

## NY-BEST Comments on Con Edison's Straw Proposal – EVIIWG

May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Con Edison Straw Proposal (“Straw Proposal”) addresses the streamlining queue management for the electric vehicle make-ready program and other programs focusing entirely on unidirectional EVSE applications. New York’s future generation mix will require more flexible assets, such as DERs, to achieve the state’s clean energy goals with reliability and manageable cost (Case 24-E-0165, Grid of the Future Order, p. 6.) Interconnection rules must effectively accommodate bi-directional assets such as V2X and energy storage co-located with EVSE equipment. While NY-BEST supports the general content of the Straw Proposal, the EVIIWG must work to also address bi-directional assets in a manner that does not disadvantage their deployment compared to unidirectional assets.

Specific points:

- 1) EVSE integrated with bidirectional resources such as V2X, Energy storage, and other DERs has real benefits for reduced grid upgrade costs and lower customer costs. However, currently fewer V2G projects exist in part due to barriers put in place by the existing queue management and interconnection application processes and procedures. NY-BEST and members would like the EVIIWG to create policy that harmonizes the interconnection process for load and distributed generation so that V2G projects are structurally incentivized for growth.
- 2) Harmonizing the interconnection process for EV loads combined with distributed energy resources (DERs) is not mentioned in Con Edison’s straw proposal and NY-BEST encourages the PSC to include this topic in EVIIWG discussion. During the presentation of the Straw Proposal, Con Edison suggested that V2G should not be a primary focus because this accounts for a minority of EV projects. The present low number of V2G projects should not be used as either a metric of the interest in those projects or the importance of this class of projects to the future. Programs and interconnection procedures have not encouraged and in some cases discouraged the deployment of V2G, for example the interconnection for V2G is presently substantially more complex than interconnection of unidirectional EVSE. Irrespective of the present deployment, it is widely recognized that New York State needs to deploy far more flexible assets (add references). NY-BEST recommends that EVIIWG should focus on V2G capability and encourage EVSE paired with energy storage.

- a. Harmonizing queues – Interconnection processes use queues to determine study order and priority to available hosting capacity. Historically, power generation was evaluated through the Standard Interconnection Process (SIR) and load through separate utility processes. V2G and Energy Storage load is evaluated as part of the SIR process and thus is not synchronized with other load evaluation. The EVIIWG should address harmonizing these queues in a way that does not slow down deployment or disadvantage more flexible assets.
- 3) Procedures should be developed to realize the benefits of co-located battery storage coupled with EVSE which may avoid grid upgrades in certain areas. This will require modifications to the interconnection study methodology. Coordinated studies and queue management should enable these benefits to be realized.
- 4) Feedback gathered from NY-BEST members indicate that V2G service applications are being handled by many teams and departments. The complexity of this process is an impediment to deployment. For an EV project with V2G chargers, which are eligible for PowerReady incentives as an EV project, ConEd customers have to submit a CESIR study for the V2G to go through the SIR process. Completely separately, the customer must submit a PowerReady application for incentives which triggers a separate application with the energy services team. NY-BEST members report that these two studies are not linked or connected, leading to situations where the EV project may have a service determination and a signed program agreement while a CESIR study is still in progress and may lead to conflicting results.
- 5) EV Interconnection processes fall under the management of eMobility team members at Con Edison that are primarily responsible for overseeing statewide incentive and charge management programs. This contrasts with the SIR process, which does not have the additional layer of incentive applications, awards, contracts, and monitoring/evaluation. It is critical that incentive eligibility tied to specific infrastructure is made explicit in advance of applications filed by market participants so there is no confusion and strong market signals that incentivize the development of infrastructure that reduces customer (ratepayer) costs. Energy Storage and other load management technology should be considered eligible for incentive payments when they directly impact interconnection costs for EVSE. The Load Management Technology Incentive Program filed by the Joint Utilities in the “Proceeding to Establish Alternatives to Traditional Demand-Based Rate Structures for Commercial Electric Vehicle Charging” is a great start but lessons from that program should be incorporated proactively in the long-term planning of EVSE interconnection.



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**INTERSTATE RENEWABLE ENERGY COUNCIL**

May 7, 2024

To: Lisa Rosi, NY Department of Public Service  
Re: Comments on Con Edison's Queue Management Straw Proposal

Dear Ms. Rosi:

On behalf of the Interstate Renewable Energy Council, we submit the following comments in response to Con Edison's Queue Management Straw Proposal that was shared with the EV Infrastructure Interconnection Working Group (initiated under Case 18-E-0138).

I. Introduction

The Interstate Renewable Energy Council, Inc. ("IREC") is a 501(c)(3) non-partisan, non-profit organization working nationally to increase consumer access to sustainable energy and energy efficiency through independent fact-based policy leadership, quality workforce development and consumer empowerment. IREC's regulatory team works to increase the adoption of policies and regulatory reforms that expand access to and streamline interconnection and energization of new clean energy resources to the grid and to encourage transportation electrification.

IREC appreciates the opportunity to comment on Consolidated Edison of New York's (Con Edison or Con Ed) Queue Management Straw Proposal and provides the below comments and information requests to assist in the development of a statewide, standardized process for connecting electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure to the electric grid.

