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Appropriations Committee

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Capital Budget

Chair, Transportation and the
Environment

Oversight Committee on Personnel



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Electric Vehicle Recharging Equipment for Multi-Family Units Act (HB 111)

Testimony of Delegate Marc Korman – Favorable

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chair, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee. I come before you today to discuss the Electric Vehicle Recharging Equipment for Multi-Family Units Act (HB 111). Marylanders who live in multi-unit dwellings or are governed by a Homeowner's Association (HOAs) often face obstacles to making investments in electric vehicles (EVs) because of the difficulty in installing recharging equipment in their buildings. This bill will help multi-unit communities develop infrastructure to support EVs and remove barriers to practical ownership of EVs.

This committee gave a favorable report to this legislation during the 2019 legislative session after Chair Barve and Chair Holmes brokered a compromise. The bill passed the House, but not the Senate.

The bill establishes a process for the HOA governing body and the EV owner to collaborate on getting an EV charging station installed. The bill mandates that the HOA or condo board must process and treat an application to install EV charging equipment in the same manner as it does for an approval of an architectural modification to the home or condominium. Aligning the application process for EV charging equipment with that of architectural modifications guarantees that the application will be reviewed and seriously considered in a timely manner, which will encourage more EV owners to pursue installing recharging equipment.

Additionally, if the application is not explicitly denied within 60 days of submission, the request shall be considered approved. This is to prevent the governing body from intentionally avoiding or delaying the review process. However, the bill does include reasonable limitations on where an EV owner can install this equipment. The bill outlines that the governing body has the right to deny a request for recharging equipment if the installation prevents normal use of a certain area on the property. EV owners must also meet a series of other requirements designed to protect the governing body from liability and ensure that the EV owner covers all the costs for the installation and maintenance of the charging equipment. Please see the attached fact sheet for more details on these provisions.

Although the compromise provisions negotiated last year were baked into this year's bill, we found that two small changes from last year's legislation are necessary to address the concerns that HOAs have had in previous years. Those two amendments are included with my testimony.

The first amendment specifies that a governing body may grant a license of up to 3 years, renewable at the discretion of the governing body, to any EV owner who seeks to use a common element to install their recharging equipment. The second amendment clarifies that the installation of the recharging equipment must be consistent with the building's safety codes and architectural standards to maintain the safety of all users of the common area.

The legislation also establishes a grant program in the Maryland Energy Administration—paid for from the existing Strategic Energy Investment Fund—to support HOAs and condo boards by allowing them to apply for funds to assist in updating their garage's wiring to support EV use. These would be for extraordinary costs beyond the grasp of an individual EV owner that the building board also does not want to—and should not have to—pay. Updated garages will facilitate the installation of new EV equipment, and will also increase the value of the property and could help attract other tenants who own EVs.

I urge you to once again provide a favorable report for the Electric Vehicle Recharging Equipment for Multi-Family Units Act to further Maryland's adoption of electric vehicles which contributes to the goal of reducing emissions and combating the effects of climate change.