

Testimony in Support of HB 2317
Oklahoma State Representative Scott Fetgatter (R-District 16)
February 25, 2021
House Taxation Committee

Chair Smith and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I write in support of HB 2317 as a fiscally conservative Republican representing Okmulgee, Oklahoma, a typical rural district. Economic development is a priority for me and for my constituents.

Okmulgee's proximity to interstate highways gives our downtown community of small businesses - too often ignored - an opportunity to capture out-of-state drivers, and Oklahoma drivers, if only we can pull them into town. High-speed EV charging stations provide a unique and innovative solution. EV drivers who want to charge very quickly and continue down the highway have that option. But many EV drivers prefer to eat lunch, purchase goods, and visit local attractions, while their vehicle charges for 30-45 minutes. Hosting a charging station creates a destination, and with it a kind of tourism effect.

To bring this vision to reality, I co-sponsored legislation – similar to HB 2317 – extending an alternative fuels tax credit. It passed overwhelmingly with bipartisan support because of the myriad benefits a network brings to a state: new business investment, job creation, and increases in tax revenue and in GDP. This credit will more than pay for itself over time.

Oklahomans seem genuinely excited by the arrival of the Ford E-150 next year. GM and virtually every other carmaker is spending billions and billions of dollars on the manufacturing of electric vehicles.

Traveling internationally with a state delegation, I have witnessed the global evolution of the automotive industry, away from internal combustion engine vehicles and toward EVs.

Given this imminent and transformational change, the best policy, as I see it, is to provide public infrastructure for the benefit of consumers and of the state, rather than to ignore it or wish it away. Infrastructure investment will provide a direct incentive for manufacturers - and other companies in the automotive industry supply chain - to do business in our state. Manufacturers will not sell EVs in states which lack public charging infrastructure.

Last December, one startup EV company, Lordstown, parked a prototype truck just outside of the Oklahoma State Capitol to showcase what we all will soon be seeing on our roads. And after

the demonstration, I met with a team from Lordstown to pitch Okmulgee, Oklahoma as a great place to do business.

I encourage Kansas and other states across our region to join in this effort to create a comprehensive regional network of EV chargers.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

(405) 557-7373

scott.fetgatter@okhouse.gov