

1/31/24

The Chapter 127-A-Advanced Clean Cars II Program is insanity on steroids. A few of the reasons why are explained below.

1. China and India combined produce twice as many tons of CO₂ per year as the U.S. In 2023 the U.S. reduced CO₂ emissions by 4%, China increased its CO₂ emissions by 8%, and China is ~~continuing~~ ^{continuing} to build new coal-fired power plants. The U.S. could reduce CO₂ emissions to 0 and the effect on climate change would be negligible.
2. Maine comprises about 1% of the U.S. population. Punishing Mainers by forcing ^{them} to buy EVs, which most don't want, is stupid and would have no effect on climate change.
3. EVs may catch on fire spontaneously. It would be risky to park an EV in a garage, especially a garage attached to a house. Yet in cold weather EVs should be kept in garages where it's warmer. EV fires are impossible to put out.
4. EVs do not do well in cold weather, as the recent fiasco during an intense cold spell in the Chicago area showed. Batteries wouldn't charge, cars wouldn't run, people were stranded and cars had to be towed. In case some members of the BEP aren't aware, it sometimes gets very cold in Maine.
5. In some areas and at some times there is barely enough electricity to meet existing residential and commercial needs. Where will the additional electricity required to charge EVs come from? Certainly not from green energy.
6. It's pretty hard to charge EVs during a power outage. Think back to the storm of 12/18/23.

The vote by the BEP on 10/24/23 to support new clean car rules shows that those voting yes are either misinformed, uninformed, or climate change is a religion to them. To help educate these people I have enclosed some fact-laden editorials from the Wall Street Journal, as well as a few related articles.

If Robert Duchesne, Barbara Vickery, Robert Sanford and Steven Pelletier want to drive EVs they are free to do so. LEAVE THE REST US ALONE TO DRIVE THE TYPE OF CAR WE CHOOSE! There is already too much government intrusion into our lives; we don't need more from petty little tyrants on the BEP.

Thank you for reading this.

Robert K. Shepard
65 Robin Hood Dr.
Brewer

Robert K. Shepard

John Kerry and CO2 Emissions Reality

Give John Kerry credit for persistence if not realism. President Biden's climate envoy keeps demanding the end of fossil fuels while the world continues to blow through his apocalyptic warnings.

A new report in time for the COP28 climate conference in Dubai says that global CO2 emissions will hit a new peak this year. But Mr. Kerry keeps berating American fossil fuels producers though U.S. emissions are on track to fall 4% in 2023. The big problem: China's emissions are set to rise by twice as much as the U.S. decline.

The Global Carbon Project estimates that worldwide CO2 emissions from burning fossil fuels will increase 1.1% this year. That represents a slowdown from the last two decades. Yet emissions would have to drop by 9% annually to achieve the Paris climate agreement's goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Mr. Kerry rapped U.S. oil and gas producers at this week's United Nations climate confab for not doing enough. "We have no real evidence that [Chevron] and a lot of others are doing what every company needs to do," he said. Well, actually, there is evidence that oil and gas producers are helping reduce emissions.

U.S. and European emissions this year are projected to fall by a combined 0.4 gigatons of CO2—about as much as 87 million gas-powered cars generate—owing largely to natural gas replacing coal. Increased U.S. natural gas produc-

tion, especially in the Marcellus and Permian shale basins, drove down domestic prices and displaced coal power.

U.S. coal emissions this year will be roughly half as much as in 2015. Liquefied natural gas exports to Europe also helped replace Russian gas while a relatively warm winter reduced demand for heating fuel. Not that the West's emissions reductions will matter much as long as China and India continue to build more coal plants.

China's emissions this year are set to climb by 0.5 gigatons while India's will increase by 0.3 gigatons. Last year China approved 106 gigawatts of new coal power, four times as much as in 2021 and about as much as the peak electricity demand in France and Britain combined. Western leaders can keep tilting at windmills while China burns more coal.

Irony alert: China's National Development and Reform Commission says that at least 200 gigawatts of coal capacity will be needed to support its solar and wind energy build-out. Beijing has figured out what President Biden and the climate left haven't: Solar and wind energy can provide cheap power at the margin but must be backed up by fossil fuels or nuclear power. Batteries are getting better, but they are still expensive and can't scale.

