

Utah Public Service Commission  
Heber M. Wells Building  
160 East 300 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114

January 14, 2009

UTAH PUBLIC  
SERVICE COMMISSION

Re: Docket 07-053-13

2009 JAN 14 A 9:02

160218

Dear Commission,

I wanted to express my concern about the pending rate increase for Natural Gas Vehicle fueling. I can understand an increase to bring the fuel cost in line with some other locations but I disagree with it being completely uncoupled from the regulated price that we pay to heat our homes.

I think that there is more at stake here than just making money on the fuel. Public Policy should be used to encourage environmentally responsible activities and the most environmentally responsible activity I do is drive a CNG vehicle to help keep our air clean. I probably wouldn't drive a CNG vehicle if the price of the fuel were close to the gasoline price.

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 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 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 stayed clean. 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.

I personally switched to a CNG vehicle almost 2 years ago after reading about Governor Huntsman's example of converting his Suburban to 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 100 in '07 and '08. (I still needed to buy gasoline when I flew somewhere on vacation and had to rent a car). I feel good that my fuel dollars are staying here instead of going to people who don't like us very much.

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. I'm sure that the recent cut-off of Russian gas supplies to Europe is going to spur development of technology to use more bio-mass as a feedstock for renewable bio-fuels (gas and liquid). 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 in a CNG version. We need incentives to bring those cars to the USA.

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

The CNG infrastructure in Utah is improving but it still has a ways to go. 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. . The opening of the State fueling stations (HB 103) helped a lot but I think the lower gasoline price also slowed down the increase in CNG demand the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year. It seems that the maintenance and upgrades of the compressors helped the CNG stations keep up with the demand.

Utah is leading the country in CNG vehicle usage. This is due to several factors including tax incentives for the purchase of the vehicles, low fuel prices, decent infrastructure, 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. I hope you'll consider all these issues in your final decision.

Thanks for taking the time to read my concerns.

Kevin Frazier