If we’re to survive as a civilization, we have to buy electric cars. And the sooner the better.

 That was the core takeaway from a recent news conference held by Governor Lamont, Democrat lawmakers, and climate activists who stood on a Toyota showroom in New Haven to announce that in 2035 anyone in Connecticut who wants to buy a new car will have no choice but to go “green.”

 At that time, 12 years from now, the sale of *new* gas-powered vehicles will be prohibited. Don’t worry, they’ve assured us that both our state’s charging infrastructure, capacity, and battery technology will have improved enough that our lives will be the same as they are today—only we’ll be breathing easier, and getting to work on time will be as easy as plugging in your iPhone before bed.

 Sorry, but count me among the many skeptics who have seen how long it takes the state to fix a bridge let alone develop energy solutions to support a sprawling grid of charging stations.

 Thankfully, they say we’d still be able to buy *used* gas-powered vehicles.

 During their news conference, the Governor and his Energy and Environmental Protection commissioner announced that Connecticut is moving to adopt California regulations, which, in addition to passenger vehicles, also target gas-powered medium and heavy-duty trucks for extinction. Farm equipment, too. School buses are also in the crosshairs, as are diesel-powered state transit buses that are being replaced by electric models like the defective bus that caught fire at a Hamden depot a year ago.

 They’ve filed their new regulations, which will be considered by the legislature’s Regulations Review committee. Residents have until Aug. 23 to comment in writing, and though not yet confirmed, it’s likely the committee will hold a hearing that will give residents a chance to speak in person.

 Expect to hear from the business community, particularly those companies that rely on trucks—a frequent target of Democrats, many of whom seem to have little understanding of the effort and cost associated with providing services and moving goods upon which we all depend.

 Trucking companies have justifiable concern about the transition. Trucks come with higher upfront costs compared to those powered by diesel. Charging infrastructure and range limitations for longer hauls are ponderous. Make no mistake, this looming—forced—change requires business owners to begin reworking their finances and long-term planning *right now*.

 After all, buying a new dump truck isn’t as easy as eyeing an [expensive] electric Camry in the paper before popping down to a dealership with a binder full of government-backed vouchers and rebates.

 That Democrats are driving Connecticut down California’s ideological regulatory rabbit hole, using government as a blunt instrument to expand the electric vehicle consumer base, just doesn’t sit well. Especially when you consider the legislature’s full membership—me included—won’t have a vote on the matter. That decision-making power lies solely with Regulations Review committee members.

 Sure, “green” vehicles are gaining in popularity in Connecticut. Yet, as reported by the news media, the 36,000 registered electric vehicles represent a seed-sized fraction of the 3 million vehicles on the road.

 The 2035 mandate set by California, and soon Connecticut, is at odds with popular opinion. A recent Pew survey reports Americans generally support renewable energy initiatives, but just 31 percent support phasing out fossil fuels in 12 years’ time, while 59 percent oppose the prohibition of gas-powered vehicles on that same timeline. No matter, here, the Governor tells us “do the right thing.”

 Make no mistake, soon that “right thing” will extend to many other items we use, from riding lawnmowers and weed whackers to log splitters and pressure washers. The commissioner has also expressed interest in digging into emissions standards for other sectors of our economy.

As a business owner, the thought of that makes me shudder.

 Perhaps we should review performance of the state’s 12 electric transit buses, coming back on-line now after last summer’s fire and technology recall, before we give any unelected bureaucrat more juice.

 It’s important for each of us to send a message now—to draw a line in the stand and tell the Governor that state government shouldn’t *force* these blanket ideological policies on its citizenry. Visit repcandelora.com for instructions on how you can weigh in on the proposed regulatory changes.

 Our future, and certainly our financial well-being, depends on it.

**Rep. Vincent Candelora**

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