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The EV charging marketplace dodges a bullet in Minnesota, as Xcel withdraws \$197 million plan

Facing public backlash and scrutiny from regulators, Xcel has withdrawn a request to use ratepayer revenue to build more than 700 electric vehicle charging stations.

MINNEAPOLIS – Xcel Energy has withdrawn a controversial request to use \$197 million in ratepayer funds to build, own and operate more than 700 electric vehicle charging stations throughout Minnesota, news that was welcomed by Charge Ahead Partnership.

“Xcel was trying to take over Minnesota’s EV charging marketplace, which would have reduced infrastructure and service while raising prices on Minnesotans,” said Charge Ahead Partnership Executive Director Jay Smith. “Thankfully, there has been enough public pushback and scrutiny from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission that Xcel was forced to back down and withdraw this outlandish request.”

The utility filed a motion to withdraw its “Clean Transportation Portfolio” on June 1, shortly after the PUC approved a smaller three-year rate increase than Xcel had been requesting.

Charge Ahead Partnership is a coalition of businesses, associations and individuals working to expand access to the EV charging marketplace by advocating for free market policies. The organization had testified against Xcel’s proposal, joining with consumer advocates and pro-business groups. Minnesota residents also filed written opposition to the utility’s proposal.

“This is a win for Minnesotans. Xcel’s attempt to extend their monopoly into the EV charging marketplace would have burdened all Xcel customers with higher power bills and discouraged private investment in EV charging,” Smith said.

Many private businesses, including retailers, gas stations and convenience stores are eager to offer EV charging services because they already have the locations and amenities that customers desire. However, they cannot confidently invest in EV charging if they are forced to compete against a powerful state-sanctioned monopoly.

Minnesota lawmakers, however, have set the table for similar requests in the future. In May, the legislature passed HF 2310. This legislation includes a provision that utilities must submit Transportation Electrification Plans every three years, which can include utility-owned EV charging stations. In Colorado, Xcel just announced a plan to use \$145 million in ratepayer funds to build chargers, pointing to the state’s Transportation Electrification Plan requirement as justification.

“Xcel knows that they are out of step with Minnesotans. That is why they pushed for legislation that requires them to file Transportation Electrification Plans, but they should expect similar backlash if they come back with a similar request next year,” Smith said. “Minnesota needs a long-term solution to the threat that Xcel poses to the growth of the EV charging marketplace. Other states, including California, have limited the role that utilities can play in owning and operating EV charging stations, and Minnesota should do likewise.”

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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://facebook.com/ChargeAheadPartnership) and on Instagram at [@EVChargeAhead](https://instagram.com/EVChargeAhead).*