II. General Comments on the Creation of a Standardized Interconnection Process for EV Infrastructure

A. Working Group Scope and Timeline

During the first meeting of the EV Infrastructure Interconnection Working Group (EVIWG) on April 4, 2024, the Department of Public Service (DPS) asked stakeholders for suggestions on the format and organization of the working group. IREC has nearly

two decades of experience engaging in regulatory dockets and working groups, and we have found that establishing a clear process with a defined scope can help to set expectations and focus discussions and feedback to topics relevant to the working group's directive. Because the EVIIWG is tackling the creation of standardized procedures which may include both technical and non-technical provisions, it would be helpful to know if there are any issues that will be addressed through other working groups and thus out of scope for this working group. For example, in its Order creating the EVIIWG, the Commission stated that the Interconnection Technical Working Group (ITWG) would be the appropriate venue to discuss interconnection challenges related to vehicle-to-grid integration.<sup>1</sup> While IREC does not recommend bifurcating interconnection issues into separate working groups unnecessarily, we do recognize that some technical topics may be better suited for the ITWG.

Additionally, identifying and publicizing an anticipated timeline and schedule for developing new interconnection procedures as part of the EVIIWG would be helpful for understanding how long DPS staff expect the working group process to take. This may be difficult to determine upfront since it is dependent on the time it takes to reach consensus on certain topics or address any non-consensus items, but an estimated timeline could be useful for stakeholders for planning purposes. The DPS has already provided a near-term schedule for modifying the proposal based on stakeholder feedback by the June EVIIWG meeting. It would be helpful for DPS to set a schedule for further draft revisions based on similar working group processes. A good practice that we have seen in other jurisdictions is for Commissions or Staff to develop a schedule that builds in time for adequate dialog and shared learning, but also establishes concrete deadlines by topic area to help focus conversations and move the process forward. If consensus is not reached by the deadline, the non-consensus items are taken to the Commission for a final decision.

## B. Overall Structure of Standardized Interconnection Procedures

In its straw proposal, Con Ed separated its streamlining efforts into four categories: operations measures; participant informational tools; participant communication strategies; and utility enterprise alignment.<sup>2</sup> While this categorization is useful for understanding Con Ed's strategies to address queue backlogs, it will need to be expanded to capture the full EV infrastructure interconnection process and to align more fully with the customer perspective and experience. Though procedures specific to EV infrastructure do not necessarily have to emulate New York's Standardized

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<sup>1</sup> New York State Public Service Commission ("NY PSC"), Case 18-E-0138, *Order Approving Midpoint Review Whitepaper's Recommendations With Modifications*, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Consolidated Edison Company of New York ("Con Ed"), *Straw Proposal for Streamlined Queue Management in Electric Vehicle Make-Ready Program and Other Programs* ("Con Ed Queue Management Straw Proposal"), available at <https://dps.ny.gov/straw-proposal-streamlined-queue-management-electric-vehicle-make-ready-program-and-other-programs>.

Interconnection Requirements (NY SIR),<sup>3</sup> they should include a similar list of steps that lay out the process, from initial communication between the customer and utility to energization, as one of the central goals of standardized interconnection requirements is to have a complete set of the necessary rules for interconnection. This type of detail will provide customers with greater visibility into the process as well as clear expectations regarding both customer and utility responsibilities.

Clearly defining the interconnection process steps is a critical first step to designing a transparent and standardized process. During the first meeting of the EVIIWG, Con Ed shared its interconnection process flow for EV infrastructure projects.<sup>4</sup> EVIIWG stakeholders should discuss Con Ed's flow chart and identify all steps that need to be broken down and described in more detail to fully capture the process. Once all of the steps have been identified and defined, they could be used as a starting point for the EV infrastructure interconnection procedures. In addition to providing transparency and clear expectations, the process of designing and clearly articulating the different stages and tasks can also highlight opportunities for greater efficiency by identifying any steps that can be done simultaneously. It also will make clear the steps that require the most care and attention to keep projects moving.

In addition to including all process steps, state interconnection procedures for distributed energy resources (DERs) typically include timelines, fees, technical requirements, dispute resolution processes, and utility reporting requirements. These items should be considered as the working group is developing the EV infrastructure interconnection procedures. A comprehensive set of procedures allows for greater process transparency and ensures that applicants are aware of standard practices, policies, and requirements applicable to all regulated utilities.

### III. Comments on Con Ed's Queue Management Straw Proposal

The following comments and questions are organized by the categories provided by Con Ed in its Queue Management Straw Proposal.

#### A. Operations measures

The measures listed in this section, including review sequencing or batching, queue cancellation or hold policies, and flexibility regarding project prioritization, are important to consider to establish an efficient process. Determining how best to review EV

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<sup>3</sup> NY PSC, *New York State Standardized Interconnection Requirements and Application Process For New Distributed Generators and/or Energy Storage Systems 5 MW or Less Connected in Parallel with Utility Distribution Systems* ("NY SIR"), available at <https://dps.ny.gov/nys-standardized-interconnection-requirements>.

<sup>4</sup> Con Ed, *Summary of Con Edison Straw Proposal for Streamlined Queue Management*, Presentation, April 4, 2024, available at <https://dps.ny.gov/eviiwg-draft-presentation-april-meeting-coned>, p. 4.

infrastructure projects at the outset can help to prevent queue backlog issues as application volume increases. In its comments, Con Ed stressed the importance of flexibility and innovation to keep projects moving forward efficiently. IREC would like to learn more about how Con Ed has used flexible queue management practices to increase interconnection efficiency, and we ask that Con Ed provide at least three examples detailing the circumstances, reasoning, and impacts specific to the use of flexible queue practices related to particular projects.