In other words, in the name of reducing CO2 emissions, China is increasing CO2 emissions. That more or less sums up the failure of the climate lobby.

John Kerry's Climate-Change Flop

John Kerry has announced he'll soon step down as President Biden's climate envoy to join the 2024 re-election campaign, and maybe he'll fare better in that job. If he doesn't, Mr. Biden will be a one-termer.

For three years Mr. Kerry has been preoccupied with getting China to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. But excluding emissions from land use and forestry, China's emissions rose 13% between 2015 and 2023, according to Climate Action Tracker estimates. U.S. emissions fell by some 9% over the same period.

You can't say Mr. Kerry hasn't tried to persuade China, including the use of green flattery. "China has produced more renewable energy, more solar and wind than any other country," he said last year.

But China's CO2 emissions have still soared as demand for electricity surged. In 2022 China accounted for 53% of the world's coal generation, the Ember think tank says, and new permits for coal power plants in 2022 reached "the highest level since 2015." That's the year Beijing signed the Paris climate accord Mr. Kerry negotiated, promising to reduce its emissions starting in 2030.

Global Energy Monitor tracks worldwide coal-fired power plants of 30 megawatts or more and reports that as of July 2023 China had 305 coal-fired power stations announced or in the works. Together they'll be able to generate some 391.7 gigawatts—about 70% of the world's total coal-fired capacity currently announced, planned, permitted or under construction.

Or take coal mining. Reuters reported Wednesday that China's coal output reached a record high in 2023 as it mined some 4.66 billion metric tons. Global Energy Monitor says China had plans in 2022 for 217 coal mines with a capacity of at least 900,000 metric tons, which would represent nearly 57% of all new coal mine additions in the works globally.

"It is unrealistic to completely phase out fossil fuel energy," Chinese climate envoy Xie Zhenhua said in September. That follows President Xi Jinping's declaration in 2022 that China's carbon goals "can't be detached from reality," according to the state-run People's Daily.

Mr. Kerry's problem has been a failure to recognize reality, which is typical of America's climate lobby.

WSJ 1/20-21/24

The EV Backlash Builds

The Biden Administration keeps throwing around billions in subsidies for electric vehicles, and the press corps keeps hailing them, but consumers don't seem to want them. The evidence is building that this green industrial policy is a bust.

Ford Motor said on Friday that it's slashing production of its F-150 Lightning truck amid flagging demand. The F-150 Lightning drew oohs and aahs from the press when it was unveiled in May 2021. Yet the electric pickup has been plagued with defects that have required recalls. It sold a mere 24,165 Lightnings last year and lost roughly \$36,000 on each EV in the third quarter.

So now Ford is cutting production at its Lightning plant in Michigan while increasing output of its popular gas-powered Bronco SUV and Ranger pickup. "We are taking advantage of our manufacturing flexibility to offer customers choices while balancing our growth and profitability," said CEO Jim Farley.

Or consider General Motors, which last month told its Chevrolet dealers to stop selling its electric Blazer SUV owing to software and other problems. Consumer complaints have piled up on social media about glitches including inoperable window switches and batteries that won't charge.

A Consumer Reports survey in November found that new EVs have 79% more problems than internal-combustion cars. "This suggests that legacy auto makers need more time to work out the kinks under the hood of their EVs," the report noted. "What matters most to

consumers remains the same: finding safe, reliable cars," Consumer Reports CEO Marta Telhado said. People want safe, reliable cars—who would have thought?

Companies cut output amid flagging demand. Could it be the product?

Hertz, the rental car giant, is also bowing to consumer demand by selling about a third of its global EV fleet and buying more gas-powered cars with the proceeds. Car

renters have no doubt read stories about the long lines of Chicago drivers unable to charge their EVs as batteries drain power faster in freezing weather.

