

Office of the Mayor
City & County of San Francisco



Gavin Newsom
Mayor

March 26, 2008

Mary Nichols, Chair
California Air Resources Board
1001 "I" Street, P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear Chairwoman Nichols,

I write to urge the California Air Resource Board (CARB) to take decisive action this week to increase the amount of zero-emission vehicles required to be sold in California. I am extremely concerned about a staff recommendation that will be considered this week by CARB that would actually decrease the amount of electric vehicles required to be sold in California in the coming years to only 2,500 vehicles.

Electric vehicles hold tremendous promise to decrease greenhouse gas pollution from vehicles and have proven popular with consumers. Our own experience in San Francisco utilizing electric cars has been very positive. We have used several zero emission vehicles made available through CARB programs, including leasing and then purchasing Toyota RAV4 vehicles. These cars continue in daily use, functioning as normal city fleet vehicles. Most recently, our city utilized State funding to convert three Toyota Prius hybrids into 'plug-in hybrids.' Technological advancements are increasing the range of electric cars and also decreasing the cost of these vehicles.

As we seek to meet the carbon reduction goals set forth in Assembly Bill 32, I believe strongly that State government must encourage the commercialization of electric vehicle technology. Simply put, these vehicles provide the cleanest, least polluting form of car travel in California. While we are pursuing transportation and land use policy that minimizes daily vehicle travel in our State, we also must enact policy to ensure that the auto industry is providing electric vehicles for purchase by Californians.

CARB can play a critical role increasing consumer choice and decreasing overall auto pollutants by taking decisive action this week to support increased electric vehicles in our state. Not doing so would be a huge step backward. I urge CARB to require the sale of 25,000 electric vehicles that had been planned for 2012-2014. I would also recommend the creation of a separate requirement for plug-in hybrids that allows plug-ins to replace the dirtiest vehicles under CARB's regulations, rather than the cleanest electric vehicles. Lastly, CARB policy should encourage plug-in hybrids that have the most on-board electricity storage that maximizes vehicle range.

The City and County of San Francisco is working aggressively to meet AB 32 obligations and our own Local Climate Action Plan by decreasing auto-related green house gas pollution. As we work to 'green' our city fleet and educate our citizens on environmental decision-making, we rely on CARB to help increase consumer access to electric cars.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical transportation issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom

cc: Members, California Air Resources Board