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U.S. EPA Grants Landmark California Emissions Waiver

Action Brings Cleaner Air to California and Hastens National Transition to Cleaner Cars

SAN FRANCISCO, CA/WASHINGTON, DC (June 30, 2009) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today is expected to grant California the waiver to implement its landmark clean cars program to cut global warming pollution from vehicles by 30 percent by 2016.

Granting California the waiver is an important step in carrying out the historic agreement President Obama announced last month to implement federal greenhouse gas and mileage standards for model years 2012-2016. California's standards, which start in 2009, will give the Golden State a jumpstart on reducing global warming pollution while the federal government develops national standards that deliver the benefits of the California program nationwide. Fourteen states are poised to follow California's early lead. Together, California and the 14 states will cover roughly 40 percent of the U.S. vehicle fleet.

California requested the normally routine Clean Air Act waiver from EPA in 2005. The request was denied by the Bush administration in 2008. On January 26, 2009, shortly after taking office, President Obama directed EPA to revisit the denial.

Following is a statement by Roland Hwang, Transportation Program Director for the Natural Resources Defense Council:

“This announcement is a breath of fresh air for Californians. U.S. EPA's long-overdue waiver puts the federal seal of approval on California's leadership to curb global warming pollution from tailpipe emissions. President Obama understands the urgency of addressing our climate challenge and reducing our oil dependence. These standards will play a pivotal role in helping the auto industry transition make the cars we need for America's clean energy future.”

Following is a statement by Ann Notthoff, California Advocacy Director for the Natural Resources Defense Council:

“California has been the nation's leader in clean energy and fighting global warming pollution, and we couldn't be more pleased to have a new partner in the federal government. Working together, the State and Federal teams will make a big difference reducing in carbon pollution, breaking our oil addiction and providing cleaner air for Californians.”

Resources:

- Read a [blog](#) by David Doniger, Policy Director at NRDC's Climate Center.

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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 1.2 million members and online activists, served from offices in New York, Washington, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Beijing. More information on NRDC is available at its Web site: www.nrdc.org.