One key consideration before determining the ideal review practices is how the type of sequencing and other practices may impact the amount of capacity and need for grid upgrades for projects that are further down in the queue. To address this, IREC requests that Con Ed identify whether projects are essentially reserving capacity when they are placed in the queue (similar to DER projects) or whether prioritizing certain projects over others has little to no effect on the ability of non-prioritized projects to move forward. For example, if one project was shovel ready and Con Ed prioritized it ahead of a project that had entered the queue at an earlier date, how are impacts taken into account for the earlier-queued project, such as new grid constraints that may lead to higher costs and/or longer delays? IREC agrees that aligning with customer project needs and timelines can be beneficial but it would be useful to understand if there are project dependencies related to order of review.

In addition to queue management measures, it would also be helpful to know how Con Ed has implemented any phased deployment strategies which allow projects to interconnect and take advantage of available grid capacity before upgrades are constructed that will enable the project to draw more power from the grid. And how has Con Ed factored customer load management strategies (including use of certified Power Control Systems) and/or the addition of onsite solar and/or storage to enable faster interconnection or to avoid upgrades? This working group should discuss these types of strategies and determine how best to implement them if they are not already being utilized by Con Ed or other utilities.

Another way to address efficiency within the interconnection review process is to create more streamlined processes for projects that typically do not require grid upgrades. The NY SIR does this by project size, designating an expedited process for inverter-based systems up to 300 kilowatts (kW).<sup>5</sup> In its straw proposal, Con Ed stated that it has an internal tool that can “expedite service determinations for load requests that meet certain criteria,” allowing them to avoid going through a full engineering review.<sup>6</sup> This streamlined process should be incorporated into the interconnection procedures as a potential review track and should include a list of the specific criteria that would allow a project to go through expedited review. Adding similar review tracks or pathways for all projects based on size and level of complexity can ensure that projects go through an

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<sup>5</sup> NY SIR, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Con Ed Queue Management Straw Proposal, p. 6.

appropriate amount of review and create more transparency within the load review process.

To determine any additional process improvements necessary, it will be especially important to identify the current interconnection challenges faced by customers. This may include barriers outside of the utility's control, such as permitting delays, but it would be helpful to understand the most critical challenges that are slowing down the process. This working group should discuss the major interconnection barriers and how they can be addressed within the interconnection procedures.

#### B. Participant informational tools

Pre-application services and tools are extremely valuable because they can save customers time and money by directing them to viable project sites, steering them away from sites that would require more expensive upgrades, and providing additional site-specific information to help with project planning and design. However, for self-service tools such as hosting capacity maps, IREC has learned that for customers to rely on them to make project-related decisions, they must be updated with enough frequency to keep up with changing grid conditions and the data validation process must be robust to ensure accuracy.<sup>7</sup> In addition to routine updates, IREC recommends that hosting capacity maps prioritize more frequent updates for select circuits that may have undergone significant changes since the last update, such as alterations exceeding 500 kW in load or generation.<sup>8</sup> The question of whether pre-application services and tools have been helpful in project siting decisions should be explored in this working group to determine whether any improvements are necessary. It would also be helpful to discuss the other types of advisory services Con Ed offers to customers in addition to the fleet-specific advisory services.

#### C. Participant communication strategies

The strategies listed in this section are important information-sharing measures, particularly the communication practices Con Ed highlighted regarding the sharing of customer deadlines and timeline estimates for utility completion of grid upgrades. Additionally, customers could benefit from utilities providing detailed results following the service determination and/or engineering review process, including a description of the analysis performed and an explanation of how the conclusions were reached. In the DER interconnection process, providing detailed results, as well as a procedural pathway for customers to make modifications, can enable customers to make informed

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<sup>7</sup> Nagarajan, Adarsh and Yochi Zakai. 2022. *Data Validation for Hosting Capacity Analyses*. Golden, CO: National Renewable Energy Laboratory. NREL/TP-6A40-81811. <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy22osti/81811.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Currently, New York's hosting capacity maps, including PV and electrification capacity maps, are updated on an annual basis. IREC participates in the Joint Utilities of NY Hosting Capacity Stakeholder Sessions and has been advocating for more frequent updates to these maps.

decisions about how they can modify their project to avoid grid constraints. The NY SIR requires utilities to share a “detailed description of reasoning and justification for any system upgrades and associated equipment deemed necessary for interconnection of the project,” providing transparency into grid upgrade determinations. Detailed review results could provide additional visibility into the load review process and help customers understand why certain upgrades are necessary as well as provide guidance on project modifications that could reduce a customer’s overall costs and installation timeline. For example, a thorough explanation of the results following the engineering review process could help customers identify if a managed load profile would decrease project costs or whether developing a project in phases could allow part of their project to come online earlier before upgrades are constructed.

#### D. Utility enterprise alignment

In this section, Con Ed laid out the company’s strategies to improve the efficiency of the interconnection process through internal measures, such as forecasting project volume, dealing with project modifications, and using performance incentives. Improving project flows within the utility is hugely important, and it would be helpful for Con Ed to describe these and other internal strategies in more detail.

Additionally, it would be useful to know more about the customer-facing strategies Con Ed has adopted, such as providing a single point of contact at the utility for customers with one or multiple projects. With regard to project modifications, Con Ed could consider determining if there are any project scope changes that would not require a new service determination and communicate that to customers.

To ensure that the Commission and stakeholders can monitor how efficient and cost-effective the interconnection process is and identify opportunities for improvement, it is critical to have utilities report annually on both interconnection timelines and upgrade costs. This highlights the importance of clearly defining the process steps upfront to enable each utility to report on the average time it takes to complete each step. Timeline reporting can improve transparency by helping customers gauge how long the process typically takes. Similarly, reporting on upgrade costs increases customer visibility into expected interconnection costs. Both timeline and upgrade cost reporting can provide the Commission with information to highlight potential interconnection challenges, including process bottlenecks as well as high or rapidly increasing costs.

