

# Road Beat: Bludgeoning of your right to choose

By Larry Weitzman

One aspect of being an American is the right to choose and that right is in serious jeopardy. In other parts of the world, there is no protection from government intervention in your life as provided by the United States Constitution which limits and delineates the power of government. No other country in the world has these protections as evidenced by recent edicts, mandates and fiats issued by the governments of China, Norway, Netherlands, France, Britain and soon by Germany. Within the next eight-23 years, it is those governments' intention to ban the sale of cars with internal combustion engines, which has been the motive force of over 99 percent of all automobiles since about 1910.



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But you had to know some knucklehead, pandering and controlling legislator would soon follow suit in California. And it is in the form of a left wing assemblyman named Phil Ting, from of all places, San Francisco. It is the same guy who tried to subsidize Tesla in his recent Assembly Bill 1184, which we can thank the heavens for its demise in the California Senate. It was essentially a \$3 billion giveaway to rich people that would pay to each buyer of a Tesla about \$25,000-\$30,000 in the form of a rebate, no matter their

income. Great, the average annual income of Tesla buyer is \$320K. A \$3 billion wealth transfer from the poor and middle class to the rich (former President Barack Obama said anyone making more than \$250K annually is rich).

Democrat Ting said on Sep. 29 that he vowed to introduce legislation that would ban the sales of new cars with internal combustion engines by 2040, saying, "California is used to being first, but we are trying to catch up to this." This is like being first to jump off a high cliff. Sometimes it is better to be last or in this case maybe never or at least not until a safe way down is developed. When government gets involved in dictating to the private sector of what to manufacture, it by classic definition called fascism. Look it up, instead, I'll save you the trouble: Fascism /'fæʃɪzəm/ is a form of radical authoritarian nationalism, characterized by dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition, and control of industry and commerce, that came to prominence in early 20th-century Europe. Does this definition make Ting a fascist?

If EVs were so great and demanded by the public, there would be plenty of different models from many different manufacturers for sale. That is how the free market works. But there aren't. What EVs that are for sale are because of government edicts and regulations. They simply don't sell. Even Tesla, who brought to market the Model 3, is having claimed problems in production, building only 260 cars between July and September when it said it would build more than 1,500 cars for the same period and be producing 5,000 cars a week by the end of this year. Model 3 is a losing proposition. You can't lose money on every car you sell and make it up in volume. The Model S is proof of that as they are losing about \$15,000 on every Model S they sell. Just look at their financial statements. Teslas total losses even with government subsidies for the last five years now total \$2.4 Billion through the second quarter of 2017. Third quarter losses have

been projected to grow by about another \$330 million.

Perhaps the intended purpose of Ting is to take away the public's freedom of personal transportation and the freedom of travel. EVs have limited ranges and their refueling time is long and arduous. So even if their range is 200 miles, your radius of operation is about 100 miles. Yes, there are such things as superchargers which can give you an alleged 80 percent in half an hour, but battery life becomes questionable and who wants to stop two times for half an hour or more when going from Placerville to Los Angeles. I have made that trip several times in a conventional car and it is nonstop with absolutely no range anxiety. And refueling takes just three minutes or less. EVs will severely limit our mobility.

Second is the cost of EVs. Sure, Chevy sells a \$36,000 Bolt, but it costs them a reported \$52,000 a copy to manufacture. A base Tesla Model 3 will cost about the same to manufacture. The real sales price of a car costing \$50,000 to build should be at least \$75,000 to make any profit considering general and administrative expenses. In fact, the usual rule of thumb is to double the manufacturing costs. How many people can afford even a \$50,000 car? The average compact car sells for about \$20,000 and returns 35-40 mpg. Compact CUVs sell for about the same transaction price up to about \$25,000. And manufacturers still make a small profit, while making huge profits on \$40,000 to \$50,000 trucks as they don't cost that much more to build.

EVs face several problems before public acceptance and with all the hype about EVs, the public isn't buying them as they are less than one percent of the total market even with huge subsidies and sales are not increasing. If there were no government subsidies, as in Hong Kong, where subsidies were slashed to zero recently, sales followed suit. EVs are at least double the cost of conventional cars, if not more. Secondly batteries have limited range and huge refueling issues. Gasoline has about 100 times the energy density of

batteries and an amazingly simple refueling process. But because of engine efficiency differences, the I/C energy advantage is about 25 to 0ne. The energy cost per mile for EVs is about the same for a conventional compact car. No benefit for EVs there, as well.

And while “they” claim there is progress being made in EV technology, there has been little progress with battery chemistry, not progressing at all over the last decade. However, technology progress with conventional cars has been amazing with huge improvements in both performance and fuel economy. Interesting of how reality works. And I/C technology is still improving with the recent accomplishment of the compression ignition gasoline engine by Mazda which is slated for production next year (2019) with claimed fuel economy improvements of 20-30 percent. Nissan is about to produce the first variable compression engine with similar claims. Yet battery technology remains the same and electric motors haven't changed significantly in 100 years. Yet we are going to ban the progress of I/C technology to become Luddites of the early 20th century, when EVs ruled personal transportation. Brilliant.

The reasoning for Luddites like Phil Ting is to save us from nonexistent or insignificant global warming. That's why environmentalists resemble watermelons as they are green on the outside and red on the inside. The whole environmental movement is nothing more than a socialist movement as the solutions are bigger government, more laws and regulations, more taxes, less choice and freedom. I wrote 20 years ago with respect to the original Kyoto Accords environmental agreement that it had nothing to do with the environment and everything to do with politics, namely socialism. EVs are only the first salvo of your limitation of rights and freedoms, next will be the size and/or location of your home, the food you eat and/or the clothes you wear. It's coming.

*Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At*

*8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.*