



Natural Resources Defense Council

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news release

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California Zooms Toward Finish Line for Global Warming Standard
Statement by Roland Hwang, NRDC Vehicles Policy Director

SAN FRANCISCO (August 6, 2004) – The California Air Resources Board (CARB) today released its final staff proposal for the nation’s first ever regulation to reduce global warming pollution from cars. It calls for tailpipe emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants to be reduced by approximately 30 percent by 2016. CARB is scheduled to adopt final standards at a hearing on September 23. A 2002 bill (AB 1493, Pavley) requires it to adopt standards by the end of this year.

The law still enjoys enormous popular support in California. Just last month, the nonpartisan Public Policy Institute of California released a statewide survey, showing that 81 percent of Californians support the global warming law. The same survey found that 77 percent of SUV owners favor requiring automakers to reduce global warming pollution. This is in spite of a vigorous, expensive and ultimately unsuccessful campaign of misinformation and scare tactics by automakers to kill the bill in 2002.

Following is a statement by Roland Hwang, vehicles policy director at NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council).

“The proposal is a sensible, feasible requirement for automakers to build cleaner, better cars. These new standards are the key to accelerating the drive to put the latest pollution reduction technologies in California’s fleet of cars. Not only will it spur new innovation, it is also consistent with the overwhelming public support by Californians for cutting global warming pollution from cars.

“California has been leading the nation and the world in clean vehicle technology standards for over 40 years, and as a result, we have cleaner air and a stronger economy. Time and time again Californians have rejected the same old ‘it can’t be done’ arguments from the Big Three. Any automaker that tries to convince Californians that they can’t have cleaner cars runs a big risk of alienating customers in the world’s most valuable car market.

“CARB and industry analyses confirm there are technologies available right now to make less-polluting vehicles, including SUVs and pickups. Many of these technologies – such as variable valve timing and lift, cylinder deactivation, and continuously variable transmission – already are entering the nation’s auto fleet and offer the additional benefit of saving consumers money at the gas pump. In fact, automakers can’t keep up with the demand for the cleanest, most advanced cars, the hybrids.”

The Natural Resources Defense Council is a national, nonprofit organization of scientists, lawyers and environmental specialists dedicated to protecting public health and the environment. Founded in 1970, NRDC has more than 1 million members and e-activists nationwide, served from offices in New York, Washington, Santa Monica and San Francisco.

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