From a technical perspective, there is little visibility into how Con Ed evaluates EVSE projects. As mentioned above under the section on operations measures, Con Ed could implement review tracks to ensure that projects of all sizes go through an appropriate amount of review and that framework and steps within each review track could be detailed within the interconnection procedures to enable greater process transparency. It would also be helpful for Con Ed to share more information on the type of engineering review currently done to ensure adequate capacity for new load capacity (e.g., load flow



analysis, flicker or other power quality analyses), the assumptions used for EV charger load profiles, and the data required to do these evaluations.

#### IV. Conclusion

IREC commends the Commission and DPS for creating a working group to improve interconnection process transparency and efficiency for EVSE. We look forward to working collaboratively with DPS and other stakeholders to develop new procedures that will benefit utilities and interconnection customers, and help New York achieve its transportation electrification goals.

**From:** [Amber Dorner](#)  
**To:** [Rosi, Lisa \(DPS\)](#); [dps.sm.EVSE](#)  
**Subject:** Comments Re: Queue Management Straw Proposal and EVIIWG - Case 18-E-0138 and Matter 24-00339  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 7, 2024 3:29:06 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi Lisa and DPS Staff,

I am writing on behalf of General Motors LLC (GM) to provide 1) feedback on the Straw Proposal developed by Con Edison and 2) comments on topics for exploration by the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Interconnection Working Group (EVIIWG).

GM is a leader in developing the market for electric vehicles (EV) and is helping to enable the grid benefits of widespread transportation electrification. Automakers – including GM – are investing billions of dollars in EV technologies and charging infrastructure deployment.

The Straw Proposal presents reasonable practices for queue management, however, to realize the widespread charging infrastructure necessary to achieve New York's ambitious zero-emission vehicle targets, the Commission may need to consider further enhancements to speed up the energization process. Continued growth in electrification could lead to an overwhelming volume of service requests. Establishment of target and maximum energization timelines and reporting requirements for utilities, as currently being implemented by the California Public Utilities Commission, could be a positive framework for the state. Lessons could be gathered from the generator interconnection process, moving away from a serial, first-come, first-served process to a first-ready, first-served and/or cluster review approach. Ultimately, the utilities' processes should be streamlined with any proactive planning approach (as contemplated in Case 23-E-0070) as well as any frameworks encouraging deployment of flexible resources (e.g., within Case 24-E-0165).

At the April 4, 2024 EVIIWG meeting, several stakeholders raised questions and concerns around the process for bidirectional EVSE. It was indicated by Con Edison that these service requests must also go through the Standard Interconnection Requirements process for distributed energy resources and that to date, this represents a small minority of projects. GM suggests that the EVIIWG continue to contemplate whether these processes can be harmonized and establish clear and concise requirements on which vehicle-to-x configurations (e.g., vehicle-to-home, vehicle-to-grid) require utility interconnection and which do not. As more bidirectional-capable EVs and equipment come to market, these types of service requests are expected to grow. Proactive process improvement could prevent the need for further refinements in the future.

GM appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Straw Proposal and looks forward to continued engagement within the EVIIWG.

Thank you,  
Amber



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May 8, 2024

Lisa Rosi  
State of New York  
Public Service Commission

**Re: Con Edison Straw Proposal for Streamlined Queue Management, Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Interconnecting Working Group**

Dear Department of Public Service Staff,

EVgo thanks the Staff for the opportunity to submit comments regarding Consolidated Edison Company of New York (“Con Edison”)’s Straw Proposal for Streamlined Queue Management (“Straw Proposal”). EVgo applauds the New York Public Service Commission (PSC)’s support of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations incentives to advance deployment of public charging in New York to achieve the state’s clean transportation goals. EVgo also appreciates Con Edison’s efforts to ensure an efficient process for make-ready applicants.

Founded in 2010, EVgo is one of the nation’s largest public fast charging providers, featuring over 1,000 fast charging locations across more than 35 states, including stations built through EVgo eXtend™, its white label service offering. In New York, EVgo currently owns and operates over 80 fast-charging stalls at more than 30 locations.

EVgo supports many elements of the Straw Proposal, which incorporates many best practices that have enabled successful program implementation and will be critical in achieving increased make-ready targets. EVgo supports the Straw Proposal’s five guiding principles, with particular emphasis on guiding principle #5: transparency. Communication and transparency are key to enabling a positive and flexible applicant experience as projects move through the process.

Below, EVgo provides brief comments that aim to further strengthen the overall Straw Proposal and streamline interconnection applications across the state.

**1.0 Operations Measures**

EVgo has had a positive experience with Con Edison’s incentive eligibility review process. However, it would be beneficial for Con Edison to develop a “plug-and-play” website tool that allows prospective applicants to seamlessly calculate potential incentives based on address and charger count.

To manage the queue, EVgo recommends forming batches based on anticipated energization timeline and available capacity to send applications to the Service Determination team. Specifically, projects that require earlier energization and do not have capacity constraints should be prioritized over projects with long lead times or those that require capacity upgrades.

A cancellation policy for projects should vary case-by-case based on the responsiveness of the site host. Since projects can move forward at varying paces, it is critical to maintain flexibility and avoid creating unnecessary cancellations. If communication is maintained and demonstrates a good faith effort to move the process forward, the projects should remain in good standing. However, once a site host becomes non-responsive, a succession of three warnings via email and/or phone call is sufficient to ensure fairness before cancelling a project.

