

October 6, 2025

Submitted electronically via dps.ny.gov

Honorable Michelle Phillips
Secretary State of New York Public Service Commission
Building Three Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12223-1350

RE: Case No. 18-E-0138 – Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment and Infrastructure

Dear Secretary Phillips:

Tesla appreciates the opportunity to comment on the petition filed February 24, 2025, by the Joint Utilities requesting an extension of the Make-Ready Program once the maximum target number of Level 2 (L2) or direct-current fast charging (DCFC) plugs has been reached. As a manufacturer of electric vehicles (EVs), operator of New York’s largest fast charging network, and producer of Supercharger equipment at Gigafactory New York in Buffalo, Tesla supports the Joint Utilities’ position. Allowing continued investment in charging infrastructure beyond current plug targets aligns with Tesla’s view that expanding access to public charging is essential to accelerating EV adoption and decarbonizing the transportation sector. Tesla particularly supports the proposal to continue Make-Ready funding for DCFC deployment, which remains critical to meeting the needs of urban residents, fleet operators, and long-distance drivers. Public funding plays an important role in building a robust and equitable charging network, and these incentives will help accelerate infrastructure deployment, expand access in underserved areas, and support clean manufacturing jobs in New York State.

Make-Ready Program Extension – Tesla Response to DPS Questions:

Tesla’s comments below are organized in response to the key questions issued by the Department of Public Service (DPS) regarding the proposed extension of the Make-Ready Program.

- 1. Identify potential modifications to the design of the Make-Ready Program that could optimize the incentive funds under the proposed extension, ensuring that incentives go towards charging sites that have the greatest impact on New York State electric vehicle adoption.***

To maximize the impact of remaining Make-Ready funds, the Commission should prioritize DC fast charging (DCFC) infrastructure in locations with the greatest potential to support EV adoption. DCFC is essential for drivers without home charging access, particularly in dense urban areas such as New York City where multi-unit dwellings dominate. It also enables long-distance travel along highway corridors, helping to reduce range anxiety, and supports commercial electrification for ride-hailing and delivery fleets that require reliable en route charging.

To avoid disrupting deployment momentum, the Commission should authorize use of remaining funds even after plug targets are met. Past program pauses, such as those experienced by O&R and in Massachusetts, led to project cancellations and eroded developer confidence. Continued funding would allow for orderly deployment, especially in high-priority areas such as disadvantaged communities, travel corridors, and fleet hubs.

2. Should a portion of the Light-Duty Vehicle (LDV) Make-Ready Program's unspent future-proofing budget should be reallocated to fund additional Level 2 plug installations, even after plug targets are already met?

Tesla does not support reallocating the unspent future-proofing budget to Level 2 (L2) deployments beyond established targets. While L2 infrastructure remains valuable, current deployment levels are on track to meet or exceed program goals. In contrast, DCFC coverage remains insufficient to meet projected demand. As of 2023, New York had only 1,494 public DCFC ports, far below modeled needs.¹ The Commission itself has recognized the need for at least 6,000 DCFC ports statewide.²

Future-proofing budgets were designed to enable scalable, forward-looking site development, particularly at locations supporting higher-power charging and grid flexibility. Redirecting these funds to additional L2 plugs would offer limited incremental value and reduce the program's ability to support long-term infrastructure needs. These funds should remain reserved for their intended purpose to ensure the state can continue building a resilient, public-facing DCFC network.

3. Describe, in detail, ways that could optimize program outcomes with some or all of the remaining LDV Make-Ready funding by providing scenarios that could: a) Optimize the remaining program incentive funds under the proposed extension to help ensure funding remains available through the second quarter of 2026 (e.g.,

¹ https://www.eia.gov/state/seds/data.php?incfile=%2Fstate%2Fseds%2Fsep_fuel%2Fhtml%2Ffuel_evci.html&sid=NY

² <https://www.nystia.org/news/governor-hochul-advances-nation-leading-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-buildout-program>

pairing program design modifications that prioritize high-impact charging sites with calibrated incentive levels—such as differentiating incentives by user or location type, disadvantaged community status, or geographic need); and b) reduce average per-plug-costs.