None of this is stopping the Biden Administration, as this week the Environmental Protection Agency sent its final rule on auto greenhouse emission standards to the White House for review. This back-door EV mandate will punish Ford and other auto makers if they respond to consumer demand by selling more gas-powered cars. It will also compel the companies to roll out EVs before technological and engineering kinks are worked out. This is a recipe for making EVs less popular, not more.

Amid the private jet-set at Davos this week, Biden climate czar John Kerry attributed consumer resistance to EVs to "disinformation." That's hilarious. The automobile press couldn't be more in the tank for EVs.

We've got nothing against electric vehicles if consumers want them. But the Administration is trying to force them on the public with mandates and subsidies. This misallocation of capital harms consumers and workers. Mr. Biden's green industrial policy isn't failing because of bad marketing. It's failing because Americans don't like the product.

WSJ 11/10/23

Phil Murphy's New Jersey Wind Flop

Phil Murphy huffed and he puffed, and a giant wind boondoggle blew the New Jersey Governor down. That's the story of another failed green-energy project, as the follies keep being exposed.

The renewable energy firm Ørsted last week backed out of two megaprojects along the Jersey shore that it started planning in 2019. With his eye on support from the climate lobby for a White House run, Mr. Murphy courted the developments, which were meant to provide electricity for hundreds of thousands of homes. The company says cost overruns have made them impossible, and it wrote off \$4 billion for the first nine months of this year.

Mr. Murphy fumed in public, saying the cancellation casts doubt on Ørsted's "credibility and competence." The Danish firm blames its withdrawal on rising interest rates and component costs, but it has said little about what made the New Jersey project uniquely impractical. At least for now, the company is moving ahead with wind farms in New England and Maryland.

But it takes two to make a bad deal, and Mr. Murphy wants to shift blame for his poor due diligence on behalf of New Jersey ratepayers. The state prodded power company PSEG into

a partnership with Ørsted, and PSEG bought a 25% stake in one of the offshore projects to prop up development. The utility sold its stake this year as cost overruns became critical.

Roughly \$1 billion in credits couldn't save a green energy project.

Yet that was exactly when Mr. Murphy doubled down. He signed a bill in July to let Ørsted pocket federal tax credits it would earn from the

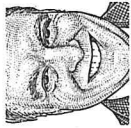
wind farms, instead of using that money to reduce its electricity rates, as it promised to do in 2019. The change would have cost New Jersey residents up to \$1 billion, but affordable energy was never the point. Like many progressive Governors today, Mr. Murphy was all in for the green bragging rights.

The New Jersey bust isn't the only sign of wind industry woes. BP and Norwegian partner Equinor recently wrote-down a combined \$840 million on New York state wind projects. "Offshore wind in the U.S. is fundamentally broken," a BP clean energy executive told the press Wednesday. Developers often underestimate project costs so much that even a boatload of tax credits can't make them economical.

The best result of Ørsted's project failure would be for other states to re-examine their green follies. This is also something for voters to recall when politicians next try to sell their climate virtue.

WSJ 1/14-5/23

The Earth Is Warming, but Is CO2 the Cause?



If this column has ever plagiarized itself, it's by repeating the phrase "evidence of warming is not evidence of what causes warming." A paper published by the Norwegian government's statistical agency, written by two of its retired experts, touching on this very subject has called forth so many shrieked accusations of climate apostasy that you know it must be interesting.

The authors ask a simple question: Are computerized climate simulations a sufficient basis for attributing observed warming to human CO2? After all, the Earth's climate has been subject to substantial warming and cooling trends for millennia that remain unexplained and can't be attributed to anything.

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uted to fossil fuels. As statisticians, their conclusion: "With the current level of knowledge, it seems impossible to determine how much of the temperature increase is due to emissions of CO2."

Wow. For all the abuse dumped on them for this modest observation, and even some apologetic hemming and hawing from the government-run Statistics Norway, the authors don't say climate models don't make useful predictions. Their predictions are useful precisely for testing the validity of climate models. What's more, many who are concerned about climate change have no trouble seeing the problem as a matter of risks rather than certainties. This includes co-author John Dagsvik, who told Norway's Aftenposten newspaper he favors emissions curbs for precautionary reasons.

