Texas Public
POLICY FOUNDATION

CALIFORNIA'S AGGRESSIVE AND COSTLY CLIMATE ACTIONS PRESAGE THE BIDEN-HARRIS WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT CLIMATE POLICIES SUGGESTING ECONOMIC PAIN FOR AMERICANS

Testimony to the Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs

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The COVID-triggered recession of 2020 lasted two months, starting in February and ending in March, with the federal government spending trillions of dollars to stimulate the economy in the wake of a global pandemic.

After losing almost 22 million jobs in two months due to government-imposed lockdowns, the economy recovered 12.5 million jobs—57% of the jobs lost in the pandemic—nine months later, when Joe Biden and Kamala Harris were inaugurated in January 2021.

It would take another 17 months of the Biden-Harris administration before nonfarm employment reached the same level as it did under the peak that was reached in February 2020.

Of note to this committee, over that period, the Biden-Harris administration embarked on an unprecedented peacetime spending binge in a bid to remake the American economy. This spending spree harmed working class Americans, enriched special interests, put the American dream at risk for our young, sparked the worst inflation seen in 45 years, and invited and then subsidized more than 10 million illegal aliens into our nation, who took the jobs of American workers.

In addition to elevated levels of federal spending, the Biden-Harris administration presided over the passage of four laws that together amount to an additional $1.6 trillion in federal spending, mostly on climate initiatives and infrastructure, with some $551 billion in tax credits for electric vehicles, wind turbines, solar panels, and other green energy efforts. Former President Donald Trump calls this package the "Green New Scam." In addition, Biden-Harris executive actions cost taxpayers an additional $2 trillion—all without Congressional approval (U.S. House Budget Committee, 2024).

continued

Some might argue that this spending is necessary—calling it "investments"—but the sad truth is that not all federal spending is equal, especially with a national debt that has reached $35 trillion. Decades ago, demand side government spending might produce a multiple of two or three dollars for every dollar in federal spending, even if borrowed. In other words, $1 in federal spending might produce a $2 increase in the economy. This is known as the "multiplier effect."

By the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the multiplier effect was between 0.6 and 1.0, meaning that every dollar of federal spending might create as little as 60 cents in additional GDP; in other words, a negative return (MacKenzie, 2024). This is largely due to the accumulation of federal debt. With a large debt requiring interest and principal payments, additional federal spending results in a "crowding out" effect (Joint Economic Committee, 2024). A high debt-to-GDP ratio also reduces economic growth by reducing consumer confidence and increasing interest rates. As a result, the multiplier effect on the Biden-Harris federal spending "investments" may be as low as 20 cents on the dollar (de Rugy & Salmon, 2020).

So, why borrow and spend the money if it doesn't really grow the economy and help American workers?

The short answer is that the spending was designed to change the economy, not grow it.

An even shorter answer is that the spending benefited special interests, not the American worker.

I served as a California State Assemblyman for six years before moving to Texas in 2011. Of note, hundreds of thousands of Californians have done so as well.

The Biden-Harris policies on energy, spending, and regulation are very familiar to me—I voted against them hundreds of times before I prudently moved to Texas.

There are no more basic matters regarding the business of government than the answer to two questions: Who decides? And are the people able to prosper?

Considering these two questions can reveal much about government's aims and effectiveness.

I lived in California for most of my adult life. I served as a city commissioner in Irvine, a southern California city of more than 300,000 people, and later was elected to three terms in the California State Assembly. In that latter capacity, I voted "no" quite a bit. "No" on higher taxes. "No" on greater regulations. And "no" on costly energy. I was on the losing side of most every vote.

But, with almost every "no" vote in committee or on the floor, I warned my colleagues that they were acting to make California more expensive, more inhospitable to job creation, and more hostile to the aspirations of millions of people, many of whom were hoping to climb the ladder of success.

By 2011, my family and I made the decision to move to Texas.

