

AUTOMOTIVE

BMW, Volkswagen align with California for stricter emissions standards

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A plug-in hybrid BMW 7 Series. Image courtesy of BMW

By STAFF REPORTS

Four automakers are linking with the state of California to create a framework for reducing car emissions, working towards standards that are more stringent than the proposed national regulations.

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The agreement, which includes BMW of North America, Volkswagen Group of America, Honda and Ford, sets targets for reducing emissions through the 2026 model year. As part of the voluntary alliance, the automakers have agreed to only sell cars in the U.S. that meet the set standards.

Emissions alliance

Last summer, The Trump administration announced a new plan to roll back regulations on emissions for U.S.-made cars in a continued effort to bolster American products over those made in other countries.

New standards would be much lower than those currently in place and would allow automakers to produce cars with far higher emissions levels. While this may give a boost to American car companies, the flipside is that it will likely exacerbate already catastrophic carbon levels in the atmosphere ([see story](#)).

California and 13 other states have stricter laws on emissions. Along with California's leadership, 24 governors have urged the administration to become more stringent about auto emissions.

Seventeen automakers also signed a letter urging the national government and California to reach an agreement on standardized levels.

The framework that the four automakers and California set out reduces the year-over-year drop in emissions that is expected from 4.7 percent to 3.7 percent. Additionally, the expectations for the 2025 model year have been extended to 2026.



Porsche parent Volkswagen is among the automakers participating. Image credit: Porsche

California will also help automakers work to reduce their greenhouse gasses by rewarding them for selling electric vehicles.

The framework also intends to make it easier for automakers to get approval for new technologies, such as ones that would make cars have lesser emissions while driving at highway speed.

"Few issues are more pressing than climate change, a global threat that endangers our lives and livelihoods," said California Governor Gavin Newsom in a statement. "California, a coalition of states and these automakers are leading the way on smart policies that make the air cleaner and safer for us all.

"I now call on the rest of the auto industry to join us, and for the Trump administration to adopt this pragmatic compromise instead of pursuing its regressive rule change," he said. "It's the right thing for our economy, our people and our planet."

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