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July 11, 2022



Governor Edwards signs law urging regulators to create competitive market for electric vehicle charging

- Transparent pricing, free-market competition and private investment are key to expanding the state's electric vehicle (EV) charging network, and a new law urges regulators to set a clear rate for the sale of electricity for EV charging -

Louisiana has emerged as a nation-wide leader in encouraging private investment in the electric vehicle (EV) charging marketplace with the passage of Senate Bill 460, which Gov. John Bel Edwards recently signed into law.

The bill, sponsored by Sen. Rick Ward (R- Baton Rouge), passed the Louisiana House by a vote of 93-0 and the Senate by a vote of 36-1, sending a decisive message to Louisiana's Public Service Commission (LPSC) to establish a consistent rate for the resale of electricity for EV charging in order to "promote rapid development of a statewide electric vehicle charging network."

"It's going to become increasingly important to have rapid charging stations from Shreveport to Baton Rouge, from Monroe to Lafayette, from Houma to New Orleans and all points in between as the electric vehicle fleet grows," Ward said. "Until now the only companies that could sell electricity in Louisiana are the power utilities. This law is designed so that the PSC, in conjunction with the companies it regulates, can establish a standard for the future."

To date, EV charging has largely been controlled by the power industry, and the cost of building and operating EV charging stations gets shouldered by electric company customers in the form of higher monthly power bills. Private retailers have no such advantage. Without an EV charging rate structure, retailers are also subject to monthly charges from the utility that can eliminate the possibility of profitably selling power for EV charging.

With this new law and the anticipated action of the LPSC, private retailers will be able to competitively enter the market. Rather than asking utility ratepayers to subsidize EV charging networks, these companies are ready, willing and able to put their own money at risk in what should become a thriving and competitive market.

"The legislature and Governor have endorsed the idea of a competitive market for EV charging, and once the LPSC follows suit, private retailers will jump into the EV charging market in Louisiana," said Jay Smith, executive director of Charge Ahead Partnership, a coalition of businesses, associations and individuals that share the common goal of efficiently and effectively developing a charging network for electric vehicles across the United States. "Today's retailers are ready to serve Louisiana drivers – whether they need gasoline, diesel or electricity."

Transparent pricing structures and stable electricity costs are the first steps to establishing an economic environment where free market competition can thrive with many EV charging providers. A strong and expansive retail market for EV charging will solve the range anxiety issue that prevents so many people today from buying an EV. When recharging your EV is as easy as filling your tank with gas, more and more Louisianans will transition to an EV with confidence.

This law also lays the groundwork to free up funds for other vital infrastructure projects in the future. When a thriving private market exists for EV charging, there will be far less need for taxpayer funds and power bill customers to carry the fiscal cost of developing the network.

“This is an exciting time for current – and future – EV drivers in Louisiana. We are eager to see the LPSC provide the final piece in establishing an EV charging rate and the level playing field need to grow the EV charging network across the state,” said Smith “When public utilities have sole control over EV charging, retailers cannot confidently step into the marketplace, and the charging network that Louisiana needs will never develop.”

The law also urges the PSC to amend regulations that define anyone reselling electricity as a public utility. Louisiana is one of only four states in the U.S. that regulates entities selling electricity to recharge EVs as a public utility.

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*To learn more about **Charge Ahead Partnership (CAP)** and join our efforts to help expand America's EV charging network please visit www.chargeaheadpartnership.com. In addition to joining CAP you can stay connected with us by following us on social media on Twitter at [@EV_ChargeAhead](https://twitter.com/EV_ChargeAhead), Facebook at [@ChargeAheadPartnership](https://www.facebook.com/ChargeAheadPartnership) and on Instagram at [@EVChargeAhead](https://www.instagram.com/EVChargeAhead).*