

ENERGY, TRANSPORTION, AND ENVIRONMENT (ETE)

Resolution ETE-23-17

AFFORDABLE ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND INSTALLATION OF CHARGING STATIONS IN RURAL, LOW-INCOME, AND UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS, while electric vehicle use is growing rapidly in wealthy communities, minority and low-income neighborhoods are being left behind;

WHEREAS, the need is greater for low-income and underserved communities, as these residents often lack the ability to charge electric vehicles where they live, thus making the demand higher in these communities, rather than those with single family homes;

WHEREAS, in the case of cell phones, electricity, cable television, and broadband internet—new technologies, such as electric vehicles and electric vehicle charging stations, leave low-income consumers and rural communities behind;

WHEREAS, when the internet started to become the dominant form of communication, rural areas and low-income communities were left behind, creating the digital divide that is still haunting unserved and underserved communities, such is the case with electric vehicle charging stations;

WHEREAS, long-range new electric vehicles are relatively expensive, making it more difficult for low-income drivers to afford;

WHEREAS, the Federal Bureau of Labor statistics show that lower-income people often have farther to travel to access jobs and run errands, thus creating another challenge for lower-income and rural drivers;

WHEREAS, residents in low-income areas unable to participate in the electric vehicle market and who do not have accessible charging stations, progress weakens, denying equitable participation in the economy of the future;

WHEREAS, maps of electric vehicle charging stations in the United States demonstrate large areas of empty spaces (known as “charging deserts”) coincide with Black and Latino neighborhoods;

WHEREAS, electric vehicle “charging deserts” exist in neighborhoods that are made up of predominantly low-income minorities, which have long experienced a lack of social, technological, and economic investment;

WHEREAS, electric companies are investing more than \$3.4 billion to deploy charging infrastructure and accelerate electric transportation, including more than \$770 million dedicated to underserved communities;

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WHEREAS, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act includes up to \$7.5 billion for the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, with a goal of more than 500,000 new chargers in place by 2030, a fourfold increase from the current number;

WHEREAS, the Inflation Reduction Act contained numerous tax incentives and rebates to aid in electric vehicle deployment;

WHEREAS, studies estimate that more than 100,000 electric vehicle fast charging ports will be needed to support the nearly 22 million electric vehicles projected to be on U.S. roads in 2030;

WHEREAS, electric vehicles represent a significant advance in automotive technology, with the potential to save thousands of dollars a year in running costs, without affordable electric vehicles for low-income, underserved, and rural drivers, and a higher concentration of chargers than currently exists in rural areas, these consumers will be left behind; and

WHEREAS, the Biden-Harris Administration created the Justice40 Initiative which aims to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of federal investments in climate and clean energy, including sustainable transportation, to disadvantaged communities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOVED that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) encourages efforts to make electric cars more affordable and to bring more charging stations to underserved and unserved areas to avoid leaving low-income consumers further behind wealthier communities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NBCSL urges that adequate funding from the Infrastructure and Jobs Act be used on the installation of new chargers equitably throughout rural, low-income, and underserved communities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NBCSL urges that programs and provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act be targeted to underserved communities to ensure that these provisions are taken advantage of in historically disadvantaged communities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

Resolution ID: ETE-23-17

Sponsored by: Rep. Barbara Ballard (KS)

Policy Committee: Energy, Transportation, and Environment (ETE)