

The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers (AAM) is waging a national campaign to preempt states from adopting more protective standards for automobile emissions. Thirteen states, home to one-third of the U.S. auto market, have adopted more stringent than federal emission regulations (Clean Cars Program) for automobile air pollution, led by California.

The Clean Cars Program has two components: the LEV 2 standards for air pollution, and the global warming pollution standards. LEV 2 is already in effect in many states, while the global warming pollution standards is being reviewed and will go into effect, or not, in LEV 2 states once the EPA rules on California's waiver request.

In its zeal to defeat state efforts, the Alliance has been distributing misinformation about the Clean Cars Program. This fact sheet corrects some of their misstatements:

AAM Myth: Automakers claim that every vehicle would cost \$3000 more under the more protective standards.

Fact: When the global warming component is put into place, the upfront vehicle costs is expected to rise by about \$1000 per car, not \$3000, and this increase will be made up through savings at the pump for consumers. Automakers are likely to meet the emission standards by making the cars more efficient. According to the California Air Resources Board, assuming a low gas price of \$2.30/gallon, the purchaser of a car meeting the CO2 standards would save more than \$18 per month, while their monthly car payment for a cleaner car would only increase by \$5-\$10, putting them ahead by \$8-\$13 dollars a month.

AAM Myth: Automakers claim that the standards would require a huge new state bureaucracy.

Fact: The states that have adopted the program have experienced minimal added administrative burden, adding only one or two staff people for record keeping and tracking.

AAM Myth: Automakers claim that the standards would reduce vehicle choice.

Fact: Looking at 2007 model cars, out of 494 models for which classification information is available from the EPA, 456 are already compliant with the Clean Cars Program. Only 38 are non-compliant.¹

Of those 38, eleven have another version of the same model with the same specs that is sold in clean car states – a cleaner version for the clean car states and a dirtier version for other states. Plus, three of the 38 models cannot even be sold under federal standards after 2008. That leaves only 24 out of 491 models (5%) that in the 2007 model year do not comply with these standards. Presumably, even some of those will be cleaned up over the next few years to meet the California standards.

¹ "Model" here is used to mean any variation of a model. For example, a 6-cylinder and 8-cylinder Mustang are considered different models.

In addition, there is an exemption for work vehicles. Up to 4% of heavy cars can be non-compliant, allowing automakers to sell even the 24 non-compliant models on a limited basis.

In reality, the program will expand consumer choice. Automakers are already making SUVs and light trucks that comply with the Clean Car Program, but they are selling these vehicles in states where the LEV 2 standards are in effect.

AAM Myth: Automakers claim that adopting the 13-state emission rules would cede authority to California.

Fact: Arizona is always free to choose between the federal program and the more stringent program on the books in California and 12 other states. If we adopt the more protective standards, we would be free to revert back to the federal standards at any time.

AAM Myth: Automakers claim that the CO2 emission rules are preempted by federal fuel economy standards.

Fact: The Clean Cars Program regulates how much pollution the fleet of cars sold in Arizona can emit, not fuel economy. Improving fuel economy is one way in which the automakers may choose to comply with the emission standards, but the program does not regulate fuel economy.

For More Information: Diane E. Brown (602)318-2779 (c) or dbrown@arizonapirg.org