

From: Julie Orchard
To: Livingston, Merilee
Date: 1/22/2009 11:28 AM
Subject: Fwd: Re:Inquiry from Trevor Thiriot

>>> Constituent Services <constituentservices@utah.gov> 1/22/2009 9:33 AM >>>
FYI

Trevor Thiriot

Email

SUBJECT:

Dear Governor Huntsman,

I'm writing you to voice my concern over the recent ruling put forward by the Public Service Commission regarding planned increases to the price of CNG (December 22, 2008). After researching the pros and cons of CNG, I like many others made the decision to buy two CNG cars based on the belief that our state regulators and leaders were truly dedicated to the promotion of alternative fuels. In hind site I feel that many of us were on the losing end of a grand "bait and switch," orchestrated by Questar with the State acting as accessory (if you read the rate case, Questar states that the original price structure was put in place to "develop the NGV market"). Now many of us are worse off than we started, and Questar will have a new way of getting global commodity prices for a local resource we all paid to develop. My understanding is that natural gas is a local resource sold within a local market. Questar should not be allowed to get away with charging prices of a market they do not belong to at the expense of the everyday Utahn (where will the money do more good during these hard economic times – spread out across the people, or concentrated in the hands of a few as more inordinate profits at Questar?).

Now is not the time for profiteering! The PSC needs to regulate their monopoly with the people of Utah in mind. Anyone who is familiar with CNG can attest to the fact that the proposed rate changes will wipe out all of the progress that has been made so far. If the new rates go into effect, I doubt there will be another natural gas car brought into the state (the number of CNG cars for sale on KSL.com has dropped precipitously since the new rate announcement and the reduction of the state tax credit). The downsides of using CNG are legion, and unless there is a strong price incentive in place its use will quickly decline.

Right now I'm very confused at the mixed messages I'm hearing. After the announcement of the rate hike, I was surprised to find an article in the Deseret News reporting your recent comments regarding Utah's preeminence in promoting the use of CNG as an alternative fuel, as if nothing was changing. While I hope that I am mistaken, I can't help but feel that all of it is just lip service. Are we, or are we not, going to finally take some sustained positive action? I know you are aware of the current situation and the potential consequences to the CNG industry if the new rate structure goes through. I plead with you to do everything within your power to continue supporting a strong alternative energy policy in Utah, and to make sure it is coordinated at all levels of the state government.

Respectfully,

Trevor Thiriot

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