread adoption of EVs, where residential service facility upgrade costs that exceed standard utility allowances for home-based EV charging are treated

as a common facility cost and recovered from all ratepayers. AB 841 declared the intent of the Legislature that the interim policy be the policy applied by the CPUC, but authorized the CPUC to revise the policy after the completion of the electrical corporation's general rate case cycle in effect on January 1, 2021, if a determination is made that a change in the policy is necessary to ensure just and reasonable rates for ratepayers. Before implementation of AB 841, the CPUC approved both utility-side and customer-side investments associated with programs through specific, one-off IOU applications, and the IOUs tracked the costs for recovery through balancing accounts associated with the individual programs. Outside of programs before implementation of AB 841, customers would take service under Electric Tariff Rule 16, which would determine the amount of utility-side costs the customer versus ratepayers would pay. With AB 841, the electric IOUs socialize across all ratepayers the costs of service line extensions and electrical distribution infrastructure for EV charging—for customers other than those in single-family residences. Although single-family residences already receive similar treatment under existing permanent exemptions from the Rules 15 and 16, governing customer contributions for new infrastructure.

3) Required the CPUC and the California Energy Commission (CEC) for work performed on or after January 1, 2022, pursuant to a decisions for EV charging infrastructure by those state entities, to require all EV charging infrastructure and equipment located on the customer side of the electric meter that is funded or authorized, in whole or in part, by those state entities to be installed by a contractor with the appropriate license classification, as determined by the Contractors' State License Board, and specified portion of each crew, at any given time, to hold an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP) certification.

*CPUC establishes new framework for electric IOU EV charging investments*. For the first several years, the CPUC's reviews had largely evaluated each application on its own merits and review, case-by-case. As AB 841 was being debated in the Legislature, the CPUC was proposing a new ten-year plan approach to support strategic investments for EV charging, but ensuring the lessons learned and concerns for ratepayer costs would further guide future projects. In a November 2022 CPUC decision (*D. 22-11-040, Order Instituting Rulemaking to Continue the Development of Rates and Infrastructure for Vehicle Electrification*), the CPUC adopted a long-term transportation electrification policy framework that established funding cycles, including a third-party administered statewide transportation electrification infrastructure rebate program for the first five-year cycle starting in 2025, and holds that the electric IOUs shall no longer own behind-the-meter infrastructure as the CPUC found it to be more expensive for ratepayers.

The funding cycles are intended to harness the lessons from past projects and create a framework for electric IOU roles and priorities. The funding cycles also have the benefit of supporting investment plans to support transportation electrification infrastructure with the highest value for meeting the goals and providing opportunities to streamline review of projects. These funding cycles begin in 2025 (Funding Cycle 1 (FC1)) to allow for exhaustion of currently approved electric IOU funding. FC1 consists of a statewide rebate program for behind-the-meter make-readies and EV charging infrastructure, as well as maintenance and operation, and technical assistance. The FC1 rebate program would provide support to multiunit dwellings, including those serving public locations, and the medium and heavy-duty sectors. As proposed, Funding Cycle 2 (FC2) would start in 2030, after FC1 completes at the end of 2029, and would be based on an assessment of FC1, and analysis of the policy and market needs The Funding Cycle One Behind-the-Meter (FC1 BTM) Rebate Program adopted in D.22-11-040 consists of $600 million over the first three years, and a total of $1 billion over five years. The rebate program is to support EV charging deployment but also help reduce costs to ratepayers from these investments.

*Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP) certification*. The EVITP is nonprofit organization that provides training for licensed electricians on EV infrastructure and installation of charging infrastructure. The training includes charging station fundamentals, National Electric Code standards, jobsite safety, and other installation and maintenance best practices. As of May 2025, EVITP costs $275 and takes approximately 20 hours to complete. After successfully completing the online training course, electricians are certified through a proctored online examination. EVITP does not train or certify contractors or employers, only eligible electricians. EVITP certification is valid for three years.

**Comments**

*Need for this bill*. According to the author:

> SB 1215 makes EV charging accessible to Californias who live in multifamily housing while making electricity more affordable for California ratepayers. California's clean transportation future must be affordable and accessible for everyone, not just those who own single-family homes with private garages. Millions of Californians live in apartments and other multifamily housing, where access to convenient and affordable EV charging is often limited or unavailable. As a result, many renters are forced to rely on more expensive public charging or are unable to consider an electric vehicle at all. SB 1215 helps close this gap by expanding EV charging where people live. By making overnight charging more accessible at multifamily housing, SB 1215 helps

renters access the same lower-cost charging options available to many homeowners. This expands the benefits of California's clean energy transition to all Californians, regardless of where they live. At the same time, with added electric load from EV charging, SB 1215 will put downward pressure on electricity rates by spreading distribution system fixed system costs across more kilowatt hours consumed and reducing the amount of fixed costs that each electric ratepayer must pay. At a time when affordability is a top concern across the state, SB 1215 makes affordable EV charging more accessible to Californians and benefits California ratepayers.

