Feds putting the kibosh on national EV charging program

“There is no legal basis for funds that have been apportioned to states to build projects being ‘decertified’ based on policy,” says Andrew Rogers, a former deputy administrator and chief counsel of the Federal Highway Administration.

The US DOT did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

It’s unclear how the DOT’s order will affect charging stations that are under construction. In the letter, FHWA officials write that “no new obligations may occur,” suggesting states may not sign new contracts with businesses even if those states have been allocated federal funding. The letter also says “reimbursement of existing obligations will be allowed” as the program goes through a review process, suggesting states may be allowed to pay back businesses that have already provided services.

Billions in federal funding have already been disbursed under the program. Money has gone to both red and blue states. Top funding recipients last year included Florida, New York, Texas, Georgia, and Ohio.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk has spent the last few weeks at the head of the federal so-called Department of Government Efficiency directing “audits” and cuts to federal spending. But his electric automobile company has been a recipient of $31 million in awards from the NEVI program, according to a database maintained by transportation officials, accounting for 6 percent of the money awarded so far.

The Trump administration has said that it plans to target electric vehicles and EV-related programs. An executive order signed by Trump on his first day in office purported to eliminate “the EV mandate,” though such a federal policy never existed.

NEVI projects have taken longer to get off the ground than other charging station construction because the federal government was deliberate in allocating funding to companies with track records, that could prove they could build or operate charging stations, says Ryan McKinnon, a spokesperson for Charge Ahead Partnership, a group of businesses and organizations that work in electric vehicle charging. If NEVI funding isn’t disbursed, “the businesses that have spent time or money investing in this program will be hurt,” he says.

This story originally appeared on wired.com.

https://arstechnica.com/uncategorized/2025/02/feds-putting-the-kibosh-on-national-ev-charging-program/