Why do I mention California? What relevance does the Golden State have regarding today's hearing, "Kitchen Table Economics: How Failed Biden-Harris Policies Continue to Hurt Consumers"?

As it turns out, quite a bit of relevance.

For better or for worse, California is often at the leading edge in what is often referred to as the laboratories of democracy. In our federal system, more so in the past than today with the increasing power of the federal government fueled by trillions in borrowed dollars, states innovate new policies. This can allow observers to examine how policies might work and be adapted to other states or the national government.

I've maintained for many years that California provides an excellent example of what might be called left wing or progressive governance. Similarly, Texas, America's second-most populous state after California, represents a test case for conservative governance. You might say that California and Texas, both highly diverse, minority-majority states, are emblematic of alternative futures for America.

Two federally determined metrics provide an illuminating comparison between the policy outcomes of the two largest states: the U.S. Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure and the same agency's state population reports.

The Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure was first published in 2009 after some 20 years of work to craft a more comprehensive measure of poverty than the Official Poverty Measure, which was based on a 1955 study that gauged poverty as an income below three times the cost of food (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). The main weaknesses with the Official Poverty Measure are that it sets the same threshold in the 48 contiguous states, regardless of regional price variations—which, when including the cost of housing and other goods and services, varied by as much as 123% in the second quarter of 2024, with Hawaii's cost of living index at 188.4, West Virginia at 84.3, and the U.S. equaling 100. California was the second-most expensive state with a cost index of 143.0, compared to Texas at 91.7 (Missouri Economic Research and Information Center, 2024).

Unlike the Official Poverty Measure, the Supplemental Poverty Measure considers the regional cost of housing, the value of noncash government benefits such as Section 8 housing vouchers and the Supplemental Nutrition Benefit Program (SNAP), and out of pocket medical expenses.

While this comprehensive measure of poverty has undergone a couple of revisions since its first publication 15 years ago, despite series breaks that make comparisons over time difficult, there has been one constant: California has had the nation's highest rate of poverty since the debut of the Supplemental Poverty Measure in 2009.

In the most recent Census Bureau report on Supplemental Poverty published in September 2024 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024a), California's Supplemental Poverty Measure indicates that for survey years 2021, 2022, and 2023, 15.4% of Californians live in poverty, as compared to the national average of 11%.

However, given that California is one of only seven majority-minority states (Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, New Mexico, Nevada, and Texas being the others), and given that racial and ethnic groups tend to display significant variations in poverty, it is useful to compare like groups to like groups. California's two largest demographic groups are white/non-Hispanics, and Hispanics of Mexican origin, totaling 74.7% of the population, as compared to 79.4% in Texas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024b). Blacks make up 6.5% of California's population and 13.6% of Texas', while Asians comprise 16.5% of the population of California and 6% of the population of Texas.

Looking at the average over years 2021 to 2023, California has the highest white/non-Hispanic poverty rate of 13.5%, compared to the national average of 8.8%. The poverty rate among Hispanics of Mexican origin was

16.3%, compared to the national average of 14.4%. In Texas, the numbers are 11.2% for the white/non-Hispanic group and 14.2% for Hispanics of Mexican origin.

So, if California's policies can't seem to shake the nation's worst showing for poverty, how do middle and lower income residents fare? Per capita annual income (in 2022 dollars) was $45,591 in California, $37,514 in Texas, and $41,261 nationally (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024b). But this doesn't factor in California's sky-high cost of living. With the cost of living considered, Californians have a per capita income of $31,882, compared to Texas at $40,909, meaning that before taxes, Texans' per capita income is 28% higher than that in California.

So, why does California have a high cost of living? A heavy regulatory burden on land use, energy, and business explains much of it (and high taxes as well).

Again, comparing the two most populous states today, California and Texas, we can chart the divergence in the states' relative cost of living from 1960 to present, with Texas consistently enjoying a cost index at 90 to 95 (U.S. = 100) for all decades except 1980, when Texas was closer to the national average at 95 to 100. California, meanwhile, saw a steady divergence from the national index, rising from 105 to 110 in 1960 to 115 to 120 in 1980, to 125 to 130 in 2000, to 140 to 150 in 2020, and 145 to 150 in 2023-24 (ChatGPT 4o, 2024).

