

From: Julie Orchard
To: Livingston, Merilee
Date: 1/14/2009 5:56 PM
Subject: Fwd: Re:Inquiry from Kevin Frazier

UTAH PUBLIC
SERVICE COMMISSION

2009 JAN 14 P 5:58

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>>> Constituent Services <constituentservices@utah.gov> 1/13/2009 4:13 PM >>>
fyi

Kevin Frazier

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Email

SUBJECT:

I am writing to ask that you consider incentives for increased use of compressed natural gas (CNG) as a transportation fuel when formulating energy policy. I know this request is a bit like "preaching to the choir" considering your track record but I just wanted to add my voice of support for clean fuel vehicles.

As you are aware, CNG is an abundant, relatively inexpensive, exceptionally clean, DOMESTIC resource.

Using CNG is something that the average taxpayer can do immediately that will make a difference not only to our dependence on foreign oil but to clean the air.

I personally switched to a CNG vehicle almost 2 years ago right after reading about you converting your Suburban to run on CNG. I have been extremely satisfied with the experience. I cut my gasoline consumption from close to a thousand gallons in '06 to less than 50 in '07 and '08. (I still needed to buy gasoline when I flew somewhere on vacation and had to rent a car).

I worked as a computer technician at the Salt Lake airport from 1993 to 2007 and I remember how horrible the air was from all those diesel powered shuttle buses. Any of our computer equipment that was outdoors in the public contact areas would be covered with black soot from the diesel exhaust. After the airport converted to CNG buses I could breathe better and our equipment hardly ever needed to be cleaned.

That made a big impression on me. I was breathing the same air that was carrying around all those diesel particulates.

I also remember Mayor Rocky Anderson talking about the importance of CNG as a transportation fuel when he opened the CNG fueling station at the airport. At the time, I didn't even know that CNG vehicles were available for the average consumer. It's something that GM, Ford and Chrysler never advertised.

In Utah County a few years ago, the stations converted to "Oxygenated Fuel" during the winter months. I was lucky that I commuted to Salt Lake because I could buy normal gasoline. I kept records of my gas mileage and I would average 15-20% worse fuel economy with "Oxygenated fuel". I also had to change my fuel filter every year the first time I filled with "Oxygenated Fuel" because the sediments in the tank would mix with the fuel and get into the fuel line. Now that I use CNG my vehicle runs much cleaner than it could ever run on oxygenated fuel and without all the other problems.

People say that Natural gas can serve as a bridge fuel for our transportation needs but I think it is actually a very acceptable long term solution. A recent study in Germany concluded that they could eliminate all of their natural gas imports just by utilizing domestic resources for producing bio-gas. Germany was trying to have 1000 CNG stations online by the end of 2008. The last I heard they were about 100 short of that goal. But 900 fueling locations in an area smaller than Montana is pretty impressive. Most German automobile manufacturers are now producing CNG models. Even GM's Opel division is producing some very sophisticated CNG models but they won't import them into the US. Most of the new Saturn models are re-badged Opels but nothing is available with a CNG option.

In Sweden, technology is in place that is allowing most public transportation to be fueled by renewable biogas produced by garbage and biomass. There is no reason why we can't harvest methane from landfills and wastewater treatment facilities and use it either as a transportation fuel or a fuel to generate electricity.

The CNG infrastructure in Utah needs to improve. I saw a huge increase in demand for CNG in 2008 and the current stations were oftentimes unable to handle the demand. If they weren't shut down completely for some maintenance issue then they were only able to dispense fuel at a lower pressure. Sometimes we felt lucky if we could get 3/4 tank of fuel because of the low pressure. Areas east of the Wasatch Front have no public fueling stations and taxpayers in those areas won't be interested in using the fuel until convenient filling locations are available.

Utah is the leading state in the country in CNG vehicle usage. This is due to several factors including tax incentives for the purchase

of the vehicles, low fuel prices, and the availability of solo carpool lane access for Clean Plated Vehicles. Changes to the incentives for CNG use would slow down the acceptance of CNG vehicles, increase our dependence on foreign oil, and cause people to drive vehicles that produce much more pollution.
Thanks for taking the time to read my concerns.