The correlation-to-causation puzzle is hardly the authors' invention, having bedeviled the oracular Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change since its founding in 1988. But unrestrained name-calling is required, the critics say, because anything that undermines confidence in climate models undermines progress against climate change. Which is laughable. What progress? If any proposition has been demonstrated beyond doubt, equating skepticism with Holocaust denial etc. is the most failed salesmanship strategy in the history of public policy, as readily shown in the emissions data.

What really upsets the critics, though they are petrified to say so, is the paper's ever so gently brushing its sleeve against the measurement problem.

Since we're using abstruse calcula-

tions of an annual average global temperature to validate the climate models, it matters if these calculations—based on disparate instruments and unstable sampling frequencies and a variety of "proxies" for times and places when no measurements were taken—are accurate and meaningful.

Norway's government commits a no-no by letting statisticians pose the most inconvenient question.

Before 2015, as I've previously noted, the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that 2005 and 2010 were equally warm to the second decimal. By 2015, the record was changed to claim 2010 was warmer than 2005. Such adjustments are common and the Norwegians point out the obvious: "It is impossible to evaluate the validity of such administrative changes for an outside user of these records." In 2017, independent researcher Marcia Wyatt showed 16 such revisions had been made to the long-past temperature record in just the previous three years.

I've long argued that if a future climate scandal is lurking, it's here. A spirit of disingenuousness already pervades NOAA's use of these numbers to make "hottest year" and "hottest month" proclamations, ignoring its own stated margin of error, which is often a large multiple of the claimed temperature difference from one period to the next.

Something beyond hysteria, though, explains the continued reliance on the no-longer-plausible idea that ritually attacking every expression of skepticism moves the ball on climate policy. By now, it's some people's job, if not personal vocation, to enact these rituals of denunciation simply because it helps prop up the green corporate welfare that has become the primary substitute for climate action as well as the primary incentive for anyone to spend working hours participating in these now-tired activities.

The same week brought forth a new study from one of the most venerable of climate warriors, former NASA scientist James Hansen, whose own brand of discordance furrows the climate crowd into a tizzy of cognitive dissonance. Warming will be worse, his paper predicts, for an ironic reason: Our success in reducing particulate exhaust from vehicles and power sources has reduced the atmospheric aerosols that slow warming. Mr. Hansen champions nuclear power, which remains anathema to many greens, and research into using aerosols artificially to cool the planet, even more anathema, since it doesn't involve a giant convulsion of green socialism. You can bet most of his argument will be ignored except the part about faster warming, since it can be used to bludgeon any deniers who might be handy.

As long as we're noting ironies, much of the abuse of the Norwegian authors comes from their fellow Norwegians, whose pretense of green virtue is funded by their country bearing, per capita, one of the biggest exporters of oil and gas the world has ever known.

The EPA Threatens to Turn Out the Lights

By William S. Scherman

Imagine flipping a light switch and not knowing if the lights will come on. Normally unthinkable. But the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed power-plant rules would stabilize the energy grid, resulting in less-reliable electric service.

The EPA's aggressive standards require all coal-fired power plants to be a new and still-tricky technology called carbon capture and storage, CCS, to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions 90% by 2035, or begin co-firing with natural gas. In addition, natural-gas-fired plants must capture 90% of emissions by 2035 using CCS or switch almost entirely to hydrogen by 2038. The only other option for both: shut down.

's proposed regulation could close power plants, stabilize the energy grid and end reliable electricity.

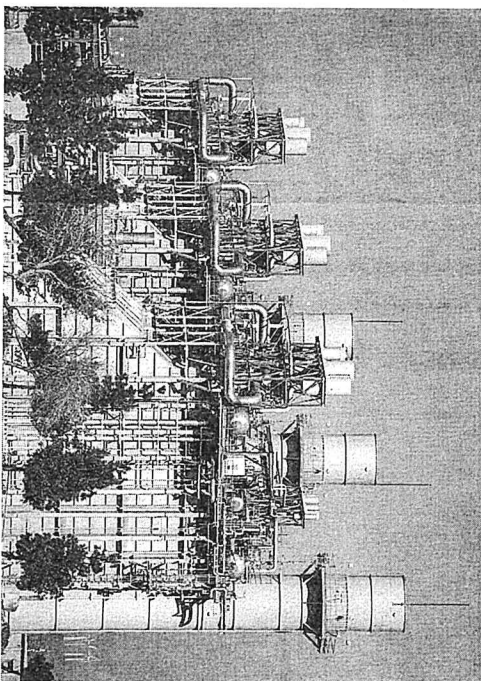
These nascent technologies simply won't get the job done in the next few years. CCS is used at only one commercial power plant in North America. The only U.S. coal plant to implement CCS successfully closed in 2020 for economic reasons.