Apologists for California's high cost of living oftentimes refer to it as the state's "sunshine tax": that more people want to live in California than the housing market is easily able to accommodate.

Yet per the state of California's estimates, California lost population for four years in a row from January 1, 2019, to January 1, 2023, dropping from 39,605,361 to 39,061,058—a loss of 544,303 residents. The California Department of Finance's January 1, 2024, estimate showed a modest increase of 67,104 (AP, 2024)—all of which is likely due to the surge of illegal immigration since 2021. The Census Bureau likewise estimates that California lost 1.4% of its population from the decennial census on April 1, 2020, to July 1, 2023—a dip of 573,030. In the same period, Texas grew by 4.7%, or 1,357,842 people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024b). The number one state in losing a net of residents to Texas was California (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024c).

California enjoys stunning natural beauty and a mild climate. After Hawaii, California has the lowest degree heating and cooling requirements of any state (heating requires about four times the energy as does cooling; National Weather Service, 2024). And yet, the state's mismanagement has resulted in stagnant population growth and an unhappy populace. According to a poll conducted in June 2023 (Strategies 360, 2023), 40% of Californians were considering moving out of the state. The number one reason cited by 61% of the potential movers was that "It is too expensive to live in California," followed by 27% who indicated that "California's policies and laws do not reflect my political views."

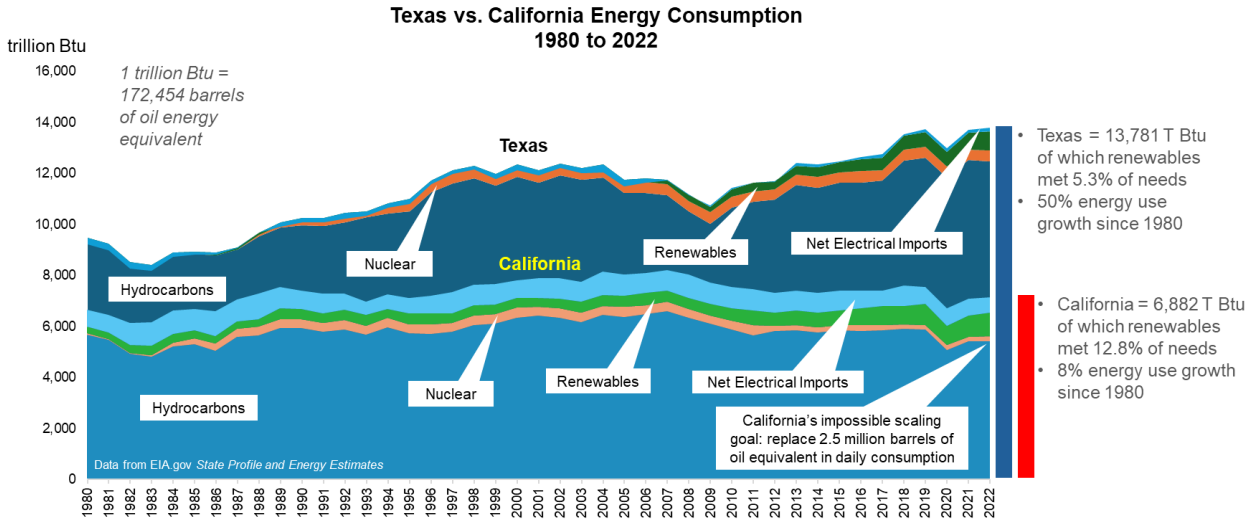
As already mentioned, California has the nation's second-highest cost of living after Hawaii. What are some of the components of this cost of living and how did they become so?

California has the nation's highest gasoline prices, $4.75 per gallon as of September 21, 2024 (AAA, 2024).