Regarding data management, EVgo appreciates Con Edison's current project portal, which can aid in robust and transparent record keeping for make-ready projects.

## **2.0 Participant informational tools for pre-engagement, planning, and project management**

EVgo recommends the Joint Utilities create pre-recorded videos to provide an easily accessible resource on the incentive application and interconnection process. Any webinars or workshops also held by the utilities should be broadcast to a larger audience to communicate program requirements and answers to frequently asked questions to more stakeholders.

In the participant portal, additional clarity would be appreciated regarding certain comprehensive steps. For instance, steps such as customer-site construction and utility-side construction could benefit from a notes section to specify what actions/phases are occurring.

## **3.0 Participant communication strategies**

At service determination, EVgo recommends communicating a 3-month time range for estimated completion of utility-side upgrades. This 3-month range will support site hosts' preparation for construction activities, understanding that this range hinges on ideal factors and conditions.

## **4.0 Utility-enterprise alignment**

Service determination is a critical and early part of the process. However, flexibility is required in instances when project scope changes. In these cases, applicants should submit these project scope changes in their applications and provide expeditious notice of these changes through an email, a meeting, and/or the portal. To the extent possible, EVgo recommends maintaining the same application case with any modifications made to the program agreement and other documentation.

In conclusion, EVgo is supportive of many elements of the Straw Proposal and appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback. EVgo looks forward to continued engagement in the working group and welcomes further opportunities to engage on this topic.

Sincerely,

Katelyn Lee

Sr. Associate, Market Development and Public Policy  
[katelyn.lee@evgo.com](mailto:katelyn.lee@evgo.com)

**From:** [kitchenlav](#)  
**To:** [Rosi, Lisa \(DPS\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Weiner, Lindsay \(DPS\)](#)  
**Subject:** EV starts at Walmart Stores  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 2:57:17 AM

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Dear Lisa,

As a family of EV cars, we are well aware of the basic problems that exists in our daily lives with regard to charging stations.

Unlike gas stations that require huge diesel trucks to constantly make the routine driving routes to refill the underground tanks, our society has already built-in infrastructure of Walmart Stores with huge rooftops that can easily be populated with high efficiency Solar Panels.

At least 6 to 8 charging stations per Walmart Store will instantly facilitate the process of EV charging.

People want to do the right thing when it comes to cutting emissions and climate change but just like gas stations that were deemed as necessary in the past, innovative charging solutions need to exist today in order for people to get on-board with EV's.

I can tell you first hand that Public Parks, Shopping Centers, Schools, Public Libraries, Public Parking Lots. These are all places that people use for at least 1/2 to 1 hour a day that will significantly increase the popularity of a cleaner transition to EV ownership.

This investment is essential. It will bring forth the changes to move us away from a pollution complacency lifestyle to a better, cleaner world for us and the new generation of people to follow.

Best regards,

Concerned citizen.



April 29, 2024

**Case 18-E-0138**  
**Matter 24-00339**

Ms. Lisa Rosi  
New York State Public Service Commission  
Empire State Plaza  
Agency Building 3  
Albany, NY 12223-1350

**INITIAL COMMENTS OF THE ALLIANCE FOR TRANSPORTATION ELECTRIFICATION (ATE)**

The New York Public Service Commission (Commission) established Matter 24-00339 in Case No. 18-E-0138 to establish an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Interconnection Working Group (EVIWG). The purpose of the Working Group, as noted on the Commission Web Site is “to identify, discuss, and resolve the technical barriers and challenges associated with the electric vehicle (EV) interconnection process, including queue management and EV-specific standardized interconnection requirements (SIR) in a collaborative, efficient and effective manner.” At the initial meeting of the EVIWG which was held on April 4, 2024, Con Ed presented a Straw Proposal (referred to hereafter as the Strawman) that it has developed to streamline the interconnection process for new commercial EV charging stations. Towards the end of that meeting, Commission staff requested that before the next meeting of the Working Group (May 8, 2024), parties wishing to comment on the Con Edison Strawman should provide those comments to allow the Commission staff to revise the proposal as appropriate. The Alliance for Transportation Electrification (ATE), as a member of the Working Group, is pleased to provide these initial comments on the Con Edison Strawman which we hope will help inform further discussion.

ATE is a 501(c)(6) non-profit corporation established in early 2018 with the goal of promoting policies and regulatory measures to accelerate the pace of EV adoption and infrastructure. We primarily engage with policymakers at the State and local government level to remove barriers to EV adoption and to encourage the acceleration of EV infrastructure deployment with a particular emphasis on open standards and interoperability. We currently have over 60 members that include many electric utilities, auto and bus manufacturers, EV charging and service providers (EVSPs), and related trade associations and non-profit organizations. We take a “big tent” approach to advance the industry and focus not just on accelerating EV charging deployments—which necessarily



requires a strong utility role—but also promoting public accessibility and open standards. We are presently involved in about 30 proceedings in the States before the PSCs, state energy offices, Legislatures, Governors, state DOTs and DEPs, and other agencies.

ATE strongly supports the Strawman developed by Con Edison for use as a framework for interconnection commercial EV charging stations in New York. We believe it has been carefully considered with stakeholder input, and that the recommended process, with both the methods and guiding principles, has demonstrated that it can work in practice. The straw proposal presents four areas for streamlining queue management; operations measures; participant informational tools for pre-engagement, planning, and project management; participant communication strategies, and utility enterprise alignment. Con Edison has also developed five Guiding Principles to be applied to each of the methods for streamlining the process. We believe that these elements, taken together, provide a comprehensive means to achieve interconnection of commercial EV charging stations in an optimal and timely manner.