CCS holds great promise, but there are significant operational and economic hurdles to its widespread deployment. The Biden administration recently acknowledged that building and using CCS faces many of the same permitting and regulatory problems plaguing other energy infrastructure.

Likewise, while hydrogen may be a future solution for electricity generation, the science isn't there. Hydrogen can be made by one of two methods: electrolysis, which is incredibly costly and energy-intensive; or steam-methane reforming. Most hydrogen is produced by steam-methane reforming, which produces large amounts of CO₂ as a byproduct and doesn't provide a net reduction in greenhouse gases. The proposed rules all but ignore these obstacles.

Closing the dwindling number of coal-fired plants and most natural-gas-fired plants would drastically affect electric reliability. In the past 10 years, more than 100,000 megawatts of coal generation capacity was retired. In 2022 total U.S. generating capacity was only 12 million megawatts. Another 40,000 megawatts of coal generation is scheduled to close in the next six years. As the trend continues, natural-gas-fired generation will need to play an even larger role in keeping the lights on. The Energy Information Administration recently forecast that this summer domestic natural-gas consumption for electricity generation will reach the second-highest level on record.

The numbers don't lie. Biden administration policies mean that higher consumption will be met with substantially lower supply. In 2022 the U.S. generated 4,243 million megawatt-hours of electricity, including 1,689 million from natural gas and 828 million from coal. If these plants close, that represents a loss of 2,517 million megawatt-hours, or 60% of U.S. electric generation.



The Calpine Delta Energy Center power plant in Pittsburg, Calif., in February.

DAVID PAUL MORRIS/BLOOMBERG NEWS

Reliability Corp. has identified "capacity shortfalls" that may result "in high risk of energy emergencies during peak summer conditions" in an area of the nation's midsection that covers parts of 15 states and about 45 million consumers. Part of the West covering California also faces shortfall risks due to "overall variability in both the resource mix and demand profile." The North America Electric Reliability Corp. has repeatedly flagged winter reliability concerns for New England, in part due to "limited natural gas infrastructure."

If the EPA's proposed rules force reliable generating plants to close on Jan. 1, 2032, the unthinkable will happen. Whenever you hit the lights you'll be crossing your fingers that they actually go on. After the Clean Power Plan was enacted in 2015, the EPA administrator admitted her plan was to force generators to comply—that is, close—before courts could decide if the rules were legal. The Supreme Court took note, stayed the plan in 2016, and struck it down in 2022. Regardless of the legality of the new proposed rules, plants will close if they are finalized, unless the courts act swiftly again.

We all hope for a cleaner energy future. But that will take time and thoughtful planning. It will take bipartisan support, not radical proposals. Whatever lofty goals the EPA has, they won't keep us warm at night when the heat goes off.

Mr. Scherman is a Washington-based energy lawyer at Vinson & Elkins, LLP. He served as general counsel for EPSC, 1000.02

In 2022 all U.S. renewable resources generated a mere 913 million megawatt-hours. To replace the plants these new rules would close, the U.S. would need to quadruple its renewable-energy generation in 10 years. That is to maintain present levels. It doesn't account for rising energy demand, which is projected to triple worldwide by 2050, including for new hydrogen production and an increasingly electrified vehicle fleet. Quadrupling renewables will require hundreds of thousands of miles of new long-distance transmission lines, which are difficult to build. A multiyear backlog for energy-project interconnections means we are still years away from launching transmission projects needed to keep the lights on.

