



June 10, 2022

The Honorable Laura Friedman
Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee
California Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SUPPORT: SB 1258 (Allen) Clean Transportation Program: electric vehicle charging: fleet-operated vehicles – Will Help Reduce Harmful Auto Emissions

Dear Assemblymember Friedman,

On behalf of Chamber of Progress, a tech industry association working to ensure that all Americans benefit from technological leaps, I write in support of SB 1258 (Allen), which would clarify that light-duty vehicle fleets are eligible for grants from the California Energy Commission (CEC) Clean Transportation Program. This bill seeks to accelerate Governor Newsom's goal of transforming the automotive industry to fully electric by 2035 and contribute to reduced auto emissions in California.

The Clean Transportation Program has proven to be an effective tool in accelerating the elimination of non-renewable energy sources in the transportation sector. **SB 1258 (Allen) will amplify the program's impact by allowing innovative technologies to play an active role in addressing the climate crisis.** Fully electric vehicle fleets, with access to infrastructure funding opportunities, have the potential to contribute to considerable reductions in GHG emissions¹ supporting California's ambitious climate change goals and clean air standards.

Many fully-electric fleets are also autonomous. A fully electric autonomous vehicle fleet has the potential to promote environmental sustainability goals and offer tremendous benefits to communities including addressing passenger safety outcomes, mitigating transit gaps, combating food deserts, and increasing mobility for the elderly and disabled.

The progressing challenge of climate change presents devastating health and economic consequences for communities. In 2020, the transportation sector was the largest contributor to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the United States.² For California, transportation accounted for more than 50% of GHG emissions in the state.³ In adherence to SB 500 (Min, 2021), new autonomous vehicles operated as a fleet are to be zero-emissions vehicles by January 1, 2035.

¹Benjamin Leard and Virginia McConnell, *Progress and Potential for Electric Vehicles to Reduce Carbon Emissions*, Resources for the Future, (December 2020)

<https://www.rff.org/publications/reports/potential-role-and-impact-evs-us-decarbonization-strategies/>

²*Fast Facts on Transportation Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, United States Environmental Protection Agency, (May 2022)
<https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/fast-facts-transportation-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

³*Transforming Transportation*, California Energy Commission, (May 2022)

<https://www.energy.ca.gov/about/core-responsibility-fact-sheets/transforming-transportation>

We are encouraged by the Legislature's commitment to curtail greenhouse gas emissions through the statewide adoption of zero-emission vehicles and investment in building the critically important infrastructure needed to achieve this goal. When California lays the groundwork for clean transportation initiatives, many states will observe and apply similar measures to future programs.

Studies have already indicated that even gas-powered autonomous vehicles can positively impact the environment and promote sustainability efforts. Through high-speed driving, braking, and re-acceleration, human drivers burn a lot of gas and energy while driving.⁴ According to the Southwest Research Institute, through connectivity and automation, vehicles can reach a 20% improvement in fuel efficiency.⁵ Since autonomous vehicles are programmed to follow traffic rules and speed limits, fully electric autonomous vehicles will ultimately burn less gas and energy.

The transition from gas-powered to fully electric autonomous vehicles heavily relies upon investments that will increase the number of EV charging stations and allow for ongoing research and development for future EV infrastructure needs. By enacting this bill, California will continue to lead in combating climate change by way of the transportation sector, while making certain that electric vehicles are accessible to all.

For the reasons cited above, Chamber of Progress proudly supports SB 1258 (Allen) and requests an 'AYE' vote.

Sincerely,



Jamie Pascal
Director of Civic Innovation Policy
Chamber of Progress

⁴Ashleigh Rose-Harman, *The Environmental Benefits of Driverless Cars*, Greener Ideal, (Nov. 2021), <https://greenerideal.com/news/vehicles/driverless-cars-environmental-benefits/>.

⁵SwRI Achieves 20% Improvement in Vehicle Fuel Efficiency with Connectivity, Automation, Southwest Research Institute, (Nov. 2021) <https://www.swri.org/press-release/vehicle-fuel-efficiency-improvement-connectivity-automation-arpa-e-nextcar>.