

AUTOMOTIVE

Trump cancels stringent California emissions standards

September 18, 2019



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

By STAFF REPORTS

U.S. President Donald Trump announced his administration's intentions to revoke a waiver that allowed the state of California to set its own vehicle emissions standards, which were stricter than the those of the federal government.

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As global emissions standards become more stringent, many automakers have requested more consistency from regulators. Even without government input, automotive manufacturers have continued to invest in sustainability efforts, including electrified vehicles.

Emissions showdown

Mr. Trump made his announcement on Twitter on Sept. 18, arguing that the revocation is part of the process of establishing a new federal standard for emissions that are more in line to California's guidelines. He also claimed that canceling California's waiver would increase vehicle production and create more jobs in the U.S.

Initially issued in 2013, the California waiver was intended to encourage automakers to comply with higher standards in an effort to have a sales presence in the large market. According to [NPR](#), 13 other states have agreed to the standards set by California.

The Trump Administration is revoking California's Federal Waiver on emissions in order to produce far less expensive cars for the consumer, while at the same time making the cars substantially SAFER. This will lead to more production because of this pricing and safety.....

Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [September 18, 2019](#)

Mr. Trump announced the change in several Tweets

Previously, the Trump administration had announced a 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.

Obama-era regulations required that automakers continuously improve on fuel efficiency until 2025, a responsibility that can be an expensive effort for brands ([see story](#)).

California lawmakers have already announced intentions to settle the emissions matter in court, believing that rolling back emissions standards could have irreparable environmental consequences.

In an earlier show of support for California, four automakers have partnered with the state to create a framework for reducing car emissions, working towards standards that are more stringent than the proposed national regulations.

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 ([see story](#)).

The Department of Justice has since opened an antitrust investigation into the arrangement.

Despite the continued confusion regarding emissions standards, some in the automotive industry have tentatively shown support for the Trump administration's move.

"NADA believes that the regulation of fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions should be done at the federal level for the entire country," said Peter Welch, president/CEO at the National Automobile Dealers Association, in a statement. "One national standard for fuel economy will create much-needed regulatory certainty for the auto industry and certainty for all American new-car and -truck buyers regardless of the state in which they reside.

"America's franchised auto dealers continue to support continuous improvements in the fuel economy of the nation's new-vehicle fleet, as well as federal fuel economy standards that help keep new vehicles affordable," he said.

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