

SUPPORT PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN EV CHARGING (S. 275)

Dear Members of the South Carolina General Assembly:

Our companies and associations write in **strong support of S. 275** sponsored by Sen. Larry Grooms. It is essential that South Carolina build a reliable, convenient and customer-driven electric vehicle (EV) fast charging market that is based upon fairness and a competitive, level playing field. The most efficient and effective way to build out this market is by embracing private investment and the inherent competition and innovation that comes with it. Several of the undersigned businesses are those who want to be a part of this expanding market. Many own and operate fuel outlets and convenience stores in South Carolina, each serving a vital role in their communities.

As South Carolina continues to attract billions of dollars in investments from EV manufacturing companies, it is essential that the state enact public policy that prepares South Carolina for increased amounts of EVs on state roads and highways. Passing S. 275 will break down major barriers to private investment, which is needed to build out an EV fast charging network that will best meet the needs of drivers throughout South Carolina.

This legislation allows for free market competition and improved pricing transparency by:

- **Preventing electric utilities from using ratepayer funds to cover the costs of constructing, owning and operating publicly available EV chargers; and**
- **Establishing a level playing field by setting a standard set of rules and rates for all EV charging competitors, including utilities that provide EV chargers.**

Private businesses are ready and willing to build EV charging stations, but they are hesitant to make the considerable investment that fast charging infrastructure requires due to the prospect of competing with electric utilities, which have the ability to invest in EV charging stations using ratepayer dollars. This affords utilities a competitive edge over private businesses that do not have access to this type of risk-free capital. Additionally, electric utilities typically do not bill themselves the same rates for electricity for their own charging stations that they bill for charging stations owned by private businesses.

This bill would prevent electric utilities from using ratepayer funds to compete in the EV charging market and require them to abide by the same rates, terms, and conditions that they offer to private EV charging providers. This will level the playing field and empower private entities to invest in this emerging market.

Successful passage of S. 275 will ensure that South Carolina's EV charging market develops in a competitive manner. Additionally, it will send an extraordinary signal to many of the industries below that it is safe to invest in EV fast charging stations in the state of South Carolina.

Charge Ahead Partnership