Where’s da Juice?

by

*Eyes Right*

**Springfield, VA –** For nearly 250 years, American politicians have learned that no surer way to attract votes is to promise goodies to voters. Perhaps the most famous promise was first stated by Henry IV of France, when he vowed that there would be “a chicken in every pot.” American politicians had long been making their own campaign promises, but the Republicans had apparently done some historical research in the late 1920’s when they picked up Henry’s slogan to use in some ads during the 1928 Herbert Hoover vs Alfred Smith Presidential campaign. When things did not turn out well for either the Republicans or Hoover over the following four years, those pesky Democrats seized upon Hoover’s obviously unfilled promise and used it against him throughout Depression-era elections.

I mention this tidbit of American history from 100 years ago to illustrate that little changes in politics other than the politicians who are making the promises. In 2021 Congress passed the so-called Bipartisan Infrastructure Law which set aside $5 billion to fund a national network of EV charging stations. To date, less than 100 such stations are in place. That, using 2nd grade arithmetic, comes out to $5 million per station.

How can this happen??? Enter regulations and administrators driving agendas rather than results. The Biden administration apparently viewed the chargers as more of a means of creating “social justice” and achieving environmental goals than ensuring a wealth of outlets for electric car owners to use to charge their vehicles. Because the administration’s goals included directing “at least 40%” of all clean energy investments to “disadvantaged communities,” the plan was to install these charging units in sections of cities where, ironically, the smallest percentage, by far, cannot afford electric vehicles and simply do not have them…nor want them.

Another stumbling block to having a large number of charging stations installed has been the insistence of Biden’s bureaucrats that drastically favor union work – and the considerably higher costs associated with that criterion. For example, the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act provided tax credits to companies up to 30% of cost if they use installers at “prevailing wages and apprenticeship standards. There is a loophole for companies who choose to play, but only if they sign project labor agreements which include “monitoring and administration” by union officials.

As if all of this wasn’t sufficient to slow down charger installations, there is now a new regulation requiring that all newly installed charging stations be made here in the USA. Obviously, “Buy American” is a popular slogan, but with few American companies seeing this as a money-maker for them, we are all left wondering where are all the chargers loudly proclaimed by Biden?

Of course, there is no shortage of other issues slowing the widespread exchange of gasoline-powered vehicles with electric ones. In addition to the higher cost of electric cars (and trucks), many consumers have serious range concerns, if an electric vehicle is their only car. Planning a cross-country road trip in your Tesla is far more complex than jumping into any gas vehicle and taking off. Those electrons are going to take you 400 miles max and then you better be prepared to camp out for a while during the charging process – if you can locate a workable charger that is not being used by another Tesla.

And the big question remains…where are those pesky electrons coming from?? The development lately of AI data centers are placing new demands on electricity generation sources and a grid ill-prepared to send those electrons where they are needed. All I have heard from our Energy Department on these problems has been the proverbial crickets.

What is certain is that our national ROI (Return on Investment) on these Biden chargers has been negligible. This has the potential to make the Teapot Dome Scandal of the 1920’s seem nickel and dime. $5 billion disappeared! Does anyone care?

I thought you might like to know.

E-R