

March 25, 2025

To: Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee  
From: Kim Okafor, General Manager of Zero Emission Solutions, -- Love's Travel Stops  
RE: SB 106

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member DeMora, and Members of the Senate Public Utilities Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 106. My name is Kim Okafor and I am the General Manager of Zero Emission Solutions for the Love's Family of Companies. At Love's we believe the best way to rollout Ohio's electric vehicle (EV) charging network is by encouraging private investment and the free market competition and innovation that comes with it. As a conventional fuel retailer, we want to be a partner in the expansion of the EV charging market to create affordable and convenient charging opportunities for all Ohioans. As a private company with 25 stores located along Ohio's major interstates and highways, we believe Love's and other fuel retailers are uniquely positioned to be on the forefront of the EV charging rollout.

With more consumers purchasing electric vehicles, a reliable, convenient EV charging market is imperative to meet the emerging needs and expectations of Ohio's EV drivers. SB 106 preserves a level playing field for private investment in EV charging infrastructure. As it currently stands, there is nothing to prevent Ohio's electric distribution utilities (EDUs) from leveraging their regulated monopoly power to compete unfairly with the private sector through "rate-basing" the EV chargers and making all electric ratepayers' foot the bill. No private sector company can compete with a competitor that has access to that sort of "free capital" and can operate with a guaranteed rate of return as EDUs do.

An additional issue that this bill would address is the need for a level playing field in terms of electricity rates for EV charging stations. The legislation would ensure that charging stations owned by EDUs would operate under the same rates, terms and conditions offered to private providers of EV charging stations. This approach will ensure that all owners and operators of publicly accessible fast charging stations operate with the same competitive risks and access to electricity rates on a level playing field.

Ohio has the opportunity to pass this legislation and become a nationwide leader in EV charging policy. We believe that encouraging private investment and replicating the current consumer fueling experience best positions Ohio to meet the future EV charging needs in the state.

We urge you to support SB 106.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Okafor", written in a cursive style.

Kim Okafor  
General Manager of Zero Emission Solutions  
Loves Family of Companies