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As state touts growing EV charging incentives, coalition urges lawmakers to end the utility-ownership option

Private businesses are eager to invest in Ohio's EV charging marketplace, but the threat posed by utilities owning chargers has slowed the development of a statewide charging network.

COLUMBUS – Charge Ahead Partnership, representing more than 200 businesses and retailers seeking to invest in electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, applauds Ohio state officials for spurring the development of a statewide EV charging network by directing \$18 million in federal EV charging assistance to businesses serving customers along the state's highways. The organization urged lawmakers to quickly implement additional policies that would ensure an open and free marketplace for the sale of EV charging for the long-term, including prohibiting public utilities from using ratepayer funds to own EV charging stations.

The \$18 million in National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) funding is intended to encourage sustained investment in this emerging marketplace, and Ohio awarded the funds to operations with the facilities, amenities and experience necessary to serve Ohio's EV drivers for the long term.

While Ohio is effectively deploying federal funding to attract private investment, policies remain in place that discourage entrepreneurs and investors from venturing into this growing marketplace, and Charge Ahead Partnership urges policymakers to establish a level playing field in the state to encourage greater private investment.

In Ohio, public utilities are allowed to build EV charging stations and pass along the cost to their ratepayers, creating significant concern for any private investor considering building EV charging stations in Ohio.

"Federal funding is a nice boost to help the state's EV charging network grow, but what this marketplace desperately needs is private investment," said Charge Ahead Partnership Executive Director Jay Smith. "Unfortunately, in Ohio the power companies could build their own charging stations and pass along the costs to captive ratepayers. Private EV charging businesses are eager to invest, but they know they could be put out of business by the power company."

Ohio lawmakers considered legislation this year that would have prohibited utility ownership of EV charging stations, except through separate, unregulated subsidiaries. Similar legislation passed this year in Georgia, Texas and Oklahoma.

"\$18 million is a drop in the bucket when you consider how much money it is going to take for the Buckeye State to have the EV charging network that it needs," said Smith. "The need for private investment is huge, and we hope lawmakers give private investors the reassurance they need by eliminating the possibility of a utility using ratepayer funds to directly compete with the private market."

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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).*