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## **Electric vehicle charging advocacy group condemns Xcel plan to build EV charging network using ratepayer funds**

***The utility's plan to use \$145 million in ratepayer funds to build an electric vehicle charging business would result in higher bills for Coloradans and fewer options for EV drivers.***

Charge Ahead Partnership condemned a plan by Xcel Energy to use \$145 million in ratepayer funds to build a utility-owned electric vehicle (EV) charging network in Colorado.

Charge Ahead Partnership, a coalition of businesses, organizations and individuals working to expand access to the EV charging market, said utility-led takeovers of the EV charging marketplace discourage competition and unfairly burden business and residential consumers with paying for the utility's charging network.

"This proposal hurts Coloradans. Everyone, including people who don't own an EV will pay higher power bills," said Executive Director Jay Smith. "And EV drivers will have fewer options, as very few EV charging operators will open up shop in Colorado if a state-backed monopoly is allowed to unfairly compete by using ratepayer funds to build an EV charging business."

Xcel announced its intention to use ratepayer funds to build, own and operate EV charging stations in the state in its "2024-26 Transportation Electrification Plan," which the company filed last week as part of a requirement to file the plan every three years.

The plan calls for using more than \$145 million in ratepayer funds to allow the utility company to build, own and operate 460 high-speed EV chargers. The company would use these sites to sell electricity to EV drivers.

Xcel is in the midst of a similar plan in Minnesota, where the utility filed a request last year to use \$197 million in ratepayer funds to build, own and operate more than 700 high-speed EV chargers throughout the state. The Minnesota plan has attracted strong opposition from consumer advocacy groups and pro-business organizations.

Private retailers, including gas stations, grocery stores, truck stops and convenience stores are hesitant to invest in EV charging in states where the public utilities are allowed to force ratepayers to pay for utility-owned EV charging businesses.

"Proposals like this are anti-competitive. The fuel retailers that already line the nation's interstates are ideal candidates to offer EV charging in the future, with the locations, amenities and experience to provide this service," said Ray Huff, president of HJB Convenience Corp, a Lakewood-based convenience store operator. "But Xcel is trying to sideline these businesses."

This proposal is out of step with other states, Smith said. In California, the Public Utilities Commission announced a \$1 billion rebate program last year for third-party entities offering EV charging. Utilities in California are ineligible for these funds, commissioners said, because of the impact on ratepayers.

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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](http://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).