There are some issues addressed by the Strawman that we believe are critically important to be included in the Commission’s final adopted interconnection process in this Docket. First, we were pleased to see that Con Edison Strawman pays attention to the steps that can be taken by the customer and utility before any formal application is filed, which Con Edison refers to as “pre-engagement, planning, and project management.” These steps include fleet advisory services, including assistance in site selection<sup>1</sup>, building self-service tools, improving application logic, developing a participant portal and publishing a flow diagram of the process. The ATE has published a paper on the pre-engagement process that also describes some of the best practices from several other jurisdictions for the necessary consultations in the pre-filing process.<sup>2</sup>

Second, we support the batching process of similar projects as a means of increasing the efficiency of review. Third, we believe that using utility- and participant-initiated temporary pauses, putting projects “on hold,” in the service determination queue management system will allow for unexpected delays that may be out of the control of either party without having to move the customer to the back of the line. It is vital, in our view, to keep the overall interconnection alive and moving forward as unexpected obstacles or challenges may arise, which are usually outside of the control of the utility. We believe the other “Innovations” listed on pp. 5-6 of the Strawman are all good ideas worth pursuing.

There are some cautions that we have as well. During the first EVIIMG meeting on April 8, several participants raised the issue of V2G/V2X and whether the proposed Strawman would cover V2G applications or whether it could. The Con Edison presenter suggested that it was not their intent to change the process for V2G/V2X which requires a two-prong process – one for the battery generation under the generalized SIR (Standard Interconnection Requirements) process and a separate application for the EV charging load, although both could be combined in a single study

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<sup>1</sup> The ATE has published a White Paper on Fleet Advisory Services providing several case studies which may be of interest to Commission staff. The paper, entitled “Fleet Advisory Services (FAS) for Fleet Electrification: Meet Customer Needs and Provide Grid Benefits” is available on our web site at <https://evtransportationalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/PRESS-ATE-EC-White-Paper.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> See “Energizing EV Charging Stations: Issue Brief 3 in a Series: The Pre-Planning Process” at <https://evtransportationalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/FINAL-Interconnection-Issue-Brief3.pdf>

after consultation with the customer. Con Edison suggested that while such applications are a very small proportion of their total requests (perhaps less than 5 percent), they are willing to work with the applicants on a case-by-case basis.

We do not believe that it would be advisable to open this phase of the working group's activity to incorporate V2G/V2X in the initial interconnection process to be developed. It may be that the SIR process could be amended to add standards and guidelines surrounding V2G/V2X applications. Given that V2G/V2X is such a small percentage of the applications across the State, brings in many complicated factors, and we are still gaining an understanding of how it will work, it is premature to commit to a process at this time. Rather, we suggest that V2G/V2X issues be considered in the future as a separate working group activity. There is no question that these technologies are advancing and that various firms in the EV ecosystem are advancing new technologies and concepts in the market. ATE has a VGI Task Force that is examining many of these issues as well, but we all need more time before reaching conclusions on interconnection issues.

A participant also raised the question of whether there are prescribed time limits within the process. Con Edison responded that they try to match customer needs as much as possible but there is no kept clock. We urge the Commission staff not to propose requiring rigid timelines within the process (such as average or median timelines that could be enforced). Delays can and do occur – most of which are beyond the control of the utility. The utility has no incentive or desire to unnecessarily delay the connection of new loads, but sometimes it can't be helped. Supply chain problems and issues, for example, are usually beyond the control of the parties and may result in delays.<sup>3</sup> Problems with obtaining easements from easement holders, or governmental permits from Authorities Having Jurisdiction can also cause delays. And sometimes there are delays in the customer providing needed information to the utility. The Strawman's proposal to allow pauses in the interconnection process should help mitigate the pain of unexpected delays. But placing strict or rigid time limits on the overall process is not a viable option, in our view. Instead, Commission policy should recognize that a more holistic approach, including a whole of government approach with state and local governments, is necessary to achieve the desired outcome.

Finally, we think it is critical to provide some flexibility to the utilities in ultimately adopting an interconnection process. Utilities will have different levels of resources available to conduct the process and the Commission may need to consider making more resources available to utilities that are not currently sufficiently funded through the State incentive budgets. Upstate and downstate utilities have different needs and resources. In our work with other jurisdictions, we have found that the resources in the utility dedicated to transportation electrification issues will affect the level of pre-engagement services that utilities can offer and their ability to offer fleet advisory services to all customers. Size thresholds, for example, may be needed for some utilities. The Commission may want to approve additional resources to allow utilities to bring on third-party

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<sup>3</sup> ATE examined the issue of supply chain delays and some best practices to mitigate them in another Issues Brief entitled "Energizing EV Charging Stations: Supply Chain Delays and Utility Best Practices" at [https://evtransportationalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Interconnection\\_Issue\\_Brief\\_2.pdf](https://evtransportationalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Interconnection_Issue_Brief_2.pdf)

support or additional staff to enable the level of customer engagement suggested by the straw proposal.

We thank Commission staff for the ability to provide input on the Con Edison Strawman and for conducting this workshop process. We believe that by thoughtfully seeking stakeholder input and incorporating areas of consensus, a much better and useful interconnection process will result. The adoption of EVs by New York consumers and businesses is highly dependent on their confidence in public and fleet charging availability. Therefore, we believe that streamlining the process by which these stations are sited, approved, and energized will help in meeting the State's goals for a cleaner and more efficient transportation system.