Tesla supports the Joint Utilities’ petition to extend the Make-Ready Program for DCFC and offers recommendations to maximize the impact of remaining funds while ensuring cost efficiency. Optimizing incentive design is critical to maintaining program momentum through the second quarter of 2026, particularly as DCFC projects carry longer permitting and interconnection timelines than Level 2 deployments.

Reducing the average cost per plug begins with addressing the soft-cost and utility-side challenges that drive project variability. Standardizing utility review processes and interconnection timelines can help lower costs by reducing design changes and delays. Similarly, the use of common design templates across utilities for frequent site types could minimize the need for duplicative engineering work. Tesla’s own modular deployment experience demonstrates the ability to deliver lower per-kilowatt costs when sites are supported by transparent and predictable utility-side upgrades.

Cost-efficiency also depends on directing remaining program incentives to projects that yield the greatest value. Larger sites with higher plug counts benefit from economies of scale and provide greater assurance of availability to drivers. Likewise, additional support for projects in disadvantaged communities, rural corridors, and urban brownfield areas can help ensure that high-need locations do not fall behind due to their higher development costs.

Finally, preserving program continuity is essential to meeting New York’s transportation electrification goals. Pausing DCFC funding in 2025 would create uncertainty that deters investment and leads to long delays in project completion. Because fast charging projects require longer lead times than Level 2, any interruption in incentives would ripple into 2027 and beyond, undermining the trajectory needed to achieve the State’s 2035 zero-emission vehicle target. By adopting modest design modifications that lower costs and prioritize high-impact sites, the Commission can extend the effectiveness of the remaining Make-Ready Program budget and ensure that New York’s DCFC network continues to expand at the pace necessary to support broad EV adoption.

4. Describe in detail how the Make-Ready program is impacting the L2 LDV electric vehicle market and provide any analyses of: a) The types of locations that facilitate the most electric vehicle adoption and reduction of range anxiety among EV drivers. Those could be geography (e.g., charging deserts or disadvantaged communities) or location type (e.g., multi-family dwelling). b) The types of locations that have the highest utilization rates and the types of plugs that have lowest downtime/issues. c) Any “charging deserts” that may exist.

The Make-Ready Program has been instrumental in enabling DC fast charging in locations that support widespread EV adoption and reduce range anxiety. High-impact sites include dense urban areas where many drivers lack access to home charging, as well as along major travel corridors where public charging availability enables longer trips and builds driver confidence. Disadvantaged communities also benefit significantly, particularly where multi-family housing and limited private investment make fast charging otherwise inaccessible.

Tesla data show that urban and corridor-based Supercharger stations consistently experience the highest utilization. These locations serve a broad mix of daily drivers, commuters, and fleets. Investment confidence is strongest where infrastructure timelines are predictable and utility-side upgrades are delivered on schedule. Project outcomes are best where make-ready investments have supported clear coordination between developers and utilities.

Despite progress, key charging deserts remain. Upstate and western New York lack reliable fast charging across many rural and highway-adjacent areas. Within New York City, the Bronx and outer portions of Queens continue to lag behind in DCFC availability. These gaps are especially pronounced in disadvantaged communities where demand exists but infrastructure remains limited. The program should continue directing incentives toward these underbuilt regions to ensure more equitable and effective statewide deployment.

Conclusion

Tesla appreciates the Commission’s ongoing leadership in advancing transportation electrification through the Make-Ready Program and supports the Joint Utilities’ petition to allow continued investment in charging infrastructure beyond current plug targets. Expanding access to public DC fast charging is essential to achieving New York’s climate, equity, and mobility goals. As detailed in the comments above, a targeted extension of the Make-Ready Program, paired with calibrated incentive design and strategic use of remaining funds, can preserve deployment momentum, reduce per-plug costs, and ensure that critical high-impact locations are not left behind.

By maintaining focus on DCFC deployment in underserved and high-utilization areas, preserving the future-proofing budget for scalable, grid-resilient infrastructure, and avoiding any lapse in funding availability, the Commission can help ensure that New York's charging network keeps pace with accelerating EV adoption. Tesla looks forward to continued collaboration with the Commission, the Joint Utilities, and other stakeholders to support an efficient, equitable, and forward-looking charging ecosystem across the state.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Ehrlich". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

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