*Multi-unit dwellings remain a challenge for EV charging deployment*. The disparity in charging availability between single- and multi-unit residences results from a range of factors that make EV charging installations significantly more challenging for multi-unit dwellings, including: landlord-tenant and shared ownership, tenants have less access to capital, shared parking or limited to no dedicated parking, on street parking, location of electric infrastructure, older buildings, and other challenges.

*Potential costs to ratepayers*. This bill requires the CPUC to review, and largely approve, electrical corporations' applications for EV charging infrastructure at multifamily housing units that would result in a tripling of EV chargers for this sector between January 1, 2027 to 2037. This bill's goal to address multifamily housing is laudable given this is a continued area of need. However, concerns about costs to ratepayers remain. The author and supporters intend to provide some guardrails to address affordability for ratepayers by requiring the EV chargers that have the highest utilization with the intent of providing downward pressure on electricity rates as load increases and is recovered from additional use (and possibly customers). The supporters contend such expansion would result in overall downward pressure, as recent studies have shown the potential of added load from EVs can help reduce rates for all customers. (Though such outcomes may depend on the particulars of all costs borne by ratepayers to implement EV charging infrastructure.) A study by Synapse found that the key reason why revenues from EVs outweigh the costs to ratepayers (based on national data for EV use and investments) is that EV customers – particularly those on time-of-use rates – tend to charge during off-peak hours. By charging during off-peak hours, EVs impose minimal additional costs on the grid and help to utilize resources more efficiently. This bill mandates networked, managed chargers with time-of-use rates to shift charging to off-peak times, this is intended to better manage the new load in order to reduce the need for additional generation and infrastructure costs. This bill also limits EV charging deployment to locations where no grid capacity upgrades are needed, thereby minimizing costs of the projects beyond the charging stations and related make-ready infrastructure. This bill also limits cost recovery to

operations and maintenance expenses and prohibits electric IOU profit on the customer side of the meter investments, thereby reducing the costs from electric IOU profit and financing for these investments. These requirements are intended to capture the highest utilization with the lowest costs to other ratepayers.

*Need to maintain CPUC's full authority to review for just and reasonableness*. While the above provisions could help reduce costs borne by ratepayers, it is unclear whether the required EV investments pursuant to this bill would result in overall reduced costs for ratepayers. This is particularly the case given other requirements in this bill, such as those to require customer-side of the meter costs are paid for by electric IOU ratepayers, requiring a tripling of EV chargers for multifamily unit dwellings of five or more dwellings which is likely to be a significant amount of chargers, and authorizing ownership by the electric IOUs for this infrastructure, among others. The requirements for load management are likely to also increase costs for the infrastructure and related operations, even as their intended goal is to reduce costs by supporting better grid charging times. More significantly, is the proposed process and timeline by which the CPUC must make determinations in reviewing these proposals, approve within 90 days or reject within 45 days and direct the electrical corporation to make changes to the proposal. Such timelines, processes, and procedures seem intent on forcing the CPUC to approve these projects and greatly limit the CPUC's (and other stakeholders') opportunities to review and provide input. Moreover, this approach runs counter to the CPUC's adopted funding cycle framework, particularly the approach to prohibit IOU ownership and to provide rebates for multifamily housing installations, in order to minimize costs to ratepayers. The electric IOUs are executing their core responsibilities to serve as both the infrastructure and fuel providers to support transportation electrification. With the passage of AB 841 and the resulting EV Infrastructure Rules governing recovery of utility-side distribution infrastructure investments that support EV charging, the scope and magnitude of the IOUs' role is clear. As the CPUC has noted: "If the IOUs properly perform their core responsibilities of supporting utility-side infrastructure and serving as fuel providers, they will accelerate TE and customer investment by providing reliable infrastructure, rates, and technical expertise." The CPUC has further noted that given the immensity and importance of the core electric IOU responsibilities, the role of electric IOU ratepayers in subsidizing behind-the-meter infrastructure requires careful and ongoing consideration.

*Other funding sources.* The CEC administers the Clean Transportation Program (CTP) which is working to invest in the infrastructure to charge EVs. Through the CTP, formerly known as the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program, the CEC invests up to $100 million annually in a broad portfolio of transportation and fuel transportation projects throughout the state. The

CEC leverages public and private investments to support adoption of cleaner transportation powered by alternative and renewable fuels. The CTP was established by AB 118 (Núñez, Chapter 750, Statutes of 2007), which took effect January 1, 2008. AB 126 (Reyes, Chapter 319, Statutes of 2023) extended the program to July 1, 2035. Using funds collected from vehicle and vessel registration, vehicle identification plates, and smog abatement fees, the program:

- Expedites development of conveniently-located fueling and charging infrastructure for ZEVs;
- Accelerates advancement and adoption of alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles, including low-and zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles;
- Expands in-state production of alternative, low-carbon renewable fuel from low-carbon pathways; and
- Supports manufacturing and workforce training to translate clean technology investments into sustained employment opportunities.