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Date: April 25, 2024

Lisa Rosi  
New York State Department of Public Service  
Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Interconnection Working Group

**Re: Case 18-E-0138 – Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment and Infrastructure**

**Matter 24-00339 – In the matter of EV Infrastructure Interconnection Working Group**

To the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Interconnection Working Group:

Environmental Defense Fund (“EDF”) respectfully submits these informal comments in advance of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Interconnection Working Group’s (“EVIIWG”) meeting on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024. EDF is broadly supportive of the *Straw Proposal for Streamlined Queue Management in Electric Vehicle Make-Ready Program and other Programs* (“Straw Proposal”) filed by Con Edison in the Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment and Infrastructure.<sup>1</sup> Timely interconnection of electric vehicle (“EV”) chargers is critical for facilitating the electrification of light-, medium-, and heavy-duty vehicles in New York, and proactively identifying and implementing best practices in utilities’ interconnection queue management processes can help keep shorten these timelines and avoid the need for waitlists.

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<sup>1</sup> Case 18-E-0138, *Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment and Infrastructure*, Straw Proposal for Streamlined Queue Management in Electric Vehicle Make-Ready Program and other Programs (Mar. 15, 2024) [hereinafter “Straw Proposal”].

In fact, the goal of providing timely interconnection should not only be to speed interconnection of those projects already in or expected to join the interconnection queue, but to streamline the process so much so that it encourages the development of projects that otherwise would not have happened. None of the utilities are currently on track to meet the plug targets of the Commission's make-ready program, and renewed efforts are needed throughout the EV charger deployment process to get back on track.<sup>2</sup> This work is not likely to get easier, as many of the charging sites with easy-to-access grid capacity have already been developed, and the remaining capacity is in growing demand from a variety of end uses, not just transportation.<sup>3</sup> Given this, it is crucial that the utilities implement the improvements necessary to wring every bit of efficiency from the EV charger interconnection process.

At this stage, EDF has two specific recommendations for modifications to the Straw Proposal for consideration by the EVIIWG: inclusion of flexible and hybrid interconnections, and inclusion of negative financial incentives. We discuss each of these further below.

### **Flexible and Hybrid Interconnection**

The EVIIWG should consider interconnection processes that can get chargers in operation faster by accounting for the actual charging behavior of customers and conditions on the distribution grid. Flexible interconnection does this by allowing charging customers to access at least a portion of the grid capacity they requested if they agree to some level of flexibility in their electric demands and reduce or avoid charging during period of grid constraints.<sup>4</sup> These agreements can also allow customers to ramp up their charging and other loads over time as the utility completes upgrades that remove the existing grid constraints.<sup>5</sup> The form of the agreement and the technological and operational solutions employed could vary based on the needs and capabilities of both the customer and the utility as well as the particular grid constraints at issue. Hybrid interconnection integrates, or at least coordinates, the interconnection process for new

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<sup>2</sup> Joint Utilities of New York, *EV Make-Ready Program*, <https://jointutilitiesofny.org/ev/make-ready>.

<sup>3</sup> See Case 18-E-0138, *Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment and Infrastructure*, EV Make-ready Program (MRP) Midpoint Review Technical Conference, Joint Utilities of New York (Nov. 18, 2022), <https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={27C00B88-3EC5-41B5-8C22-AE7F9F0BA4A2}> (finding that utility-side make-ready costs for projects in the make-ready program have risen over time as the need for utility-side upgrades increases).

<sup>4</sup> Casey Horan, *Flexible interconnection can optimize the grid and speed deployment of charging infrastructure* Environmental Defense Fund (Jan 30, 2024), <https://blogs.edf.org/energyexchange/2024/01/30/flexible-interconnection-can-optimize-the-grid-and-speed-deployment-of-charging-infrastructure/>.

<sup>5</sup> Casey Horan, *Ramped connection can help states sustainably scale the grid to meet charging needs*, Environmental Defense Fund (Mar. 7, 2024) <https://blogs.edf.org/energyexchange/2024/03/07/ramped-connection-can-help-states-sustainably-scale-the-grid-to-meet-charging-needs/>.

loads and new generating resources.<sup>6</sup> This allows developers to install chargers alongside other distributed energy resources such as solar and battery storage—which can be important tools for mitigating grid impacts and charging costs—without needing to go through separate interconnection processes. Given the Commission’s prior innovative work on interconnection and tariffs for customers with non-traditional demand profiles, such as the standby and buyback service rates,<sup>7</sup> the EVIIWG is well-positioned to identify which specific variations of flexible and hybrid interconnection agreements are viable and beneficial in New York and ready for near- and medium-term deployment.

Implementing these measures in the near-term would allow the utilities to get ahead of future challenges as charging station load grows. New York has already seen the size of typical public charging stations grow above what was envisioned in the original make-ready order,<sup>8</sup> and the expected growth in electrification of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles (“MHDVs”) over the coming years is likely to result in an increasing number of charging sites with meaningful grid impacts.<sup>9</sup> Allowing a charging station, whether publicly accessible or for a private fleet, to enter service with partial capacity rather than waiting months or years for full capacity can be the difference in achieving financial viability for a project.

New York’s utilities would not be the first to consider such practices. Southern California Edison (“SCE”), facing some of the largest load growth projections from electric MHDVs in the country,<sup>10</sup> has already implemented flexible interconnections through its Load Control

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<sup>6</sup> Casey Horan, *Solutions for timely interconnection to speed the transition to electric trucks* (Jan 10, 2024), <https://blogs.edf.org/energyexchange/2024/01/10/solutions-for-timely-interconnection-to-speed-the-transition-to-electric-trucks/>.

