"All of the Above" — Not Such a Good Idea

The fundamental fight over enacting good energy policy, is between **lobbyists** and the **public**.

> *Lobbyists* are paid to represent the economic interests (or political agendas), of their clients. The *public* consists of citizens, businesses, and the military.

Lobbyists are professionals who spend a good deal of time soliciting legislators in their clients' behalf. The obvious question is: "who is balancing this out by competently and aggressively representing the **public** on energy policies (and other important issues)? The unfortunate answer is: **almost no one**.

The end result of this striking imbalance, is that most energy policies are effectively written by lobbyists — which means that they are permeated with carefully orchestrated marketing propaganda, designed to benefit their clients.

To keep their control, lobbyists full well know that they must maintain the *impression* that their self-serving promotions are actually in the public interest — so they leave no stone unturned to creatively maintain that **illusion**.

> Despite lobbyists' carefully-massaged message, it is totally inadvertent if *any* parts of their policies happen to be advantageous to the public.

A classic example of this is the well-known "All of the Above" energy mantra.

The hook is: who wouldn't be in favor of investigating alternative energy options? However, 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 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.

How do we do that? Well, it's certainly *not* by taking a sales person's (lobbyist's) word about their product! We assess the real qualifications of proposed energy sources by conducting a **scientific assessment**.

A key problem with the "All of the Above" mentality is that it ***purposefully bypasses*** the scientific assessment part… Why? Because lobbyists are acutely aware that their client's energy product will *fail* such an evaluation. To avoid that exposé, they devised a clever end-run around the facts: *no scientific assessment is needed if* ***all options*** *are pre-approved as acceptable!*

If we buy the lobbyists' energy mantra, we accept *everything.* These marketers have cleverly switched the focus from the actual **merits** of alternative energy sources, to such subjective intangibles as energy "diversity" and "security"…

On the surface, the "All of the Above" slogan sounds innocent enough, and even has a ring of reasonableness to it. But, of course, that is the lobbyists' *raison d'etre*: **to subtly get preferential treatment for second-rate energy sources that otherwise would fall by the wayside**.

We need to give the lobbyists' sales pitches some considered thought. In this example: does an "All of the Above" policy really make sense?

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

#2 - When we include ALL options, that would mean **very expensive** alternative sources of energy 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 and our society, by allowing unreliable, expensive, and environmentally ruinous alternative power sources on the grid?

Who benefits from an "All of the Above" energy policy? It certainly is not taxpayers, ratepayers, most businesses, the military, or the environment. Major beneficiaries would be foreign conglomerates who supply us with inferior energy sources, our enemies who are anxious to see our economy crippled, plus China who we will owe an even larger debt to…

There is a BETTER path, *and* one that is in the public's behalf.

An "**All of the Sensible**" energy slogan would go a LONG way towards putting some balance in the energy policy fight, and 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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