

VT Judge Rules for Clean Cars, Cleaner Air

Decision Clears the Way for EPA Approval of New Global Warming Regulations

BURLINGTON, Vt., Sept. 12 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- California and fourteen other states won a decisive victory today in federal court that paves the way for new rules limiting global warming pollution from automobiles. Vermont U.S. District Judge William K. Sessions rejected all of the manufacturers' and dealers' challenges to the state greenhouse gas emissions standards, ruling that auto manufacturers can meet new clean car standards adopted by California and fourteen other states.* The U.S. EPA still needs to grant California a waiver under the Clean Air Act to permit the standards to take effect.

"This ruling takes away the last excuse for delay -- it's time for EPA to clear the way for cleaner cars," said Jim Tripp, General Counsel for Environmental Defense, who helped argue the VT case. "The U.S. auto industry should stop litigating and start innovating."

The VT case (along with a similar case pending in CA) was brought by U.S. automakers arguing that the regulations are burdensome and cause undue economic harm to the industry while not addressing global warming.

Over the last decade, foreign automakers have seen profits jump as they bring more low-emissions vehicles to the market, while U.S. automakers have struggled financially.

Environmental Defense has filed a notice of intent to sue EPA if they do not rule on the California waiver request by November 2007. Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) has introduced legislation in Congress to require EPA to grant the waiver.

"Cleaner cars are the ultimate win-win-win: good for our economy, our environment and our overall health and well-being," added Tripp.

* The fourteen other states include Vermont, Connecticut, Florida, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Washington.

Environmental Defense, a leading national nonprofit organization, represents more than 500,000 members. Since 1967, Environmental Defense has linked science, economics, law and innovative private-sector partnerships to create breakthrough solutions to the most serious environmental problems. <http://www.environmentaldefense.org>

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