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Vijay Dhar Comment re Lithium Valley Commission Meeting

Thanks for taking a note of my public comment

During early part of the Feb 25 meeting, I asked a question about fast tracking of actions on the ground in Lithium Valley. Reason for the question was the huge concerns about critical raw materials and battery supply chain security - similar to the "Sputnik moment" that drove fast tracking of transformational US Space Program in the sixties.

As I listened to the discussions and comments during the Feb 25th meeting, I identified two actions that could be prioritized for such fast tracking. I suggest to include them in early agenda items on upcoming meetings

1. Enterprise Zone in Imperial Valley: Both Rod Colwell and Jonathan Weisgall, who are already working on demonstration of local battery grade Lithium, emphasized the need for incentives to create a local supply chain ecosystem for Lithium, Precursor and Cathode manufacturing. "Enterprise Zone" designation would help incentivize co-location and collaboration with ease of infrastructure/power/access, permitting and tax credits.

2. Social and Environmental justice: Most members of the commission emphasized need to repair the damage that has already occurred. Fortunately Jonathan Weisgall, who represents one of the most philanthropic companies, took a lot of interest in stepping up to the challenge. This early agenda item is suggested to discuss

a) Repair of Damage that has already occurred. Some best practices may be borrowed from "abandoned mine" recovery efforts elsewhere in the world.

b) Set an example, with best practices integrated into the Lithium Valley development plan, in order to lay a solid foundation for social and environmental justice for the 2030's circular economy.

For inclusion, a sub-team for this topic #2 could have a few bright and passionate teenagers from the local disadvantaged communities, to have a say in laying such a foundation to shape their future in the 2030's - 50's