

Electric car chargers to link Reno-LV

By Riley Snyder and Michelle Rindels, AP

CARSON CITY – Hoping to attract millennials and eco-conscious tourists to rural parts of Nevada, Gov. Brian Sandoval is announcing a plan to install electric car charging stations at regular intervals on the lonely stretch of road between Las Vegas and Reno.

Sandoval and officials from NV Energy held a media conference Tuesday at an electric car charging station in Carson City to discuss the so-called “Electric Highway.”

Officials plan to partner with five different businesses along U.S. Route 95 and install three chargers at each of them by the end of the year. Sandoval said the project will give drivers the confidence to complete the 450-mile journey in their short-range electric cars, and help rural economies when drivers stop in small towns for an hour or more while they wait for their batteries to power up.

“This is a big deal for us to be able to invite visitors who are going to be using this type of transportation,” he said, “and the moment they cross that state line, to have that complete confidence that no matter where they are in our great state, they’ll be able to charge their vehicles.”

Officials also said that electric car manufacturer Tesla is planning to install more chargers in the state.

NV Energy head Paul Caudill acknowledged that electric cars make up a minuscule percentage of cars on Nevada roads – they account for 0.39 percent of new car registrations here – but said investing in clean energy would pay off down the line.

“Electric vehicle usage and penetration in Nevada today is relatively small, but with the governor’s leadership, adoption of this form of transportation is assured a bright spot in our energy future,” he said.

Las Vegas and Reno currently have about 150 charging stations shared between the state’s 1,400 registered electric cars. Drivers will be able to use the new stations for free.

Money for the project will come from NV Energy and Nevada’s renewable energy tax abatements program, but not from the state general fund.