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District Responds to U.S. EPA Action on Tighter Vehicle Emissions Standards

Sacramento, Calif. – Today, the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District’s (Sac Metro Air District) Air Pollution Control Officer, Dr. Alberto Ayala, issued a statement in response to the U.S. EPA finalizing the rule requiring cars, beginning in the 2023 model year, to reach the industry-wide standard of 40 miles per gallon by 2026:

“The Sac Metro Air District is pleased to see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency taking action to enforce a more stringent mileage standard. This is an important step toward getting our country back on track to achieve our emissions reduction and climate change goals.

While we applaud this progress and President Biden’s leadership on the environment, we must do even more to reverse shortsighted environmental policy and rollbacks. This latest ruling essentially gets us back on track to meet the standards President Obama’s administration set, which was 54.5 mpg by 2025. We know those standards were modest and the bar must be set higher to meet the challenges of our climate crisis. As we look forward, the District heavily encourages and supports more aggressive standards for model years 2027 and beyond to dramatically combat climate change and reduce catastrophic environmental and health consequences. Additionally, while President Biden’s plan to increase the adoption of electric vehicles to around 17% is a step in the right direction, a much more daring plan is needed.

The state of California is already two steps ahead of the rest of the country on electric vehicle policy. Per Governor Gavin Newsom’s executive order, the sale of new gasoline cars will be banned beginning in 2035, reflecting our state’s commitment to making zero emission vehicles a practical and realistic option for residents, whether they live in a busy urban center or a quiet rural town.

By tackling the air and climate pollution created by light duty vehicles, California will improve outcomes for the environment and public health. By reducing exposure to toxic tailpipe emissions, negative health impacts from pollution will be diminished for everyone. We will especially improve outcomes for individuals with asthma, heart and lung disease, and those who are most vulnerable to the negative impacts of air pollution including children, pregnant women, the elderly, and our underserved communities.

Sac Metro Air District looks forward to continuing to work with residents, community organizations, local governments, and state and federal leaders to advance aggressive climate change and clean air solutions.”

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