California has the nation's second-highest electricity prices, at 25.93 cents per kilowatt-hour for the year 2024 for the first six months of the year (Energy Information Administration, 2024a). Only Hawaii's electric prices are higher, as they run diesel generators supplemented by solar power for their electricity needs. This is an

Figure 1

California's Overall Energy Use Flatlined Since 1980 as the State Exported Manufacturing Jobs to China and Texas and Stopped Growing—Texas Energy Use Up 50% in 42 Years, Mostly Hydrocarbons



astounding 102% higher than the national average, or more than double the U.S. average price of electricity. Compared to Texas, California's electricity prices are 162% higher.

Given California is further down the path of the energy transition than is the rest of the nation, California's sky-high electricity prices have profound implications for energy affordability, should the Biden-Harris administration's energy subsidies, tax credits, and mandates be extended and deepened. This is further compounded by the push to electrify the transportation sector as well as home heating.

Even more serious for California lawmakers and federal officials who seek to copy their energy plans: in 2022, California consumed the same amount of hydrocarbons to produce energy as it did in 1980, despite massive investments in wind, solar, batteries, non-dispatchable electricity mandates, and laws that phased out the use of hydrocarbons. As it stands, California faces the impossible task of replacing the consumption of 2.5 million barrels of oil a day.

Figure 1 also hints at one possible solution to the scale needed to support any energy transition (that yellow-orange portion of the graph for both California and Texas). That's 3% of all energy needs produced by six nuclear reactor vessels at three sites in the two states.

California's excessive electricity prices in the name of climate change is very personal for me. I served in the California State Assembly and voted "no" on AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (California Legislative Information, 2006a). During debate, proponents claimed that due to the looming scarcity of natural gas, California would benefit from the significant push for wind and solar installations. After all, they argued, solar and wind had no fuel costs. At the time, California's electricity prices were the 8th-highest in the nation at 12.82 cents per kilowatt-hour, which was 44% above the national average.

Making another comparison, from 2006 to 2023, national electricity prices fell in real terms by 5% while California's prices were up 28% in real terms. In contrast, Texas's electricity prices were down by 36% in real terms over the same period (Energy Information Administration, 2024b). However, due to the federal subsidies for wind and solar, Texas will soon likely contend with some of the same price-increasing market forces that California more aggressively embraced some 20 years ago.

It should be noted that the computer-aided hydraulic fracturing boom was just starting when the assumptions about natural gas scarcity were made. Today, as mentioned, California's prices are more than double the national average. Thus, one of the major claims made during the passage of AB 32—that of less expensive electricity prices—turned out to be the opposite of what was promised.

One likely unintended downstream effect of these high prices are deadly wildfires and high home fire insurance premiums (or the lack of coverage entirely). How did that happen? In October 2019, I wrote in *Forbes* magazine,

> …California's publicly regulated utilities are hardly examples of unfettered free markets. Rather, they do exactly what the regulators appointed by the elected officials tell them to do.
>
> Those politicians and regulators have told the utilities to dramatically boost wind and solar power—and they have. In 2012, PG&E asked regulators for a $4.84 billion electric rate hike to pay for powerline maintenance and upgrades (Finley, 2019). Regulators, worried over electrical prices that were already close to the nation's highest, rejected the request, and eventually approved less than half that amount.
>
> One can't help but to wonder—if this rate hike were approved in 2012, might it have prevented 2018's deadly Camp Fire, which started almost a year ago and killed 85 people while destroying nearly 19,000 homes, businesses and other buildings? The fire was blamed on a nearly-100-year-old power line that should have been replaced 25 years ago.
>
> Now, PG&E—in bankruptcy to shield itself from $30 billion in fire liabilities and under heavy criticism—is preventatively cutting the power on high-risk powerlines during periods of heavy winds.
>
> These blackouts—the largest two hitting about 2 million people each time for a couple of days—have cost California businesses and consumers an estimated $5 billion in lost economic activity. As much as the requested rate hike might have cost had it been approved seven years ago. (DeVore, 2019a)

Thus, concern over voter discontent with rapidly increasing electricity prices due to the push for solar and wind power lead directly to the denial of a $4.84 billion rate hike to pay for safety upgrades for aging power lines that, in turn, contributed to the deaths of 85 people.