The CTP investments include some specifically for multi-family housing, including the California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project (CALeVIP) provides $250 million in funding for the deployment of light-duty EV chargers. The Communities in Charge is designed to focus exclusively on multi-family housing and related sites, including historically under resourced communities via an equity-based scoring rubric. The Reliable, Equitable, and Accessible Charging for Multi-family Housing 3.0 requires proposed projects to include EV charger installations that will benefit and be used by multi-family housing residents within disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, or a combination of both.

*Need to restore the CPUC's oversight.* Given the myriad of issues and the ongoing efforts at the CPUC (and CEC) and the efforts to reduce costs for ratepayers while supporting EV charging, including in multifamily housing, *the author and committee may wish to amend this bill to:*

- *Require the CPUC to adopt targets for the electrical corporations to support EV charging in multifamily housing while considering impacts to ratepayers.*
- *Recast this bill to require the CPUC to determine whether many of the provisions should be adopted in order for the electrical corporations to achieve the required targets.*
- *Delete provisions requiring ratepayers to pay for the costs on the customer-side of the meter.*
- *Expand the time by when the CPUC may review electrical corporations' proposals for projects to support the goals established by the CPUC to 180 days and authorize the CPUC to approve, modify, or reject applications,*

*thereby retaining their regulatory authority to ensure the proposals are just and reasonable.*

- *Delete Section 2 of the bill to retain the CPUC's current authority to adjust the interim policy concerning the Common Treatment of for Excess PEV Charging.*
- *Make additional clarifying changes.*

**Prior/Related Legislation**

AB 841 (Ting, Chapter 372, Statutes of 2020) proposed several changes to deployment of electric utility ratepayer-funded EV charging infrastructure investments, including: authorizing cost recovery from ratepayers for infrastructure expenses on the side of the meter, a requirement that electricians installing EV chargers are certified through the EVITP, requirements on the CPUC to approve specified applications,

AB 1082 (Burke, Chapter 637, Statutes of 2017) authorized electrical corporations to file with the CPUC a pilot program proposal for the installation of EV charging stations at K-12 school facilities or other educational institutions by July 30, 2018. The bill required the CPUC to review, modify, or decide whether to approve the program proposals filed by the electrical corporations by December 31, 2018.

AB 1083 (Burke, Chapter 638, Statutes of 2017) required the electrical corporation to file with the CPUC a pilot program proposal for the installation of EV charging stations at state parks and beaches within its service territory, with specified conditions, including the ability of the CPUC to decide whether to approve applications.

SB 350 (De León, Chapter 547, Statutes of 2016) among its provisions, required the CPUC, in consultation with the CARB and CEC, to direct electric IOUs to propose multiyear programs and investments to accelerate widespread transportation electrification to reduce dependence on petroleum, meet air quality standards, achieve the goals set forth in the Charge Ahead California Initiative, and reduce emissions of GHGs, as specified.

SB 1275 (De León, Chapter 530, Statutes of 2014) established the Charge Ahead California Initiative to provide incentives that increase the availability of ZEVs and near-zero emission vehicles, particularly in disadvantaged and low-and-moderate-income communities.

SB 626 (Kehoe, Chapter 355, Statutes of 2009) required the CPUC to adopt rules to address the development of EV infrastructure to support the expansion of EV and plug-in hybrid usage to achieve goals of GHG reduction.

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

**SUPPORT:**

California New Car Dealers Association
Electric Vehicle Charging Association, if amended
The Climate Reality Project, California Coalition
An Individual

**OPPOSITION:**

The Utility Reform Network

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:** The Climate Reality Project, California State Coalition states:

> …limited access to EV charging in multifamily residences discourages EV adoption – convenient access to charging is essential. Additionally, while the price of gasoline is rising, EV charging is becoming more affordable. …SB 1215 specifies that each electrical corporation will determine where and how charging stations are installed to ensure efficient planning and maximum usage. Installation of chargers will not be required if a capacity upgrade is necessary. The electrical corporation may own and manage the EV chargers it deploys or may choose to contract with an EV charging company. …SB 1215 ensures that residents of multifamily residences can avail themselves of clean and lower cost energy for transportation needs, that the IOUs will be able to determine the best and most cost-effective strategies for deployment of EV chargers and California will continue to prioritize greenhouse gas reductions by the transportation sector.

**ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION:** The Utility Reform Network (TURN) states:

> TURN does not believe ratepayers should be funding customer side, also known as behind the meter (BTM), charging infrastructure. Behind the meter charging does not directly benefit all ratepayers, yet paying for it through utility rates would impose a financial burden on all ratepayers. …740.27(b)(1) is concerning in that it sets a completely arbitrary requirement to triple the amount of charging stations without defining the status quo. Given the amount of multi-family housing in California this could be a very significant number. Without knowing how many multifamily housing charging stations currently exist it is

impossible to know how many more need to be built and therefore impossible to know the cost impact to ratepayers, no way to determine when or if the utility has met its obligation under the law, no way to know if the utility overspent on its activities. In TURN's experience, legislative mandates without clear goals and guidelines, lead to excessive spending by utility companies at the expense of ratepayers. California is an affordability crisis and if enacted, SB 1215 will only make the crisis worse.

**-- END --**