“All of the Above” — a Pig in a Poke

Essentially everyone supports investigating alternative energy options... However, just because an energy source is “alternative” or “renewable” does not mean that it should get a free pass from scientific scrutiny.

In a properly designed energy policy the only alternatives that should be allowed on the Grid (a privilege, not an entitlement), are those that have genuine scientific proof that they are a net societal benefit.

Phrased another way, that would mean we should only accept alternative energy sources that are: a) technically sound [e.g. reliable], b) low cost, and c) environmentally friendly.

On the surface, the “All of the Above” slogan sounds innocent enough, and even has a ring of reasonableness to it.

However, this lobbyist sales pitch warrants some deeper thought. Specifically, does an "All of the Above" policy really make sense? Consider:

#1 - When we include ALL energy options, that would mean that unreliable alternative sources would be put on the Grid.

#2 - When we include ALL energy options, that would mean very expensive alternative sources would be put on the Grid.

#3 - When we include ALL options, that would mean environmentally destructive alternative sources of energy would be put on the Grid.

Do ANY of those really make sense? How do we advance our economy, our society, our national security, by allowing unreliable, expensive, and environmentally detrimental alternative power sources to be on the grid?

There is a BETTER path, and one that is in the public interest.

An "All of the Sensible" energy slogan would go a LONG way towards putting reasonableness in our energy policy, Further, it would send the message that citizens, businesses and the environment are a top priority for legislators.

What are our “sensible” energy choices? Well that is exactly the conversation we should be having — but are not.

I would posit that “sensible” alternative electrical energy sources are those that are proven to have a net societal benefit, so let the discussion begin!

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[Note: see this for a more detailed explanation of the problem with this mantra.]