

Managers Log Wednesday, April the 22nd 2020

On this Earth Day, looking at another Nation magazine article, kind of taking a break from this COVID-19. Looking at the March 30 edition, St. Bill: The Story of Bill Gates. But inside there's an article, California fights Trump for clean air.

"The President has overturned a 50 year waiver that allows the state to set its own standard. This article by Sasha Abramsky. Fifty years ago when the Nixon administration and Congress were working to strengthen the Clean Air Act, they looked at California to see how it could be done. At that time in Los Angeles, it was a heavy, heavy smog and State officials had already established emission standards for vehicles mandating the use of cutting edge technology like crank cases that recirculated exhaust into the emission system rather than simply spewed out into the air. Later they introduced catalytic converters and lights that warn drivers when their engines are malfunctioning and thus over polluting. By 1967, when then Governor Ronald Reagan signed the act creating California Air Resources Board CARB, the Golden State had an infrastructure for environmental regulations second to none.

"Then for Donald Trump, who has claimed that climate change is a hoax and whose administration is joined at the hip to the fossil fuel industry. California's Clean Air Act waivers were always destined to be a target. So last October, his administration announced that one of the most important California waivers of the past half century, the one allowing it to set stricter standards for vehicle emissions was being revoked." So there we have that story from other sightings of this article.

"The moment Trump was elected, California's waiver became vulnerable to the ideological driven attack. California has detailed greenhouse gas reduction targeted for vehicles in 2002. When the AB 1493 created what was called a Pavley standard, it rocked the world. The automotive industry fought tooth and nail claiming California couldn't do it. And that greenhouse gases weren't a pollutant. CARB locked into place stringent emission standards and other states followed suit in 2016.

"The Trump administration came into power committed to roll back regulations that, in a way limited the ability to maximize profits for American corporations. It was therefore particularly receptive to lobbying from the auto industry and the fossil fuel companies. November 10th two days after the election, the CEO of lobbying group Auto Alliance emailed Trump's transition team urging his incoming administration to roll back the higher fuel economy and emissions standards that were negotiated in 2012 between the Obama administration's and the California Air Resources Board.

"Those standards required vehicle fleets to hit an average fuel efficiency standard of 54.5 miles per gallon by the middle of the decade 54.5." I remember back in auto shop back in the 1960s my auto shop teacher always claimed that it's possible to build a internal combustion motor to operate at 100 miles per gallon. And that was always a dream, wow, 100 miles a gallon. You can cruise all night long and all week long at 100 miles per gallon. So we thought that was a nice worthy dream.

But of course, fossil fuel industries wants us to use as much gasoline as we possibly can. That's why cars travel so fast. The faster you go, the more you burn. The more you burn, the more you need. So anyway, that's another thing that we're looking at is on this Earth Day. What's the rest of the story? How has the air quality, improved or degraded? Food for thought, the air to breathe. Thanks for listening.

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