

Oregon Gov. encourages passage of electric vehicle bills

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Electric Vehicle Bills Help Transition to Zero-Emission Cars, Attract Business PORTLAND, Ore. — Governor Ted Kulongoski on Wednesday test drove an electric vehicle made by Think, a Norwegian car maker looking to site a new manufacturing and technical center in North America. The test drive, the second this week, is evidence that car makers have taken notice of two bills before the Legislature to encourage the manufacture and sales of electric vehicles in Oregon. —Think is another company the state has attracted because of our commitment to establish and grow the electric vehicle market —“ wins for our economy and our environment,” Governor Kulongoski said. —“Through a combination of environmental ethic and strategic tax credits, Oregon today leads the nation in per capita ownership of hybrid vehicles. By continuing this economic strategy, I believe that Oregon will also be known one day as the state with the largest per capita ownership of zero-emissions vehicles.” Oregon is one of several states Think is considering as a location for a new manufacturing and technical center. To compete more effectively for these jobs or other electric vehicle business opportunities, the Governor urged action on two proposals before the legislature this session. One would make electric vehicle manufacturing facilities eligible for the Business Energy Tax Credit and the other would transition the hybrid tax credit to one that encourages the purchase of zero-emission vehicles. —“My vision has always been for Oregonians to be able to drive from Astoria to Ontario and from Portland to Ashland emission free. With Think, the Legislature now has the opportunity to take that vision one step further: families could be making that drive in an emission-free vehicle manufactured in Oregon by Oregonians,” the Governor said. Joining the Governor during the test drive was Richard Canny, CEO of Think North America, who came to Oregon to introduce Think’s electric vehicle and announce the company’s interest in Oregon. —“We are very encouraged by Governor Kulongoski’s commitment to transitioning to zero-emission vehicles and particularly, the interest in making Oregon home to electric vehicle manufacturing and sales,” Mr. Canny said. —“We believe Oregon could be a really good place for Think to do business.” The planned manufacturing facility will initially employ about 290 workers with a starting capacity of 16,000 cars per year. The technical center will provide jobs for another 70 engineers and electric drive specialists. Plans ultimately call for up to 900 employees and a capacity of 60,000 electric vehicles per year. The Governor added, —“Whether it’s Think or another electric car company, the proposals before the legislature aim to attract good jobs, and support our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by transitioning to the next generation of vehicles.” This week’s events follow the Governor’s business mission to Asia last November where he met with Nissan, Toyota and BYD to encourage the companies to use Oregon as a test market, manufacturing site or a port-of-entry for electric vehicles.

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