



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item  
Meeting of December 8, 2012

### SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

**DATE:** December 7, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Award of New Taxicab Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity to existing and/or proposed new taxicab companies to permit operation in Arlington County.

**DISCUSSION:**

On December 6, 2012, Mr. Hans Hess, the owner of enviroCAB, wrote to County Board Member Jay Fisette to express his concerns about the proposal to issue a Taxicab Certificate of Convenience and Public Necessity ("Certificate") to EV Taxicabs, LLC. Mr. Hess expressed his support for innovation in electric vehicles (EVs) but is concerned that EV Taxicabs' application could bias the electric-charging infrastructure to one format of equipment and hinder the future introduction of other formats such as that used by the Tesla brand's electric vehicles. Mr. Hess believes that a Tesla vehicle, scheduled to be introduced in 2015, will be a superior vehicle to the Nissan Leaf due to its greater battery capacity and travel range. Mr. Hess does not believe that the Leaf can serve as a viable taxicab due to its travel range limitations.

County staff has the following response to Mr. Hess's concern. The fast-charge option by Nissan and its partners is the only practical "standard" today because it is the only such product currently available. Charging technology is very dynamic and competitive. Several competing designs and "standards" are emerging, so in addition to competition in the market, some electrical equipment companies are already doing engineering design to make competing systems compatible (universal). County staff does not intend to name a winner in that competition, but rather only intends to allow the competition to begin in the market and to provide an impetus for wide-spread electric vehicle use.

The electric chargers that EV Taxicabs is proposing to install in the next year will be paid for through private funding and placed on privately owned land, yet made available for use by the general public. Most EVs currently operating in Arlington and the Metropolitan Washington region will be able to use those chargers. The Tesla fast chargers that Mr. Hess prefers are not planned to be introduced until 2015 and then may only work for Tesla vehicles and not the majority of EVs then operating. The EV Taxicabs proposal has chosen Nissan for its business

County Manager:

County Attorney:

BRC

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Staff: Richard Viola, DES, Transportation Planning Bureau  
John Morrill, DES, Energy and Sustainability Office

operation. There is no current proposal to install Tesla chargers for either the taxi fleet or the general public in Arlington.

A number of EV taxi fleets are in service around the world. Most of those companies, such as the Dutch Taxi-e company, are operating fleets of Nissan Leafs. Although Mr. Hess has had some problems with the one Leaf vehicle that he is piloting, in other cities the Leaf is working well. Staff believes that electric vehicles are viable today and early adopters like EV Taxicabs are essential to overcoming perceptions that they are not viable.