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Proceeding name: BCUC Regulation of Electric Vehicle Charging Service Inquiry

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party: Yes, Interested Party

Name (first and last): Ian D Brown

City: Victoria

Province: British Columbia

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone number: [REDACTED]

Comment:

I am writing because I have been driving a Nissan Leaf for almost three years and I think my experience is relevant to your inquiry. The biggest deterrent to my driving my Leaf more is lack of DCFC stations. For local driving in Greater Victoria the range is entirely adequate but a trip to Lake Cowichan, for example, is fraught and I don't yet dare a trip to Nanaimo. I believe that this range anxiety is a huge deterrent to what would otherwise be a much wider spread uptake of electric vehicles in B.C. The Leaf is a lovely car to drive, superior to all the ICE vehicles I have driven over the last 60 years and I recommend it to everyone I know. Before I respond to your questions I have some comments about costs. Some of your correspondents have claimed that purchase costs of EVs are in the \$100,000 range. This is far from the truth. My Leaf cost \$20,000, admittedly second hand. But there is a whole range available now below \$50000. Again some correspondents have claimed a level 2 charging station to be about \$10000. My friend and neighbour purchase one and had it installed for \$1500. I see prices for a DCFC station mentioned up to \$100,000. I have seen much lower prices than that, as low as \$50,000. So I recommend that before you make any decisions that might depend on these capital costs, that you do your own research into costs and use those figures. These vehicles are not a rich man's vehicle and will become very popular as soon as the charging stations (DCFC) become more frequent on the highways. I specify DCFC because it is the rare driver who will spend 4 or 5 hours waiting for a charge. 1.Are charging stations a natural monopoly? No they are not, no more so than gas stations. However, at this stage of the market, the few EVs on the road discourage private investment in charging stations and the few charging stations discourage the acquisition of EVs. So, for government policy of increasing EV use to combat global warming, it might be very worthwhile for a monopoly like BCHydro to create a base network of DCFC stations. Once more EVs are on the road I would assume it would become attractive for private entrepreneurs to operate many stations for profit. I would presume BCHydro would divest itself of its stations at that point to avoid conflict of interest. I think BCUC could help this all along by regulating what Hydro can charge what will become electric retailers in order to encourage them, not force them out of the market. 2.Are we captive or do we have a choice? At the moment there is virtually no

choice, certainly not for any distance travel. Drivers are either captive or abandoned totally. No service between Kamloops and Prince George or between Whistler and Kamloops. I will not take my Leaf to my cabin near Pemberton because the nearest fast charger is an hour away in Whistler. A level 2 charger requires too long a wait, though there are two of these in Pemberton. 3. I don't see much need for regulating private, non-utility charging any more than you might regulate gas stations. I count on the market making available the boon of charging by standard credit or debit card just like thousands of parking meters and parking lots do and I count on competitive prices making the market efficient. If DCFC stations need to be regulated in some way, make regulation as light as possible in order to not discourage private sales. I also expect that private chargers will sell by the KWH and impose a steep penalty on those who simply park at the charger, either after charging or without charging. 4. The only charge that seems fair is by energy amounts. That said, any charging station will need some time limits, so that freeloaders and those who are all charged up don't block the station from others who need it. 5. I still trust the market to provide the fairest rates, but the BCUC needs to regulate what Hydro charges retailers, presumably at the cheapest rates that recoups the costs. I would presume "costs" do not include local costs particular to a charging station but merely the costs as for all residential and businesses. It might be useful to the BC Government, in its drive to check global warming as soon and as much as possible, to have ICE vehicle drivers grumpy about subsidizing EVs. They can be encouraged to switch to EV. 6. Ultimately public utilities should not sell charging to EVs. In the beginning, as I have suggested, the BC Government might ask the utilities to do so, to accelerate checking of global warming. Then the rates must be under close supervision of the BCUC. 7. Cross subsidization might be useful in the beginning but it should be explicit and transparent and temporary. The BCUC might recommend a saturation level at which subsidization and direct sales but utilities should cease, perhaps a level where the major highways of BC have just enough coverage for EVs to be sure of getting a charge when needed.