<sup>7</sup> Case 15-E-0751, *In the Matter of the Value of Distributed Energy Resources*, Order Establishing Net Metering Successor Tariff, at 18 (Jan. 13, 2020) (identifying the newly created standby rate as “most likely to benefit customers with multiple DER technologies, such as solar PV coupled with energy storage and electric vehicle charging.”).

<sup>8</sup> Case 18-E-0138, *Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment and Infrastructure*, Petition of Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. to Modify its EV Make-Ready Program to Improve Service to Disadvantaged Communities and Development of Fast Chargers, at 11-16 (Feb. 11, 2022), <https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={F0025FEA-DF08-4066-8AC0-FA5B93FC9A66}>.

<sup>9</sup> See Case 23-E-0064, *Proceeding on Motion of the Commission to Address Barriers to Medium- and Heavy-Duty Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure*, EV Proactive Planning Studies Technical Conference Presentation of National Grid and Consolidated Edison (Nov. 2, 2023), <https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={D014A58B-0000-C635-BB67-63DF8C34A7FF}>.

<sup>10</sup> Pierre-Louis Ragon et al., International Council on Clean Transportation, *Near-Term Infrastructure Deployment to Support Zero-Emission Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicles in the United States*, at 14 (May 2023), <https://theicct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/infrastructure-deployment-mhdv-may23.pdf>.

Management System pilot.<sup>11</sup> As SCE explains, the pilot is meant to support customers “that must wait to receive service connection until needed grid capacity upgrades are complete by providing them the option to receive service based on currently available capacity. SCE argues this could minimize energization delays and maximize available grid capacity.”<sup>12</sup> By building on the work of SCE and others in this space, New York can proactively avoid interconnection delays and support the interconnection of large charging customers including both public stations and fleet depots, supporting the achievement of New York’s climate and clean transportation goals.

Recommended additions to the Straw Proposal:

- Under “Innovations” EDF recommends adding an additional recommendation “**1.2.5 – Implement flexible interconnection processes under which the utility establishes partial service to customers while completing system upgrades.**”
- Under “Innovations” EDF recommends adding an additional recommendation “**1.2.6 – Coordinate between the EV charger interconnection process and the Standardized Interconnection Requirements (SIR) process for generating resources to streamline the interconnection process for EV charging projects installing hybrid resources.**”

Earnings Adjustment Mechanisms

EDF agrees with the Straw Proposal that the utilities should be encouraged to innovate and collaborate to identify tools and techniques to improve the EV charger interconnection process, and that financial incentives in the form of earnings adjustment mechanisms (“EAMs”) support this.<sup>13</sup> We caution, however, that EAMs consisting solely of upside incentives can limit the Commission’s effectiveness in influencing utility behavior, and the EVIIWG should also discuss the potential of downside incentives in the EV interconnection context. At a time when EV charging is expected to drive load growth and additional distribution system investments,<sup>14</sup> the utilities already have an incentive to support faster interconnection of these projects, and additional positive EAMs may result in additional ratepayer costs that do not necessarily drive corresponding changes to utility behavior. Rather than simply driving a “compliance mindset,”<sup>15</sup> establishing

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<sup>11</sup> Southern California Edison, Advice Letter 5128-E and 5138-E-A, *Establishment of Southern California Edison Company’s Customer-Side, Third Party Owned, Automated Load Control Management Systems Pilot* (Jan 16, 2023), <https://www.sce.com/regulatory/advice-letters/approved> (select “electric”).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.* at 1.

<sup>13</sup> Straw Proposal at 10.

<sup>14</sup> See NYSERDA, *Transportation Electrification Distribution System Impact Study*, at ES-1 (May 2022), <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/-/media/Project/Nyserda/Files/Publications/Research/Transportation/22-13-Transportation-Electrification-Distribution-System-Impact-Study.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Straw Proposal at 10.

minimum requirements paired with both upside and downside incentives can support innovation while also ensuring that the utilities are held accountable when they fail to meet their obligations to provide timely service to customers.

While the Commission has not approved downside EAMs since 2012,<sup>16</sup> several factors support, at minimum, further discussion of the topic in the EVIIWG. This includes the substantially different context since their last use (energy efficiency) and the EV charger interconnection process at issue here, the length of time since their last robust consideration in New York, and the current use of downside incentives in several other jurisdictions.<sup>17</sup> The EVIIWG should explore whether and how different incentives, both upside and downside, could work to drive both innovative practices and baseline expectations in order to keep charger interconnection timelines at a minimum and ensure all customers are receiving adequate service.

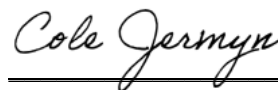
Recommended modification to the Straw Proposal

- Under “Utility-enterprise alignment,” EDF recommends modifying recommendation 4.3 to read “**Positive performance incentives drive innovation, enterprise alignment, and commitment, along with transparency; and negative performance incentives can penalize failure to implement best practices and/or meet reasonable performance thresholds.**”

**Conclusion**

EDF thanks the Commission and the EVIIWG coordinators for the opportunity to provide these comments, and thanks Con Edison for developing its straw proposal to kick off the important work of the EVIIWG.

Respectfully submitted,



Cole Jermyn

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<sup>16</sup> See Case 07-M-0548, Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding an Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard, Order Establishing Utility Financial Incentives, at 5 (Mar. 22, 2012), <https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={93BC3B51-B317-461C-876E-0ED5962DBBA9}>.

<sup>17</sup> See RMI, PIMs Database, <https://pims.rmi.org/>.