Now, six years later, many Californians find it impossible to obtain homeowner's insurance.

The inability to obtain homeowner's insurance in California is closely tied to the government-induced death of the timber industry. With harvest and forest maintenance down and fire suppression efforts continuing, the fuel buildup in California's forests has ramped up at an unnatural pace. Before California became a state, the indigenous inhabitants of the region used to routinely burn the forest to increase the food supply (DeVore, 2019b). In the eyes of progressive politicians and environmental activists, this has the added benefit

of reducing the pressure to expand housing into the wildland urban interface—where it's affordable—and instead increase density in the cities. Of course, many people, it turns out, don't wish to live in California cities overrun with 49% of the nation's street homeless population, sidewalk feces, used needles, and crime.

Leftwing politicians with whom I served in the Legislature such as Dave Jones, who later became California Insurance Commissioner, make claims that reinforce the need for sacrifice in the name of combatting climate change. In explaining costly or hard-to-get homeowner's insurance, he said, "The insurance crisis is one price we are paying for not moving away from fossil fuels and to alternative energy sources quickly enough. … Climate change is driving more natural disasters and more *severe* natural disasters — wildfires, but also tornados, hurricanes, floods, sea level rise, atmospheric river bombs, and extreme heat, to name some. … Also, the problem is compounded in many areas due to population growth" (Martin, 2024).

Is Jones right? Mostly no. Though when Jones suggested that insurance payouts are getting more costly due to population increase in coastal areas (such as Florida), he's right about that aspect.

Bjorn Lomborg rebuts Jones' climate catastrophism, writing that it

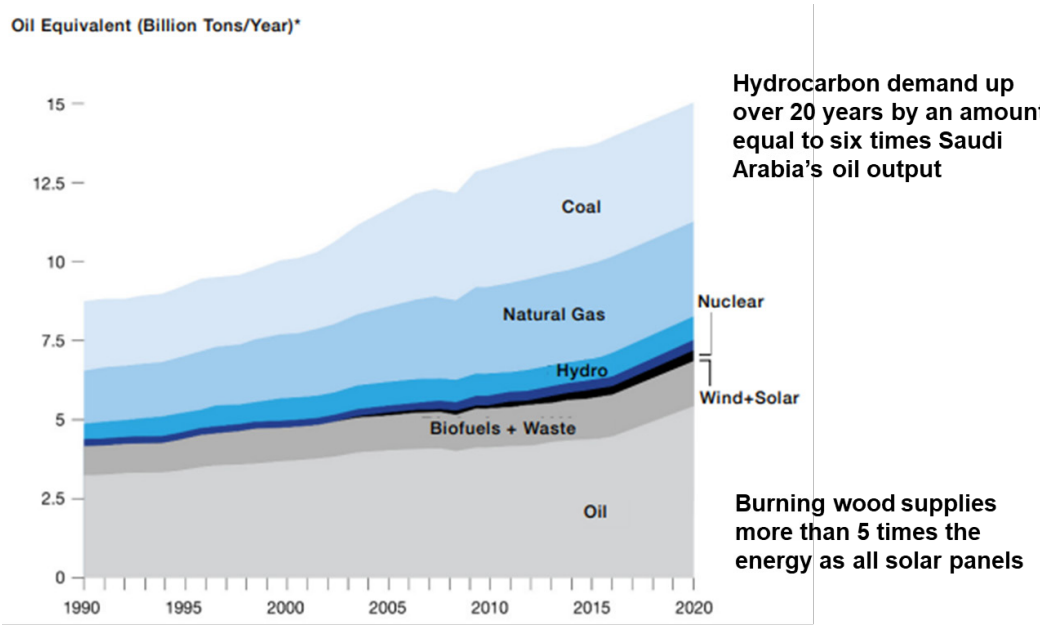
> …is wildly misleading and makes it harder to get climate change policy right. The numbers show climate-related events such as floods, droughts, storms and wildfires aren't killing more people. Actually, deaths have dropped precipitously — over the past decade climate-related disasters have killed 98% fewer people than a century ago…
>
> The huge drop in climate-related deaths is revealed by the most respected international disaster database, the gold standard in measuring these effects. It's reliable because extensive catastrophes have been documented consistently over the century, while smaller events were more likely to have been overlooked because there were fewer deaths and less advanced technology. That is why some media and climate campaigners increasingly point to a rise in reported events (rather than the declining death toll) as evidence that climate change is ravaging the planet.
>
> But all of this increase has been in less serious events, whereas more deadly events are fewer and declining. The "rise" is due to technology and the global interconnectedness that allows for better reporting of ever smaller events, wherever they take place. This is clear because the increase is seen in all categories of disasters measured — not only weather disasters, but geophysical disasters such as volcanoes and earthquakes, and technological disasters such as train derailings. Not even radical climate activists claim that climate change is causing more trains to derail, or more volcanoes to explode. (Lomborg, 2024)

