Opening statement to the Joint Committee on Transport - Opportunities and Challenges facing the EV Charging Infrastructure. Wednesday, 25th November.

Good morning, Cathaoirleach and members. Thank you for your invitation to address the committee today on the opportunities and challenges facing the EV Charging Infrastructure. My name is Matthew Sealy and I am the Chairperson of the Irish Electric Vehicle Association (IEVA). I am joined today by Thomas McGuire, our Secretary and Treasurer of the Association.

IEVA was originally formed in 2015, and has spent its time representing EV owners across Ireland as an advocacy group promoting EV adoption, where we learn, educate and provide data on where we stand through this modal shift in our transport. We represent a community of enthusiasts, drivers, owners, past, present and future, with 50,000 members / followers across platforms. The governance of IEVA consists of up to 11 elected members, of which up to 5 are officers and the balance comprising the committee. We are registered CLG, acting in a not-for-profit capacity with both Thomas and I as the current sitting Directors.

Current EV Adoption opportunities

As an Association we have tracked the growth of EVs over the years. From SIMI, 2008 was the first year of recorded EV sales with 6 vehicles, leading to this year where 'Electric' is now the number 1 fuel type for new passenger vehicle sales, with over 1-in-4 registered passenger vehicles this year being fully electric, meaning we are in the Early Majority stages of EV adoption, and thankfully the current trajectory is maintaining its positive direction. This has come about through consumer demand, & we must acknowledge years of work by the government to incentivise new vehicle sales, EV charge points grants and motor tax & VRT changes as some examples of where this has been enabled. As of our July mid-year data summary, there were 154,865 BEVs & 126,418 PHEVs on our roads.

Looking at the charging network, we have made significant steps forward over the past few years with our High Power DC Charging network. 2025 saw a 43% increase in CCS connectors, going from 1,039 to 1,487 connectors, and as Nov 18th, this has increased by another 39% to 2,070 connectors. CHAdeMO and Type 2 (AC charging) have both seen an increase, but not to the same growth levels as CCS. Looking ahead, V2X & dynamic pricing will only add to the net benefits of EV adoption across our grid, with mass 'storage on wheels' becoming part of a robust grid network, with consumer demand extremely strong in this regard from a large majority of our engagements with the general public.

ZEVI has outlined its strategy for the past few years (National EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2026-2028 being the current revision), and we have been delighted to have contributed to this over the years. We welcome the latest as to the next step forward for where the charging network will grow. The growth in our DC charging network has been the focus for the past few years, and to date it is still just about meeting the requirements of users on our networks. We are moving in the right direction to support EV adoption, with ZEVI's En-route charging schemes

Phase 1-3, Sports Clubs, eSPSV, ZEHDV, & ICE2EV schemes all supporting this positive trajectory. Many of which are items we would have asked for in our Pre-Budget submissions.

Challenges facing EV Charging Infrastructure

While there are many positives, significant challenges remain. Ireland's rural population has an advantage in EV adoption because many households have off-street parking and can install home chargers, but doubts remain over range & lower disposable incomes. In towns and cities, however, this is less common. Enabling safe cross-pavement charging is therefore critical and could affect around 30% of Irish households. Solutions already used elsewhere in Europe face several barriers in Ireland, including Private Wires legislation, planning exemptions and the lack of clear national guidance on acceptable installations. We have already identified around 110 planning applications relating to creating off-street parking, gullies, charging arms and similar solutions.

The National EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy has correctly prioritised DC charging, but several barriers continue to slow deployment:

- Grid connections: Ireland remains among the slowest countries in Europe for energising sites, adding around 12 months and potentially extending projects to three years from planning to completion.
- Planning and accessibility: Planning exemptions need updating to accommodate lighting, CCTV, canopies and cable-assistance systems & increased number of chargers thus reducing site development times & to help new sites to meet ZEVI's Universal Design Guidelines, many of which existing ones do not meet the standards of.
- Reliability: Communications, authentication and vehicle-charger handshakes remain inconsistent. Drivers need confidence that plugging in will result in a successful charge every time.
- Cable theft: Theft has become a significant issue during 2026. Charging infrastructure should be recognised and protected as critical infrastructure, with stronger prevention and enforcement.
- Energy costs: Public charging costs can now exceed equivalent petrol / diesel costs, & disproportionately impact those with a high dependency, notably those without home charging. Electrification should not be disadvantaged through taxation, infrastructure costs or insufficient protection of charging assets or inability to install a charger at one's home.

Looking ahead, AC charging will become increasingly important alongside our DC fast charging network. Expansion of our DC network is still needed on routes such as the Wild Atlantic Way, but EVs spend much of their time parked. Destination and residential charging can use that time effectively, provided infrastructure is widely available, affordable and accessible. V2X can further strengthen the electricity system and should be viewed as an opportunity rather than simply a cost.

Education and consistency across local authorities will also be important. The good work by ZEVI and others is not always reflected in local understanding or implementation, and we need to move beyond repeated pilots and towards widespread deployment.

Finally, while passenger BEV sales are reaching record levels, commercial vehicles remain well behind. As of July, electric LCVs represented 4.81% of new registrations, while electric HCVs accounted for just 0.13%, with four vehicles registered. Electric buses reached 9.05%, with 39 registrations. Passenger incentives should therefore remain stable for at least the next three years, while stronger measures are needed for commercial vehicles, which remain below 50% of their 2025 targets, and as such will require significant work over the coming years to meet our 2030 targets.

In closing, the transition is achievable and we remain confident Ireland can reach a predominantly electric fleet. The priority now is to accelerate delivery, remove unnecessary barriers and address the more difficult edge cases as adoption grows. At IEVA, we aim to do all that we can to help to make this a successful future for Ireland in this space.

Thank you very much.