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Issue:

There is a severe lack of electric car charging stations on NJ Turnpike and throughout the state.

Necessary Background:

With the new age of electric cars and alternative energy, it is important that the state of New Jersey updates its infrastructure to allow for the use of these cars. At this moment, there are not enough in-use electric car charging stations, but recent legislation was passed to open up six charging stations throughout New Jersey along the NJ Turnpike (Capital Network). Doug O'Malley, Director of the environmental advocacy group Environment New Jersey, says there is a general consensus that more work needs to be done to grow the market for electric cars in the state of New Jersey, and that can be done by making electric chargers accessible at more locations. Many environmentalists state that without legislative changes addressing charging stations, the culture of electric cars will dissipate around us (NorthJersey.com).

Evidence of Problem Existing:

New Jersey has some of the worst air quality in the nation, and the system needs to move towards decreasing pollution. Vehicles account for about 30 percent of the emissions that form smog in New Jersey, according to the state Department of Environmental Protection. Electric Car sales have been going up, as close to 100,000 electric cars are now present on the road, and three times as many models are present now than in 2012. Car manufacturers are moving towards the direction of electric cars, but we need the infrastructure to support a vast switch to more environmentally-friendly cars. "New Jersey's been way behind in implementing electric car infrastructure across the state," said Doug O'Malley, aforementioned Director of Environment New Jersey. Before April 1st, 2015, Tesla Motors was not even allowed to sell their electric cars in the state of New Jersey for it was in a monopolized market, but as newer models come out, the market for electric cars is growing, which necessitates the installation of charging stations. As of this moment, there are only six charging stations across the entire NJ Turnpike. Most other states have far more advanced electric charging station infrastructure.

Impact:

The impact of new legislation will allow for consumers to have confidence in purchasing electric cars and have security in understanding they will never be stranded due to lack of access to a charging station. As of now, consumers are worried there is not enough structural support to allow for purchase of an electric car. An average driver can find gas stations every mile or so, but without that same ingrained structure for electric car users, consumers will side with the gas-guzzling vehicles.

Possible Solutions:

The next step is to allow for installation of the SAE J1772 charging stations throughout the state. These new charging stations will promote consumers to make the decision to switch to electric vehicles rather than typical gas-guzzling cars. Additionally, the newly low oil prices will not be in perpetuity, and therefore consumers must be influenced away from making the myopic decision of buying a low-MPG car. There is also good reason for legislation that would incentivize corporations to build their own charging stations in their parking lots, as some hospitals have done. Overall, the need for electric charging stations is ubiquitous. Legislation could propose building state-funded charging stations on the turnpike or incentivize companies to build their own charging stations.

Sources:

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2. <http://www.northjersey.com/news/electric-car-advocates-urge-nj-to-develop-charging-stations-incentives-video-1.1040703>
3. http://www.nj.com/traffic/index.ssf/2015/02/tesla_charging_stations_to_be_installed_on_nj_turnpike_starting_next_week.html