Sorry, Bjorn, but *Scientific American*, that once-venerable journal that's now taken to making endorsements for the President, told us back in 2017 that climate change does indeed make more volcanoes explode (Sneed, 2017).

Regardless, Jones' rhetoric and that of his allies on the climate left spin visions of hell on earth to justify abridging democratic rights and shifting the power of *who decides* from citizens to international committees, experts, and scientists. And, once you've convinced people they longer have the right to decide (COVID health measures, anyone?), then complaints about high prices for energy and other essentials are misinformation that might warrant jail time.

Figure 2

$5 Trillion Spent to Speed Transition in Two Decades and Hydrocarbons Still Supply 84% of Global Energy, Down Just 2%



*A billion tons of oil/year = 20 million barrels/day

https://media4.manhattan-institute.org/sites/default/files/the-energy-transition-delusion_a-reality-reset.pdf

The problem with the claims that CO_2 emissions will kill the world are threefold:

First, assuming carbon dioxide is the earth's thermostat, what is the correct temperature of the planet? What's the optimum temperature for human flourishing?

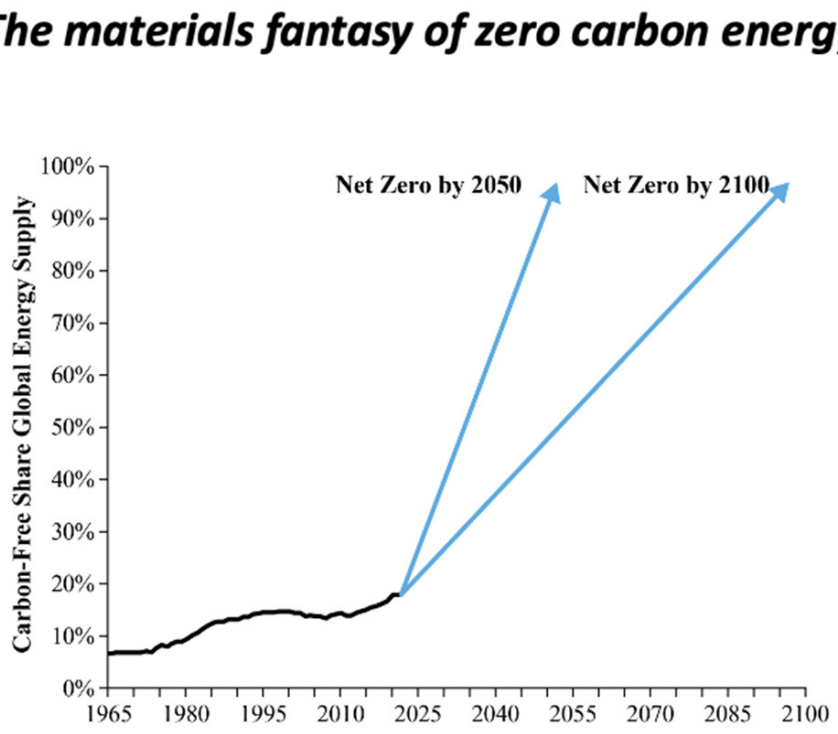
Second, is it realistic to expect the People's Republic of China, India, and the continent of Africa, home to 54% of the world's 8 billion people, to forego the use of readily available hydrocarbons to fuel their economies as they seek to enjoy prosperity? I frequently pointed out to my legislative colleagues in California that, were California eliminated—meaning both people and industry completely vanished—one year's worth of emissions growth in China would more than wipe out the "gain" in reduced emissions.

