



**TECHNET**  
THE VOICE OF THE  
INNOVATION ECONOMY

April 22, 2016

## **Technology Industry Calls for “Open and Competitive” Electric Vehicle Charging Market in California**

*Seek meeting with California Governor Jerry Brown to ensure that California develops EV charging as platform for innovation, rather than simple utility service, to support development of autonomous vehicles, drones, and other innovative technologies*

*Sacramento*—Comparing electric vehicle (EV) charging to the “early stages” of the Internet, six major technology industry associations wrote to California Governor Jerry Brown (D) and asked him to promote competition and innovation in the electric vehicle charging market and ensure that EV charging becomes a “platform for innovation.” The effort was organized by TechNet and joined by NetChoice, CALinnovates, ACT | The App Association, Tech Freedom, and the Electric Vehicle Charging Association (EVCA).

In the letter, the organizations write: **“As your administration prepares to deliver on its agenda, including its 2016 ZEV Action Plan, we propose a meeting to discuss the importance of these issues at your earliest convenience. California needs to view charging infrastructure as a platform for innovation rather than a simple utility service to be provided. We need a technologically flexible system that can be leveraged by the autonomous automobiles, drones, and multitudes of unimaginable innovations that will define the future of Silicon Valley, California, and the world.”**

California leads our nation in electric vehicles and EV charging infrastructure, and more than 430,000 Californians work in advanced energy jobs. Last week, the California Energy Commission approved a \$9 million grant for the installation of EV charging stations along highways in the state, which will connect California with the West Coast Electric Highway already being developed in Oregon and Washington.

The California Public Utilities Commission has already approved two major pilot programs (one in Los Angeles, another in San Diego) to expand EV charging in the state. Now the Commission is considering a revised proposal from PG&E to deploy 7,600 chargers across the northern part of the state. Yet, [significant concerns](#) have been raised about PG&E’s effort to control EV charging in Northern California.

In the letter, the organizations questioned “utility monopoly models,” such as PG&E’s, that could dramatically slow innovation: **“Companies around the world are rolling out the wireless and automatic charging technologies necessary to facilitate autonomous cars. Under a utility monopoly model those technologies may take another 5 to 10 years to be approved and deployed.”**

Text of the letter follows.

Governor Brown,

As your administration begins delivering on its ambitious clean energy commitments, we urge you as a matter of policy to promote competition and innovation throughout the industry, particularly in the deployment of Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) charging infrastructure. This infrastructure is more than just a “gas station” for the modern age; it’s a platform for innovation and the kinds of transformative technology that will define the future of California and the world.

California is a global leader in the transition to the clean energy economy. Not only did you outline one of the most ambitious policy agendas in the world at COP 21, but California’s innovators are driving the technology that will make it possible. Today, more than 430,000 Californians work in advanced energy jobs and California companies attracted more clean tech venture capital than the European Union, the United Kingdom, and China combined.

As part of that transition, we are on the cusp of revolutionizing our nation’s entire transportation infrastructure to the benefit of consumers and the environment. The opportunities are immense and the deployment of cutting edge charging stations will be critical to the endeavor – every bit as important as high-speed internet has been to the information revolution.

We applaud the effort to engage investor-owned utilities to speed up the deployment of California’s charging infrastructure. They have the resources and experience necessary to be critical partners in the growth of the overall charging ecosystem. But, we should take the lessons learned from the evolution of the internet and apply them at these early stages to ensure we get the structure right from the beginning.

The most important lesson is the need for an open and competitive charging infrastructure that promotes innovation. It has proven impossible for technologists, let alone governments and utilities, to predict the future of innovation with any real clarity. Therefore, long term infrastructure investments like those being reviewed by the California Public Utility Commission must be built with an eye toward flexibility and the opportunity to evolve quickly to meet the needs of future technologies.

For example, the current infrastructure is being built for personal electric vehicles that are owned and operated by individuals. Yet, in just a few years, it will need to support a growing number of autonomous electric vehicles of all shapes and sizes. Companies around the world are rolling out the wireless and automatic charging technologies necessary to facilitate autonomous cars. Under a utility monopoly model those technologies may take another 5 to 10 years to be approved and deployed. Additionally, this infrastructure could be leveraged by the many companies working to develop and deploy fleets of electric drones for delivering packages, ensure the safety of critical infrastructure, and more.

In many networked industries, innovators and regulators were forced to try and fix the regulatory model after the fact. In this case, we have the opportunity to get the model right from the beginning.

Thankfully, the approach Southern California Edison has taken with its "Charge Ready" program provides the right model for the future. It sets the standard for incentivizing the installation of charging infrastructure while allowing competition and innovation to thrive in the equipment and networks built on top. It promotes customer choice and customer ownership of the charging equipment that is installed. This approach ensures that the utility won't become a curb on innovation or an undue limitation on how the platform may be used in the future. Unfortunately, other utilities are proposing old-school monopoly approaches that will create a bottleneck on innovation.

As your administration prepares to deliver on its agenda, including its 2016 ZEV Action Plan, we propose a meeting to discuss the importance of these issues at your earliest convenience.

California needs to view charging infrastructure as a platform for innovation rather than a simple utility service to be provided. We need a technologically flexible system that can be leveraged by the autonomous automobiles, drones, and multitudes of unimaginable innovations that will define the future of Silicon Valley, California, and the world.

Sincerely,

Linda Moore  
President & CEO  
**TechNet**

Steve DelBianco  
Executive Director  
**NetChoice**

Mike Montgomery  
President  
**CALinnovates**

Berin Szoka  
President  
**TechFreedom**

Damon Conklin  
**EVCA**

Morgan Reed  
Executive Director  
**ACT | The App Association**

**About TechNet**

*TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives that promotes the growth of the innovation economy by advocating a targeted policy agenda at the federal and 50-state level. TechNet's diverse membership includes dynamic startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents more than 2.5 million employees in the fields of information technology, e-commerce, advanced energy, biotechnology, venture capital, and finance. TechNet has offices in Washington, D.C., Silicon Valley, San Francisco, Sacramento, Austin, Boston, Seattle, Albany, and Tallahassee.*

###