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## **Gov. Stitt signs legislation establishing Oklahoma as the nation's leader in creating a free market for electric vehicle (EV) charging**

***Anticipating growth in electric EV popularity in the coming years, Oklahoma lawmakers pass legislation to allow a private marketplace for EV charging to develop.***

OKLAHOMA CITY – Charge Ahead Partnership applauds Oklahoma lawmakers for passing Senate Bill 502, which established the necessary reforms to allow the electric vehicle (EV) charging marketplace to grow into a competitive industry. Oklahoma now has a free and open marketplace for EV charging, marking a major victory for businesses seeking to offer EV charging to their customers.

“Oklahoma’s lawmakers saw that the EV charging marketplace was in desperate need of reform if private businesses ever want to offer EV charging,” said Jay Smith, executive director of Charge Ahead Partnership, a coalition of businesses, organizations and individuals working to expand access to the EV charging marketplace. “We appreciate the hard work that Sen. Chuck Hall and Rep. Kyle Hilbert put into advancing these policies, and we are confident that this legislation will serve as a model for the rest of the country as policymakers consider how to attract private investment into this growing field.”

Oklahoma’s existing fuel retailers, grocery stores and convenience stores are best equipped to offer EV charging in the future, with the locations, amenities and experience necessary to satisfy customer expectations. However, these businesses could not confidently invest in EV charging because of the threat of being undercut by an electric utility.

Electric utilities all over the country have been raising rates on electric customers to subsidize the cost of utility-owned EV charging stations. This practice creates higher power bills for consumers and discourages private business investment, drawing criticism from consumer advocacy organizations and pro-free market business groups.

SB 502 limits all electricity providers from using ratepayer funds to subsidize EV charging stations.

Oklahoma’s electric utilities can still own EV charging stations under this legislation, but only through a separate entity, not funded by ratepayers. The bill ensures that all EV charging providers have access to the same rates, terms and conditions.

The legislation was sponsored by Sen. Chuck Hall and championed in the House by Rep. Kyle Hilbert.

“This legislation will allow the EV charging marketplace to grow and thrive, incentivizing competition and investment,” said Senator Hall. “Rather than raising power bills on all Oklahomans to subsidize utility-owned chargers, we are allowing the free market to develop. Not only will this protect consumers on

their monthly power bill, it also provides businesses with an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of this new emerging industry.”

“We recognize that the number of EVs on our roadways will increase, and we want to ensure that businesses seeking to serve these drivers do not face unfair competition,” said Representative Hilbert. “This legislation protects utility ratepayers’ pocketbooks while also inviting the commercial investment that this marketplace needs in order to grow.”

“The retailers that already line Oklahoma’s highways are perfectly situated to offer EV charging to the next generation of drivers,” said Candace McGinnis, executive director of the Oklahoma Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association. “This legislation ensures that these businesses can invest in the new technology without having to fear being undercut by the electric 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](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).*