As demonstrated time and again, the EPA doesn't have electric industry expertise. That is the purview of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which is charged with keeping the nation's electric grid reliable and functioning. A week before the EPA proposed its rules, all four FERC commissioners, Democrats and Republicans alike, told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that it isn't possible in the foreseeable future to maintain a reliable grid without the coal and gas plants targeted by the new rules. If Republicans and Democrats agree the policy is unworkable, you know we're in trouble.

Alarm bells have been ringing about electric capacity shortfalls that these rules would only exacerbate. The North America Electric

WSJ 12/30/23

Electric Mandates Have California Truckers Charging Overtime



Compton, Calif.

Electric trucks are supposed to save the world, but they're wasting Mike Stanley's time. Mr. Stanley, a longtime trucker whose rectangular beard flows down to his chest, now leads operations in the main Los Angeles office of IMC, a Tennessee-based drayage trucking company that carries cargo to and from U.S. ports and rail yards.

After Jan. 1, 2024, any new big rigs IMC registers in California have to be powered by hydrogen or electricity. Already, planning the logistics for electric trucks has added 10 to 15 hours a week to Mr. Stanley's workload. California has nowhere near enough chargers to service the number of electric semi trucks that will soon be on the road. Mr. Stanley can't risk a truck running out of battery; getting towed only 10 miles costs \$600.

The state's Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation, which the California Air

Resources Board approved on April 28, mandates that companies rapidly phase out diesel semi trucks, starting with older models, and replace them with zero-emission trucks in an effort to improve air quality and limit greenhouse-gas emissions. To find out what this means in practice, I rode along with IMC driver Arnel Ramos, 41.

With the route set, Mr. Ramos climbed inside a Volvo-manufactured electric semi. It hummed softly next to the growl of the diesel truck in the next parking space. Mr. Ramos likes the peaceful ride: "It's just you and your thoughts." He and IMC's leaders said they're eager to use cleaner trucks, but they're worried that regulators are pushing electric vehicles too quickly. This truck had recently been out of commission for about a month while the manufacturer replaced its battery, which was recalled because of a fire risk.

Mr. Ramos left IMC at 5:30 a.m. He drove 9 miles south to a charging station near the Port of Long Beach, where he remained for an hour, charging the battery from 54% to 90%. He then made his first haul,

picking up a container and delivering it to a customer.

A second haul started around noon—and that was it for the day. In a diesel truck, Mr. Ramos said, he could have made six hauls. But even the second one required another visit to the charging station—33 miles out of his way, and another

They haul lighter loads and spend hours plugged in. Consumers will ultimately foot the bill.

hour and a half of charging. A diesel semi can fuel up in 15 minutes and then drive 1,000 miles—a round trip from Los Angeles to Reno, Nev.—before needing to refuel. Making the same trip, Mr. Ramos's electric truck would have to make six recharging stops of at least 90 minutes each.

Fewer deliveries mean \$400 less a month for Mr. Ramos. Although he gets paid by the hour, he receives a commission for each delivery.

Mr. Ramos also faces the challenge of physically fitting his truck next to the charger. Many stations are in shopping-center parking lots, where a semi pulling a trailer can't comfortably fit alongside passenger cars. Mr. Ramos often leaves the truck's trailer somewhere he won't get a parking ticket, bobtails to the charger (driving the truck's head alone), then goes back to get the trailer.

On this sunny afternoon, Mr. Ramos got lucky when he bobtailed to a charging station near the port. His was the only truck in line. When two trucks draw electricity from the same station at once, he said, the batteries charge more slowly. At 12:30 p.m., he started charging the battery, which was at 25%. An hour and 35 minutes later, he stopped charging when the battery reached 93%.

While he waited, Mr. Ramos ate lunch and lounged in the sun. He typically watches Netflix or scrolls social media on the clock while the truck charges—time he could spend working in a diesel truck. Just after 2 p.m., he hit the road and headed

for a rail yard to pick up a lightweight load of consumer electronics. Electric trucks weigh significantly more than their diesel counterparts, giving them less carrying capacity. IMC uses electric trucks to carry products such as toilet paper and electronics. Using an electric truck to carry heavier goods, such as almonds or fresh produce, means fewer pallets and smaller loads.

