

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

Written Proponent Testimony: Senate Bill 307 Electric Vehicle Incentives

Good morning, Chair McColley, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, I am Rebecca Mellino, Policy Associate for The Nature Conservancy in Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony as a proponent of SB 307.

The Nature Conservancy is a global organization with chapters in all 50 states and projects in over 70 countries. We are a non-partisan, science-based organization that seeks to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. We work collaboratively with businesses, farmers, sportsmen groups, governments, and local communities to develop pragmatic solutions to conservation challenges, including land conservation, water quality, and climate change. More than 65,000 Ohioans are Nature Conservancy supporters, and we own and manage over 20,000 acres of nature preserves throughout the state.

JobsOhio estimates that the state of Ohio has over 108,000 jobs in the automotive industry. Automakers have pledged to invest \$330 billion globally by 2025 to shift to EV production and are making their siting decisions for those manufacturing upgrades now. Ohio is uniquely positioned to take advantage of these investments because it is one of just a handful of states that already has major auto production facilities. SB 307 sends a clear message of support to the industry that Ohio is committed not only to building the production capacity and workforce for Electric Vehicles, but also to the charging and infrastructure for personal use which is an essential step in the right direction. While electric and plug in hybrid electric vehicles tend to be more expensive up front, they are less costly over the life of the vehicle due to fuel and maintenance differences so the commitments in SB 307 will help Ohioans to afford these EVs. With the workforce development and factory retooling investment commitment in SB 307, Ohio could experience significant economic growth if auto manufacturers choose Ohio for their investments.

The Nature Conservancy's mission is to protect the lands and waters on which all life depends. We are fortunate in Ohio to have abundant fresh water and natural resources that help our economy thrive. To protect those resources that Ohioans love, we need to reduce our carbon emissions to minimize the worst impacts of climate change. In the US, transportation represents the largest portion of GHG emissions, and moving toward electric vehicles is one important step we can take to reduce the impacts. Over the lifetime of an electric vehicle vs a gas engine vehicle, EVs, on average, have 1/3 the carbon footprint even when including the production of the battery, and accounting for the energy going into the grid. According to the US Energy Information Administration, in 2019, 24.6% of Ohio's energy consumption was from

transportation. This essential and growing sector is a significant contributor to carbon emissions, and we must move towards low carbon options. If Ohio is open to EV development and deployment, our environment and economy will benefit from the investments. Not only does the overall production of EV's have a smaller carbon footprint, but since EVs do not have tailpipe emissions, the benefits of cleaner air stay in the areas where EVs are driven.

The large-scale shift needed to reduce carbon emissions in the transportation sector will also require long-term, large-scale planning and Ohioans have repeatedly shown themselves to be up to this challenge. Not only will manufacturing training and facility capacity need to increase but charging infrastructure planning will be necessary. Provisions in the bill require the creation of a task force to evaluate existing EV charging infrastructure and develop a plan for universal access; they will work with local governments to support EV adoption and evaluate improvements needed to the electric utility grid to support growing demand for EVs. For adoption of electric vehicles to be mainstream so that our cities will see less air pollution, Ohioans want to be sure that they can travel anywhere in the state and beyond without being stranded without a charging facility, and establishment of the task force will help facilitate just that. State-wide planning that assesses trends and travel patterns is the best way to ensure that widespread EV adoption is possible in Ohio. Provisions in the bill to establish a state task force and electrification plan for the state are essential to manage this growth.

TNC considers numerous factors when determining our position on various legislation, policies, and programs. We know that the environmental benefits of transitioning to a lower carbon future matter to Ohioans and that economic factors are critical as well. Senate Bill 307 is a win for Ohio's environment and economy and that is why we urge your support for this bill. Thank you for your time and we are glad to answer any questions you may have and look forward to engaging with all of you.