

Opinion: Electric cars by Draconian decree

By Larry Weitzman

Electric cars seem to be all the rage, at least that would appear to be the case if your only source of news was mainstream media creating the hype. The only way EVs have a chance in the “free marketplace” is by government decree, which becomes another government created oxymoron.

Most of Europe has done that by simply banning the internal combustion engine some 20 years into the future using insignificant global warming (another mainstream media hype) as the excuse. China is on the same course, allegedly banning internal combustion cars by 2040. Even in California, there is a move afoot and proposed legislation to remove conventional cars from our highways.



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It describes life in socialist/communist countries. The insanity just never ends, it continues to grow with no cure in sight. Orwell was a genius.

The real purpose for all these new restrictions on your freedoms is more control of you and your movement. It's similar to gun control. It's just another control and limitation on your life and freedom as criminals will never give up their guns. Autonomous cars are part of this Orwellian

plan as well. Access to roads will be controlled by the government, just like the air traffic control system. You will have to obtain a time slot for freeway access. Your speed will be tightly controlled as will be your route of travel. Driving Highway 1, "fuhgeddaboudit."

And EVs are part of this plan as EVs have the freedom curtailing issues of limited range and refueling. You will also be limited as to who and where you buy your "fuel."

Two recent articles on EVs were published in the *Mountain Democrat*, one of a couple loving their EVs. That's great, they had the freedom to choose, but they were heavily and directly subsidized by federal, state and maybe even our county through either tax credits or direct payments of about \$10,000 per vehicle and continuing utility credits. One of their vehicles was bought used so some of those credits may not apply, but car pool lanes preference should be available. In case you're interested, used Tesla Model S cars are plentiful and can be bought for prices about half of new with reasonably low miles as the average Tesla S appears to be driven less than an average of 10,000 miles a year, many halve that number.

In the second article, published March 26, staff writer Laura McCutcheon interviewed and quoted Placerville resident Bruce Bila who laid out all of the direct subsidies received by EV buyers from federal and state tax credits amounting to about \$10,000 to rebates and reduced electrical rates received from PG&E. Bila even touched on the issue of reduced registration fees and the fact that EV owners don't pay road (gas) taxes which are collected for supposed road maintenance (about two-thirds of the new gas taxes go to the bullet train to nowhere and a few other pet projects) and get car pool lane access. Bila also remarked about people who acquire solar power also getting sweet deals (lower energy rates) being subsidized by other energy users. There is also a huge direct solar subsidy of a federal 30 percent tax credit paid for by you and me. Well done Mr. Bila.

Bila goes on to say that "the government has to step back and let the industry stand on its own two feet." Well said. The bottom line is the solar and EV industry can't, as it is too expensive when compared to the competition. Another huge indirect EV subsidy not mentioned in the story created by the feds, paid for by the consumer and given to the manufacturers of EVs are zero emission vehicle credits amounting to a theoretical value of about \$5,000 per credit. Tesla has sold about a billion dollars of these credits to other car manufacturers so far, meaning that it raised the price of conventional cars by a cumulative total of a billion dollars.

In addition, Obama early in his presidency authorized \$2.4 billion in EV development with the goal of having 1 million EVs on the road by 2015. Well, that didn't happen as by 2016 only half a million were sold and the 1 million mark was moved to 2020. More money down a rat hole, never mind the half a billion-dollar Solyndra scandal and the demise of A123 battery company leaving the government holding the bag for over \$100 million. Through 2012, the federal government had wasted a billion dollars trying to force the impossible.

Within all these credits is an El Dorado County subsidy of an additional \$1,000 funded by California legislation AB2766, in a program described by our county public information officer, nee spin doctor, Carla Hass, called Drive Clean. Add that to the \$10,000 of direct federal and state incentives and the buried ZEV credits and you have about \$16,000 in incentives and subsidies paid for by taxpayers. Hass went on to say in the same article that "there's far more taxpayer money that has historically gone and currently goes into supporting gasoline powered cars as well. Estimates vary. They range from \$10 to \$55 billion each year. When the federal government came up with the EV tax credit they based the amount (\$7,500) on how much of a taxpayer subsidy they figured goes into supporting each gasoline powered car." And this statement is from a county official who works directly for the CAO. Please

tell me what government program sends money to new gasoline car purchasers? Is she talking about the failed “cash for clunkers” program?

Hass promised me an explanation to her statement published in the *Mountain Democrat* as to what her sources were and the back up data for the statement which I finally received after a week. It was as expected, complete and utter malarkey. Here is a portion of what Hass sent me: “Oil Change International estimates United States fossil fuel exploration and production subsidies at \$20.5 billion annually. Other credible estimates of annual United States fossil fuel subsidies range from \$10 billion to \$52 billion annually – yet none of these include costs borne by taxpayers related to the climate, local environmental, and health impacts of the fossil fuel industry. Fossil fuel subsidies in the United States also include massive military expenditures to acquire and defend fossil fuel interests around the globe.” Oil Change International is a far left wing “Red” group which claims to be green. And this county official, Carla Hass, who is paid \$150,000 a year was hired by our Board of Supervisors.

There is no basis in fact of the \$20 billion number and the \$10 billion to \$52 billion numbers (used by Hass) as they are made up numbers. As to our Navy and Coast Guard protecting the shipping lanes and maintaining freedom for all international commerce has been required throughout history, whether from U-boats, Somalian pirates, terrorists or penny-ante third world dictators or others who want to attack our freedom.

I also did an analysis of oil tax credits which include depletion allowances and those allowances and credits amount to about \$100 per new vehicle, not the \$11,000 per vehicle given to EV buyers in El Dorado County. We need to remember oil isn't just for cars, it is the predominant substance of so many other products, especially tires which EVs still use.

My arguments against her hiring (or any spin doctor hiring)

have been proven to be true. Carla Hass has become a government propagandist and we get to pay for it.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.