After dropping the load at the customer's warehouse southeast of Irvine, Mr. Ramos returned to Compton, arriving back at the office at 6:28 p.m. with the battery 62% charged. He'd driven only 248 miles since the day's start.

Mr. Stanley, the operations leader, made some calculations. Accounting for higher labor costs and inefficiencies, IMC had lost \$310 by operating the electric semi instead of a diesel truck. To break even rather than take the loss, IMC tacked a surcharge onto the delivery. California consumers will ultimately pay for that.

Ms. McClain is the Journal's Joseph Rago Memorial Fellow.

WST 1/6-7/24

Connecticut Hits a 'Speed Bump' on the Race to Mandate EVs



Hartford, Conn. Connecticut and California couldn't be more different or farther apart. Yet since 1994, Hartford has let Sacramento set its emissions standards for passenger cars and trucks. Connecticut is one of 17 states that have adopted California's strict vehicle-emission regulations instead of the looser rules set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. But as the Golden State races to ban cars entirely by 2035, some in Connecticut are starting to have second thoughts about riding shotgun.

Although Connecticut had voluntarily complied with California's emissions standards since the 1990s, Hartford outsource this area of policy making officially in 2004. Some legislators expressed reservations at the time over permanently sacrificing their state's regulatory independence.

"If we adopt the legislation, we'll essentially be sort of slavishly following whatever California decides to do," said Democratic state Rep. J. Brendan Sharkey during a February 2004 hearing with then-Attorney General Richard Blumenthal. "They're essentially the dog and we're the tail and we have to wag to their commands." Reluctant lawmakers were convinced to get on

board by Mr. Blumenthal's assurances that they "would not be bound by every change" made in California. Yet for nearly 20 years, they have been.

Then something changed. California's 2022 Advanced Clean Cars II program requires that by 2035, all new passenger cars, trucks and SUVs sold in the state must produce zero emissions. Last summer the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, known by the acronym DEEP, followed suit, promulgating a pair of rules to shift the state's entire

State officials pushed a California-style ban on gas-powered cars. Voters waved the caution flag.

transportation sector to electric vehicles on the same time frame. Starting in 2026, 35% of all new cars sold in Connecticut would need to be electric, with increasing rates of sales requirements until 2035 when every new car sold would have to produce zero emissions.

DEEP tried hard to rush the proposed regulation into law. In public documents it severely underestimated revenue losses to the state from reduced gasoline taxes, according to an independent review by the nonpartisan Office of Fiscal Ac-

countability. DEEP also grossly mischaracterized the 4,000 comments it received on the regulations by insinuating that the majority were supportive. A Yankee Institute analysis determined the comments were nearly 3 to 1 in opposition. RG Stratton, a Democratic polling firm, found that 59% of Connecticut voters opposed the proposed ban on gasoline-powered cars.

Connecticut's bipartisan Legislative Regulation Review Committee gets the final say on whether regulators have acted in accordance with legislative intent. The 14-member committee evidently picked up on the public's mood and was set to vote against the mandate when, on Nov. 30, Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont decided to scrap it himself. Progressives haven't given up hope, calling the proposed regulations' withdrawal "merely a speed bump" on the road to full electric-vehicle adoption in Connecticut. Some legislative leaders are looking for a new on-ramp for the proposal.

Electric-vehicle mandates aren't cost-free. They come packaged with environmental, social and policy implications that sensible legislators in every state would be wise to consider. EVs require many times the amount of minerals to manufacture as traditional cars. The cobalt used in many lithium-ion batteries is mined with child and near-slave labor in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The majority of mineral processing occurs in China, the

world's largest carbon emitter.

Electric vehicles are heavier than regular cars and trucks, which increases costs and burdens on roads, bridges and tires. Heavier cars are more dangerous—they increase accident fatality rates. In Connecticut, there is also the strange reality that consumers can't buy cars directly from manufacturers, so anyone who wants to purchase a Tesla, the world's most popular EV, can do so on only sovereign tribal land at Mohegan Sun Casino and Resort. The state is simultaneously trying to tell people what to buy and make it difficult for them to acquire.

