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Commissioner Bob Rolfe Receives Thomas B. Ballard Advanced Energy Leadership Award

Commissioner Rolfe's leadership enabled an electric vehicle supply chain boom in Tennessee

Media Contact: Gerald Witt, gerald@piper-communications.com

KNOXVILLE, TN, March 25, 2021 — Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Bob Rolfe received the 2021 Thomas B. Ballard Advanced Energy Leadership Award on Thursday. The annual award honors exemplary leadership and success in championing, connecting, and strengthening Tennessee's advanced energy economy.

"Today I'm humbled, I'm honored and most grateful to receive the Tom Ballard Advanced Energy Leadership Award," Rolfe said Thursday during the Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council's annual meeting.

Rolfe was selected for the award due to the instrumental role he's played in bringing jobs in advanced energy to the state, particularly in electric vehicle manufacturing. Rolfe has spearheaded the goal of making Tennessee the top state in the country for electric vehicle manufacturing, as well as speaking and meeting with automotive manufacturers across the country to attract them here.

"Tennessee leads the way in the automotive evolution when it comes to EV manufacturing," Rolfe said. "And I think about our most recent announcement working with General Motors to invest \$2 billion in Spring Hill to create their first OEM electric vehicle platform for their Cadillac Lyriq. And then I think back two short years ago when Volkswagen made their commitment and announced an \$800 million commitment to hire another 1,000 people so they could build their U.S. OEM platform for EVs. And then lastly, our friends at Nissan - they have built the Leaf for many years now, and today there are about 500,000 Leafs on the road."

TAEBEC champions the state's advanced energy economy as an economic development and job creation strategy through sharing information, connecting stakeholders, and strengthening the industry. Cortney Piper, executive director of TAEBEC, presented the award to Rolfe during the virtual meeting.

"Bob Rolfe has been a tremendous partner to TAEBEC and the state's impressive electric vehicle supply chain," Piper said. "He is essential to making Tennessee a national leader in EV manufacturing and the advanced energy workforce. We're excited for continued growth in advanced energy with the leadership from Commissioner Rolfe and all the efforts by TAEBEC members and partners across the state."

About the Tom Ballard Award: The award, named for Tom Ballard, celebrates leadership, education, mentoring and advocacy in Tennessee's advanced energy economy. Ballard was TAEBEC's first president upon its launch in 2014 and served on the board of directors until 2019. The Thomas B. Ballard Advanced Energy Leadership Award is an annual award, with winners named at TAEBEC's annual meeting.

In 2019, TAEBEC bestowed the first-ever Thomas B. Ballard Advanced Energy Leadership Award to Ballard himself, during TAEBEC's annual meeting at Schneider Electric's Nashville Hub. In 2020, TAEBEC awarded Dan Hurst, CEO and Founder of Knoxville-based Strata-G, with the Thomas B. Ballard Advanced Energy Leadership Award.

About TAEBEC: The Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council fosters the growth of the state's advanced energy technologies, companies, and jobs by educating public officials, the business community and other strategic partners about the value and job creation potential of Tennessee's advanced energy assets. TAEBEC is a 501(c) (3) organization.

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