

Energy wisdom is lacking among public officials



By Ronald Stein, PE

January 16, 2026

Most elected officials, as well as those aspiring to be elected, have little comprehension of the differences between the products and transportation fuels running the economy and the electricity needed by all the infrastructure. Thus, all candidates running for public offices throughout the country (both parties), for Mayor, Governor, President, etc., should be given the opportunity to share their Energy Wisdom in public debates.

The global population has surged from 1 to over 8 billion in less than 200 years, not from fossil fuels, but FROM the products and transportation fuels MADE FROM fossil fuels. This growth has been directly attributable to the dramatic increase in the number of products and transportation fuels made from fossil fuels, many of which are essential to health, safety, transportation mobility, agriculture, and national defense.

Since wind turbines and solar panels ONLY generate electricity, in less than 2 minutes, readers may find this video educational, "Can You Go a Day Without Fossil Fuels?" as it shows some of the products that wind turbines and solar panels CANNOT make for our materialistic society. Since all the components to generate electricity by coal, natural gas, hydro, nuclear, wind, and solar are MADE FROM fossil fuels, George Carlin shares in a 1-minute video the results of ridding the world of fossil fuels, as that would Eliminate ALL

electricity.

Before we rid the planet of fossil fuel usage, the public deserves to know the zero-emission ideologists' plan for what the replacement will be for that black tar commonly referred to as crude oil, to maintain the supply chain of products and transportation fuels demanded by the 8 billion people on this planet that are the foundation of the world's economy.

Which brings us back to the essence of Energy Wisdom: that decisions by public officials about energy are, at their core, decisions about society itself—about what kind of economy we wish to sustain, what kind of communities we wish to build, and what trade-offs we are prepared to accept. These are not technical questions alone, as they are cultural, economic, geopolitical, and ethical questions that demand serious public conversation, especially from those seeking public office.

For candidates who hope to lead—whether as Mayor, Governor, or President—Energy Wisdom requires comprehensive awareness: that modern civilization is not powered by electricity alone; that materials matter; that transportation fuels for planes, ships, military, construction equipment, and space travel launches, that oil underpins global logistics and manufacturing; that ethical mining must be part of any responsible strategy; that nuclear generated electricity is returning to the global stage; and that Earth's mineral and metal resources, while vast, are ultimately finite. America's prosperity has always been tied to its ability to understand industrial realities, not simply political aspirations.

The following open-ended questions are intended not to trap or embarrass political figures, but to invite deeper discussions about their Energy Wisdom. If an aspiring leader can articulate thoughtful responses to these six questions, voters will have a clearer sense of whether that candidate possesses the level of Energy Wisdom needed for leadership.

These open-ended questions are for candidates to share the extent of their Energy Wisdom:

- (1) More than 6,000 products and transportation fuels rely on petrochemicals every day, many of which are essential to health, safety, mobility, agriculture, and national defense. Question: Understanding that wind and solar only generate electricity but CANNOT make any of the products or transportation fuels demanded by those on this planet, what role do you believe petroleum-based products play in sustaining a modern industrial economy and civilization?
- (2) To support life expectancy that is now more than 75 years of age, versus 40 years of age in the 1800's, almost all modern pharmaceuticals rely on petrochemicals from crude oil for their creation and essential components for drug delivery, plastics (syringes, IV bags), packaging, and even transport, making oil foundational to nearly every medicine's journey from lab to patient. These petroleum-derived chemicals are crucial for creating active ingredients and purifying naturally sourced drugs, making large-scale, cost-effective production possible. Question: What is your plan to replace crude oil that will maintain the supply chain of products to support the medical industry?
- (3) Continuous, dependable electricity remains essential for industrial societies and economies. Voters deserve to know how a candidate plans to secure reliable electricity under all conditions. Question: Thus, how do you view the limitations of relying solely on wind turbines and solar panels that can only generate electricity under favorable weather conditions as the foundation for an electricity policy?
- (4) New nuclear reactor technologies are emerging worldwide to generate continuous, uninterruptible, and emission-free electricity to support the growing demand for electricity.

Question: How do you see nuclear power contributing to America's long-term electricity needs, and will America lead—or follow?

(5) Currently, the international supply chains for minerals and metals that support the construction of wind turbines, solar panels, and EV batteries are from poorer developing nations with minimal labor laws and environmental regulations. Question: What are your views on the ethical and moral dimensions of global mining for those critical minerals and metals that will avoid the current exploitation of child labor with yellow, brown, and black skin, and environmental degradation in those poorer developing countries, currently supplying those exotic minerals and metals, to support the green movement in wealthier countries?

(6) Earth's finite natural resources of crude oil, coal, lithium, cobalt, etc., are not endless and may require a wiser approach to energy planning and consumption. Question: What principles should guide national policy over the next half-century to maintain the supply chain of products, transportation fuels, and sufficient electricity to meet the ever-growing materialistic demands of the 8 billion on this planet?

America, and the world's 8 billion people, need leaders who can think beyond slogans, beyond narrow categories of electricity, and beyond short-term political cycles. Energy Wisdom is not about favoring one source over another. It is about recognizing the full industrial reality that sustains modern life and approaching energy decisions, inclusive of the products, transportation fuels, and electricity demanded by all infrastructures of today's economy, with humility, responsibility, and practical understanding. That is the kind of Energy Wisdom leadership the twenty-first century requires.

Please share this information with teachers, students, and

friends to encourage Energy Literacy conversations at the family dinner table.

[Click this Link to Sign up for Energy Literacy from Ronald Stein.](#)

© 2026 Ronald Stein – All Rights Reserved

E-Mail Ronald Stein: Ronald.Stein@EnergyLiteracy.net