

August 1, 2024

Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capitol St. NE, MS11
Salem, OR 97301-3871

Re: Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator program workshop

EVgo appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) workshop on the Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator (EVC RAA) program. As one of the nation's largest public fast charging providers, EVgo shares ODOT's vision for an elevated customer experience for EV drivers and recognizes that a reliable, widespread EV charging network is crucial for scaling EV adoption needed to help achieve Oregon's equity, clean energy, decarbonization, and air quality goals. The company continues to invest in customer-centric initiatives like Autocharge+¹ and EVgo ReNew² to further enhance the charging experience. EVgo also participates in industry forums such as the National Charging Experience Consortium (ChargeX)³, SAE, and UL to promote codes and standards improvements that are foundational for seamless, reliable charging.

EVgo commends ODOT for implementing EVC RAA funding to bolster the reliability of Oregon's growing public charging network. To enhance program efficiency and improve the likelihood that projects can be completed in a timely fashion, EVgo strongly encourages ODOT to consider alternatives to letter of credit (LOC) requirements to mitigate risk in deploying EVC RAA funding.

EVgo understands the intent behind LOCs, and is aligned with ODOT's goals to ensure that projects that are awarded funds are ultimately carried through to fruition. However, while well-intended LOC requirements in the EV charging space deter applicants and compromise the success of the program because, in many cases, obtaining a letter of credit will require applicants to restrict funds to collateralize the letter of credit. This is not likely to be a viable option for many site hosts and EV charging providers, and while it may be an appropriate tool for larger infrastructure projects that ODOT is accustomed to funding, it is incompatible with the distributed nature of EV charging projects, which are developed and deployed at a much smaller scale than more traditional infrastructure. Similarly, bonding requirements can present obstacles for applicants. Thus, these

¹ <https://www.evgo.com/autocharge/>

² <https://www.evgo.com/press-release/evgo-advances-network-enhancements-through-evgo-renewtm-program-releases-best-practices-to-promote-greater-industry-wide-charger-reliability/>

³ <https://inl.gov/chargex/>

requirements will likely exclude certain types of applicants from participation in the program.

Instead of requiring a letter of credit, risk can be mitigated in other ways, similar to many other states that have already released solicitations. For example, National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) programs in Ohio and Pennsylvania required an applicant to “[d]escribe general financial capabilities of the Proposer and document: 1) any funding commitments or financing in place today or 2) funding sources that will be available in the future that are intended to support the project,” while Texas required a “financial plan for site construction until reimbursement.” Other states plan to withhold funding until certain milestones are met. For example, Colorado plans to retain a percentage of the contract value pending achievement of construction milestones, completion of reporting, achievement of uptime requirements and continued operation. Similarly, New Hampshire plans to withhold a portion of the O&M incentive pending achievement of uptime requirements. Further, other risk-mitigation measures can be negotiated through the contracting process.

Ultimately, EVC RAA is a reimbursement grant, so risk to ODOT is mitigated by the fact that it can withhold awards that are not completed to the program’s specifications. Should ODOT require additional assurances that grant obligations will be met, a performance bond is a more cost effective financial instrument for applicants to obtain provided that any fees associated with obtaining the bond are considered an eligible expense.

EVgo appreciates ODOT’s leadership in supporting Oregon’s EV adoption goals and looks forward to being a resource as the agency continues to implement EVC RAA.

Respectfully submitted this 1st day of August,

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