



SB 1251 (Gonzalez) Zero Emission Vehicle Equity Ombudsperson

SUMMARY

Senate Bill (SB) 1251 creates an ombudsperson position to facilitate the coordination across agencies as they advance the State's Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) goals, and ensure that State ZEV programs are equity-centered and support underserved Californians.

EXISTING LAW

In September of 2020, Governor Newsom signed Executive Order No. 79-20, which sets the following goals:

- 100% ZEV in-state sales of new passenger cars and light-duty trucks by 2035;
- 100% zero-emission medium and heavy-duty vehicles in the state by 2045 where feasible (and 100% ZEV drayage trucks by 2035) ; and
- 100% zero-emission off-road vehicles and equipment operations by 2035, where feasible.

SB 1275 (DeLeon, Chapter 530, Statutes of 2014) required the California Air Resources Board to develop a plan to achieve California's then-goal of getting 1 million ZEVs on the road by 2023, while ensuring that low-income/disadvantaged communities benefit from this transition.

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM

California is a world leader in the ZEV market: in 2020, ZEVs were Californians' number one export¹, and Californians accounted for half of all plug-in cars purchased in the United States².

However, California is still far from its ambitious ZEV targets. As of 2020, there are 635,602 zero-emission and hybrid vehicles in California, representing just 2.2% of all

the cars on the road³. Moreover, these ZEVs are not deployed equitably as low-income, households of color are far less likely to own ZEVs than white, higher-income households. As of 2019, fewer than six percent of California ZEVs are registered in the upper 80th percentile of CalEnviroScreen score census tracts⁴. In addition to considering the equitable deployment of passenger ZEVs, deploying more zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles also has equity benefits, since these vehicles reduce air pollution that primarily affects underserved and environmentally overburdened Californians.

SOLUTION

There is a strong need to formalize and systematize the facilitation between grass-roots equity groups and state agencies working to reach ZEV targets. Ensuring that nuanced, rooted equity concerns are embedded in the decisions made about ZEV vehicle incentives and ZEV charging infrastructure programs is essential for disadvantaged communities to reap their share of the benefits of California's ZEV programs. SB 1251 addresses both of these goals by creating a ZEV Equity Ombudsperson to facilitate coordination for ZEV deployment across agencies, prioritizing equity, and creating a direct pathway for input from stakeholders and all Californians.

SUPPORT

Los Angeles Clean Tech Incubator (Sponsor)

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¹ <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/state/data/ca.html>

² <https://afdc.energy.gov/data/10962>

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⁴ <https://innovation.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/An-Agenda-for-Equity-Centered-Clean-Transportation.pdf>