Third, as **Figure 2** displays, the energy transition effort has already consumed some $5 trillion over two decades, with scant progress against hydrocarbons to show for it. Tellingly, burning wood—the most ancient of energy forms—supplies more than five times the energy as all the world's solar panels. Eventually, voters will experience real pain and vote for a course correction.

Being realistic about the goals some politicians have made for America and the rest of the world starts with confronting the data as it is, not as it is wished to be. **Figure 3** presents data developed by American meteorologist Roger A. Pielke, Jr. It merely illustrates the impossibility of achieving global net zero goals by showing changes in the world's carbon-free energy supply.

Figure 3

Impossible Goals aren't Realistic Goals—and will be Abandoned as Costs Rise and Political Pushback Mounts



Realism is in short supply, unfortunately. Take the push to transition America to electric vehicles (EVs). Government support for EVs totals an average of almost $50,000 per vehicle when accounting for nearly $22 billion in federal and state subsidies and regulatory credits. Of this, only $8,984 per vehicle for the next nine years through 2033 consists of direct state and federal subsidies, much of that from 2022's Inflation Reduction Act (Bennett & Isaac, 2023).

Yet, even as President Joe Biden admitted in a September 2024 speech before the Economic Club of Washington, D.C., "…the Inflation Reduction Act, (is) the most significant climate law ever, anywhere in the history of the world" (Bravender, 2024). Thus, as with California's AB 32 in 2006, economic benefits were asserted (e.g., reducing inflation) for a bill with the intent to underwrite a costly energy transition, and, as the result of spending more borrowed money, would increase inflation.

The unaccounted-for added costs to Americans of the government's electric transition of the transportation sector are estimated at between $2.4 to $4 trillion dollars (Lesser, 2024). These costs will be incurred by the massive upgrade that the U.S. electric grid requires to accommodate a substantial increase in the use of electricity to charge vehicles. This includes items that have not been budgeted for, such as home chargers, upgrades to local transformers and powerlines, additional long distance transmission lines, on-road charging stations, and fast chargers.

The almost $4 trillion estimate is exclusive of the demand driven price increases for critical minerals and materials and labor to build the infrastructure—for instance, a majority of high voltage transformers are manufactured overseas, with the plurality made in China—as well as added generation capacity.

Of course, these costs are also exclusive of the push to electrify homes by banning the use of natural gas for cooking, home space, and water heating.

Turning to government regulation with the expectation of improving the lives of ordinary people is a mixed bag at best. Again, California offers a cautionary tale. In 2006, Juan Arambula, a moderate Democrat Assemblyman from the Central Valley, drafted AB 2330, a bill requiring a study of the regulatory compliance costs on small businesses in California (California Legislative Information, 2006b). The bill's preamble noted,

> The federal Small Business Administration began analyzing the cost and burdens of federal regulations on small businesses in 1995. The most recent update issued September 19, 2005, found that "small businesses continue to bear a disproportionate share of the federal regulatory burden." The report found that the annual cost of federal regulations in the United States totaled $1.1 trillion in 2004. It also found the costs of federal regulations on firms with fewer than 20 employees is $7,647. For small manufacturers this figure is at least double the compliance cost for medium-sized and large firms. (California Legislative Information, 2006b)

The federal regulatory burden on small businesses in 2004 comes to an inflation-adjusted amount of $12,743 in 2024.

