



BY JASON THOMPSON

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# DEAR MR. PRESIDENT

**D**EAR PRESIDENT OBAMA, I appreciate your commitment to an open dialogue, and your willingness to share your vision on how great this country *is*, and *can be*. So I want to do my part by voicing my opinion regarding the most important issues our nation is engaged in today. They are all interconnected and include energy, transportation, the economy, and our environment. I’ve been studying, writing, and taking pictures about these things for the last two years, and because of the exceptional engineers, mechanics, enthusiasts, inventors, and scientists I’ve been in contact with—I have a unique perspective to present some of their ideas that have rubbed off on me.

## THE MAGIC BULLET

You say there is “no magic bullet” for jump-starting the economy, but have you heard of Sturman Industries’ digital-hydraulic valves? Eddie Sturman was part of the team at Bell Aerospace that invented these for the Apollo Program back in the ’60s. These valves have already been used in the 6.0L Power Stroke, and they have the potential to massively improve our world. If not for these digitally controlled valves, the Apollo missions might have failed. Especially Apollo 13, which was only able to make it back to Earth because of how much energy the astronauts were able to conserve. We are on the verge of another digital revolution, just like the one that hit electronics. This could mean clean energy and efficient transportation for everyone on earth. Sturman Industries has working engines that permit complete control of the air, fuel, and timing down to the microsecond. Its fast-acting valves can replace the camshaft, crankshaft, and transmission—freeing the piston like never before. This allows getting the most out of every drop of nonrenewable

fuel today and allows for the flexibility of burning any kind of fuel (including biofuels) tomorrow. Eddie Sturman helped get us to the moon, and although he admits that building a proper engine is a tougher challenge, I know we can do it.

## FUNDING THE SMALL BUSINESSES

I read GreenCarCongress.com every day, and I’ve noticed most of our taxpayers’ money is going to large corporations. I just got back from a Colorado trip where I visited Lightning Hybrids, Snow Performance, and Sturman Industries. All three of these companies have something to offer, which would immediately reduce our dependence on foreign oil, clean up our environment, and create more jobs. Each company has applied for federal funding and has been denied because they were too small. This is a double whammy for them because just applying for funding takes time and money. Small businesses and common working people don’t have the resources for this red tape. It’s not fair that they aren’t being given the opportunity to participate in our recovery effort. We need to find a way to help new companies get new ideas to market faster—and not just give all our money to huge (old) corporations that are slow to develop cutting-edge technology.

## APPRECIATE THE DANGERS OF ELECTRIC CARS

Electric cars seem clean on initial inspection, but when you look deeper, you catch a glimpse of the nasty future they could bring. First of all, when I visited Dhaka, Bangladesh, I tried to imagine the piles of our batteries and electronics that’ll probably end up being taken apart by the hands of its citizens. Just think of a future where we have to deal with the toxic stew of an electrified Third World. Secondly,

my father is an accountant at a rural electric co-op, so I’ve always been aware of just how much it costs to build and maintain power lines. Thirdly, some scientists believe that electromagnetic frequency (EMF) radiation has the potential to poison as many people as cigarettes do. Fourthly, we have to remember that batteries don’t come from Prius Land, they come from mining the Earth. Do we really want to trade one scarce resource (petroleum) for another (lithium)?

Furthermore, companies have begun marketing electric vehicle technology that requires equipment (batteries) that doesn’t yet exist—their energy density capacity is not practical. And it’s not like we don’t have the electronics industry already hard at work. If we switched to 100-percent electric cars right now, we’d be putting the cart before the horse, and possibly put our children at risk of living in a world that’s no more sustainable (or healthy) than the petroleum world we live in today. I think electric vehicles and public transportation would help densely populated urban areas, but everywhere in between needs an efficient, reliable automobile powered by heat—not electricity.

## DIESEL NEEDS EQUAL FUNDING AND A FRESH LOOK

Right now, if everyone in the United States switched to diesel, we’d save millions of barrels of oil each day. The problem with getting diesel into the mainstream has nothing to do with emissions or technical hurdles—the only thing holding us back is our own misguided perceptions. Close your eyes, and say “diesel.” Do you imagine something old, smelly, and noisy, or something scientific and progressive? **DP**

Sincerely,

Jason Thompson

[jason.thompson@sorc.com](mailto:jason.thompson@sorc.com)