

Plug In America Unplugs

Dealers Pressure Plug In America to Back Away From Direct Sales

Plug In America (PIA) has up until now played an important advocacy role in the effort to pass SB 127 in Connecticut and similar direct sales laws in other states. They acted as a clearinghouse for a lot of information from economists, academics and others that supported our arguments for EV Freedom, and did a lot of coordinating between the numerous parties involved, including the EV Club, manufacturers, environmental organizations, lobbyists, among others.

As of now, however, the coordination Zooms have stopped and the content has been removed from the PIA website. We had copies of some of the content, and what we have is now [posted](#) on the EV Club website.

PIA has a business called PlugStar. It is a training program to help dealerships become more effective at selling EVs. The dealers pay for this and it is a meaningful revenue stream for PIA. The dealers threatened to terminate their arrangements with PlugStar unless PIA stopped supporting direct sales. The board of PIA has caved and directed that the ongoing advocacy efforts in this area cease. This is not just a CT thing.

Needless to say, those of us in the EV community were gobsmacked by this “pulling the rug out from under” move at a critical time. And we’re surprised the organization doesn’t have bylaws in place to provide separation and deal with what seems an obvious potential for conflict. We blame PIA for compromising their principles, but, of course, it was the dealers that put them in this position. They show their colors that competition is good for everyone except themselves.

This is from the PIA website:

Plug In America is a non-profit, supporter-driven advocacy group. We are the voice of plug-in vehicle drivers across the country.

It is clear that the position they are taking runs counter to their mission and that they have now become the voice of entrenched interests blocking progress.

Our club would like to see dealers up their game when it comes to selling EVs, but we don't agree with the franchise laws being used to stifle competition. The majority of EV sales, both nationally and in CT, are from direct sales.

To the extent that club members and readers of this blog donate to PIA, we recommend sending those funds to other organizations instead. You can find a long list of worthy options in the [CT Electric Vehicle Coalition](#).

The EV Club has also filed a Freedom on Information Act Request to obtain the relevant backup documents underlying the decision.