The report authorized by Assemblyman Arambula was completed but held up for at least a year by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's administration. Eventually, by early 2009, the Legislature demanded the study they paid for, and in September of that year, the report was released (Varshney & Tootelian, 2009). The report's conclusions were explosive, finding, "…the total cost of regulation to the State of California is $492.994 billion which is almost five times the State's general fund budget, and almost a third of the State's gross product" (Varshney & Tootelian, 2009). Recall that compliance cost of federal regulations three years earlier was a little more than double, *across the entire nation.* Furthermore, the report found that

> [t]he cost of regulation results in an employment loss of 3.8 million jobs which is a tenth of the State's population. …The total cost of regulation was $134,122.48 per small business in California in 2007, labor income not created or lost was $4,359.55 per small business, indirect business taxes not generated or lost were $57,260.15 per small business, and finally roughly one job lost per small business. (Varshney & Tootelian, 2009)

The estimated compliance cost for California's myriad environmental and labor regulations in 2007 was $134,122. Adjusted for inflation today, that amount would be $203,631—and the regulatory burden, especially in the realm of climate change regulations, has only increased since then.

Understanding California's regulatory compliance burden is important because it shows how far government can go when it believes it is pursuing some public good.

Of course, the other side of the equation is that business and the jobs they create aren't captive and can move out of state or simply disappear.

But will businesses move? One theory of why the left pushes for costly national regulation is that, to the extent that federal regulations apply to all the states, burdensome regulations act to make Texas and Florida more like California and New York, thus subverting our federal system wherein states retain certain powers as a check upon a corrupt concentration of authority (Loyola, 2012). How does this work? The American Action Forum estimates that the regulatory compliance costs imposed so far by the Biden-Harris administration total $1.7 trillion (Goldbeck, 2024). Returning to California's regulatory compliance burden for small business in 2009—a burden that that has assuredly become larger—and adjusting it for inflation yields a compliance cost of $720 billion. Approximately one in eight Americans live in California; thus, the proportional weight of the Biden-Harris regulations on California equal about $213 billion, or about 38% of the cost of California's regulations as they existed in 2009. In other states with lighter regulatory burdens, the cost of compliance with new federal regulations would be far higher. In fact, many of California's existing regulations are likely redundant to the new federal regulations. Thus, the Biden-Harris regulatory push acts to suppress state competitive advantages in terms of the regulatory climate.

One fresh example of the Biden-Harris administration applying California climate regulations to the nation may be found in the new SEC climate rule, issued in March of this year (Tice, 2024). These climate disclosure rules require every large U.S. corporation to report in detail all the climate-related physical and transition risks and their direct and indirect (meaning their suppliers) greenhouse gas emissions. These rules are part of the Biden-Harris "Whole-of- Government" approach to redirect investment away from oil, gas, and coal companies. In addition to the substantial compliance costs, the overall effect of the rule will be to decrease the availability of hydrocarbons, thus driving up energy costs.

But burdensome regulations and inflationary government spending have real consequences for Americans, with a July CNN poll finding that 39% of U.S. adults worry that their family's income won't be enough to meet expenses—a figure even higher than that surveyed in during the Great Recession (Egan, 2024). CNN noted, "To cope, significant shares of Americans said they are adding side jobs, cutting down on driving and putting more expenses on credit cards" (Egan, 2024).

And it just isn't feeling bad in a poll. In May, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York issued a report that household debt and delinquencies were increasing (Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2024). Joelle Scally, Regional Economic Principal within the Household and Public Policy Research Division at the New York Fed noted, "In the first quarter of 2024, credit card and auto loan transition rates into serious delinquency continued to rise across all age groups" (Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2024). Credit card delinquencies were also increasing, showing that people were maxing out on their cards tying to pay for the higher prices generated by inflationary Biden-Harris policies.■

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