

TOP TEN ACTIONS COMMISSIONS CAN TAKE TO ENABLE AFFORDABILITY THROUGH FLEXIBILITY

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Load Growth in the United States and the Role of Electric Vehicles

Electricity demand is increasing due to growth from data centers, manufacturing, transportation electrification, and other uses. By midcentury, transportation is expected to overtake data centers as load requiring electricity. Fortunately, transportation electrification is the most flexible type of demand contributing to load growth because charging can occur at different times and locations across a wide range of vehicle types.

Additionally, electric vehicle (EV) adoption is increasingly becoming more predictable. Because EV charging can be shifted to periods when the grid has spare capacity, it can improve load factors and reduce the need for the highest cost grid infrastructure investments, even while other loads are growing.

NARUC CPI EV Workshop: How Electric Vehicles Can Support Load Growth and Affordability

During the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) **2026 Winter Policy Summit**, the NARUC Center for Partnerships & Innovation (CPI) hosted a workshop addressing this projected increase in transportation electrification and identified actions state utility commissions can take to enable affordability through flexibility.

The objectives of the workshop included identifying opportunities and barriers to the increased use of EVs as flexible resources, highlighting real world examples of utilizing EVs for flexibility, and developing key takeaways informed by participant discussions. The workshop format consisted of three panels on commercial vehicles, residential fleets, and inclusion of all customers, each followed by participant table discussions.

The U.S. Department of Energy and the Smart Electric Power Alliance also provided support. Find the [full agenda](#) and [presentations](#) on [NARUC's website](#).



Participants at the 2026 NARUC Winter Policy Summit EV Workshop.

Workshop Takeaways

Nearly 100 participants from state utility commissions, the electric and transportation industries, non-profit organizations, and academia attended the workshop and joined in robust table discussions that led to the development of a top ten list of commission actions that could enable affordability through flexibility:

Top five actions participants recommended that state utility commissions support for **commercial fleets**:

1. Opt-out time-of-use rates for commercial fleet customers with high onpeak/offpeak price differentials, streamlined approval, and study of future dynamic pricing

2. Dynamic flexible service connections through expedited pilots with rate integration that lowers economic barriers coupled with approval of proactive utility infrastructure investments

3. Enhanced integrated distribution system planning to understand the value of grid services from EVs

4. Increased education on existing studies and pilots of flexibility with collaboration and outreach to fleet stakeholders to better understand fleet charging opportunities

5. A fleet tariff that accelerates fleet electrification, maximizes the benefits of load flexibility, and provides incentives for assured load mitigation strategies alongside innovative interconnection policies

Top five actions participants recommended that state utility commissions support for **residential vehicles**:

1. Increased customer enrollment in managed charging by linking customer EV incentives and creating opt-out programs where possible, using targeted tariffs and dynamic pricing that treat EVs as grid assets to compensate customers, sharing customer response data to varying incentive levels and program designs to improve uptake, and offering higher incentives for low- and moderate-income customers

2. Implementation of utility incentives and cost recovery mechanisms that encourage utilities to boost customer enrollment in managed charging, for example by tying utility performance incentive mechanisms to customer participation and creation of tariffs and benefit-cost frameworks that recognize EVs as grid assets

3. Enhanced grid planning that collects and prioritizes grid utilization metrics, engages stakeholders, and shares customer response data to different incentive levels and program designs to optimize residential participation in flexibility programs

4. Smoother interconnection processes and requirements for residential vehicle chargers, particularly two-way chargers.

5. Updated utility billing systems.

The NARUC EV State Working Group will continue to host monthly meetings addressing the topics listed above and providing an outlet for commissioners and commission staff to discuss opportunities for flexibility to assist with affordability in their states.

You can find all previous presentations and meetings recordings on the [NARUC Electric Vehicles webpage](#). If you are a commissioner or commission staff interested in joining the EV State Working Group, please reach out to Margerie Snider at msnider@naruc.org.

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