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Public Money to Advance Alternative Energy Technology

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The greatest users of energy in the United States and elsewhere are governments. Since that is the case, the best opportunity to deploy this technology are the various levels of government starting at the federal level. But we have an opportunity to advance technology at every level.

Presently what we are doing is moving too slowly. We are creating incentives for business and individuals to install alternative energy systems. That results in a multitude of decisions on the part of many individuals. This retail method is a hard way to move a technology. Presently we are at about 1/10th of 1 percent solar. Historically the "tipping point" where technology takes off is about 3%. We need to accelerate the transition, because what we are doing isn't working.

Compare this to what happened in the field of computers. In 1957 the Russians put a satellite in orbit that was, for want of a better term, a dunce. It could go beep, beep, beep but nothing more. It could not record anything, and it could not monitor and relay information. To get the computing and telemetry needed for a modern satellite would take a structure the size of a 10 story building, and it would need a rocket that to this day has never been devised.

The United States, and only the United States had the resources to develop and build what would be needed to make space exploration possible.

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The task of making a myriad of alternative energy sources is similar, but not nearly as gargantuan. We know how to create these energy devices. What we do not know is how to make them very efficient and inexpensive. By employing the resources of the state and federal government we can endure the failures that are inevitable. When I say failures I don't mean that the project we deploy will literally fail, I mean that the bang for the buck may not be there. But that is not the point either. What we want to do is gain the experience and advance the science. In that regard it will not be a failure but a learning curve.

When the various governments create a widespread demand then the investing members of society will create the means to meet that demand. In doing so they will seek to innovate to improve profits, but this will ultimately lead to a lower power price structure.

SUNY Stony Brook has just received \$35 million to create an alternative Energy Research Center. This center will be occupied by inventors and innovators in the field of alternative energy. The state and local governments should be their natural partners. The governments will be receiving an ever-improving stream of better and better equipment. The Center would be receiving a stream of cash that would further research to create the next generation of products.

In the end what we will accomplish a strategy that will;

Advance the science of alternative energy

Reduce the outflow of the country's dollars

Create a large number of unexportable jobs

Enhance national security