Policy makers across the country

Notable of Quotable: DEI

From "How DEI Programs and Liberal Politics Are Failing Gaza" by Dave Zirin for the Nation, Jan. 4:

DEI, as it exists in most institutions, holds sacred, in the words of one teacher, "the idea that all experiences are valid and your personal pain or trauma must be centered and validated." This fails Gaza on multiple fronts. First, it provides a false equivalency that allows supporters of Israel to speak about feeling attacked whenever so much as a Palestinian flag is displayed on a Trapper Keeper. The DEI process provides space for people to claim that any critique of the Israeli state

have convinced themselves that electric vehicles are the future—that there's a market for these cars, SUVs, trucks. If that's the case, why are we mandating these regulations instead of letting the market work?

It is unclear what the future holds for an EV mandate in Connecticut. California has had the regulatory wheel so long, Connecticut may no longer remember the rules of the road. But when lawmakers return to Hartford next month, they have a chance to slip back into the driver's seat.

Mr. Chinault is director of *EXETER* national affairs at Yankee Institute

ries to the level of antisemitism in many DEI circles, the weaponization of the charge of antisemitism has proven to be effective. An individual's feelings that a critic of Israel is antisemitic is weighed as a view just as valid as those of people distressed by IDPs's shelling of Palestinian camps. But it's not just about antisemitism. DEI arises from mainstream liberal politics, a cornerstonewhich for decades has been progressive except for Palestine. The face of this, when the chillsence or being branded an antisemite, it's understandable fear would rule the day.

WSJ 1/17/24

The Electric-Car Cheating Scandal

By Michael Buschbacher
And James Conde

It's hard to think of a worse environmental scandal in recent years than Volkswagen's 2015 diesel-emissions cheating. The German automaker was rightly pursued by regulators, enforcement agencies and class-action lawyers.

The scandal ended up costing Volkswagen an estimated \$33 billion in fines and financial settlements—and revealed that diesel-emissions cheating was endemic. In 2020 Daimler AG made a \$1.5 billion settlement over emissions cheating in Mercedes-Benz diesel vehicles. (One of us helped secure that settlement.) Last year engine maker Cummins agreed to pay \$1.7 billion to settle claims that it skirted diesel-emissions standards.

In all of these cases, regulators punished carmakers that had cut corners and misled the public. But when it comes

to electric cars, the government has a cheating scandal of its own. That scandal, grabbing far fewer headlines, is buried deep in the Federal Register—on page 36,987 of volume 65.

A government rule makes them look nearly seven times as efficient as they are.

When carmakers test gasoline-powered vehicles for compliance with the Transportation Department's fuel-efficiency rules, they must use real values measured in a laboratory. By contrast, under an Energy Department rule, carmakers can arbitrarily multiply the efficiency of electric cars by 6.67. This means that although a 2022 Tesla Model Y tests at the equivalent of

about 65 miles per gallon in a laboratory (roughly the same as a hybrid), it is counted as having an absurdly high compliance value of 430 mpg. That number has no basis in reality or law.

For exaggerating electric-car efficiency, the government rewards carmakers with compliance credits they can trade for cash. Economists estimate these credits could be worth billions: a vast cross-subsidy invented by bureaucrats and paid for by every person who buys a new gasoline-powered car.

Until recently, this subsidy was a Washington secret. Carmakers and regulators liked it that way. Regulators could announce what sounded like stringent targets, and carmakers would nod along, knowing they could comply by making electric cars with arbitrarily boosted compliance values. Consumers would unknowingly foot the bill.

The secret is out. After environmental groups pointed out the illegality of this charade, the Energy Department proposed eliminating the 6.67 multiplier for electric cars, recognizing that the number "lacks legal support" and has "no basis."

Carmakers have panicked and asked the Biden administration to delay any return to legal or engineering reality. That is understandable. Without the multiplier, the Transportation Department's proposed rules are completely unattainable. But workable rules don't require government-created cheat codes. Carmakers should confront that problem head on.

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