

Rivian Automotive, Inc.

Please see the uploaded/attached file for the comments of Rivian Automotive, Inc., on the proposed rules, Chapter 173-423 WAC--Low Emission Vehicles.



August 9, 2021

ELECTRONIC MAIL TO: Washington Department of Ecology,
<https://aq.ecology.commentinput.com>

Elena Guilfoil
Department of Ecology
Air Quality Program
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Re: Chapter 173-423 WAC, Low Emission Vehicles (updating the adoption of California motor vehicle emission standards)

Rivian Automotive, Inc., ("Rivian") appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Proposal to Adopt California's Zero Emission Vehicle ("ZEV") and Advanced Clean Trucks ("ACT") Programs. Rivian supports Washington's proposed adoption of both the ZEV standards and the ACT rule this year and asks the Department of Ecology ("Ecology") to consider early action credits similar to those established by other states that have adopted or are in the process of adopting ZEV standards. Early action credits incentivize accelerated deployment of electric vehicles (EVs), which in turn will deliver critical air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions reductions sooner with important benefits for public health and Washington's climate goals. Early ZEV credits, however, must not lead to a delay in adoption of both ZEV and ACT beyond calendar year 2021.

Keep the World Adventurous Forever

Rivian is an independent U.S. company dedicated to the mission of keeping the world adventurous forever through the introduction of a lineup of all-electric adventure vehicles™, namely trucks and SUVs. The Company is in the process of launching its first truck (R1T) and SUV (R1S) that will be available for sale beginning in 2021. With features like an electric motor at each wheel, over 300 miles of range on a single charge, 0-60mph times of 3 seconds and the ability to tow up to 11,000 pounds, these all-electric vehicles will open up a new class of zero emission vehicles to consumers, meeting ever-growing demands for performance and capability while emitting zero tailpipe emissions. In addition to the R1 vehicles, Rivian will be delivering 100,000 all-electric last-mile delivery vans for Amazon in the coming years. These all-electric delivery vans will be produced at the same Normal, Illinois, assembly plant as the R1T and R1S beginning in 2021.

Rivian Strongly Supports Washington's Adoption of the ZEV and ACT Regulations

Rivian has an interest in this rulemaking not only because of our leading environmental commitments and mission to keep the world adventurous forever, but also because our vehicles will be subject to the proposed standards. The Rivian R1T, R1S and last-mile delivery van can all be counted toward heavy-duty ZEV requirements years before the ACT program comes into effect.

Rivian strongly supports adoption of the ZEV requirement and the ACT rule, but we believe that the scale of the climate challenge and Washington's bold emissions reduction targets will require more than these two regulations alone. As such, we urge Washington policymakers to view the proposed ZEV requirement and the ACT rule as the cornerstones of a broader and evermore ambitious policy approach that will allow both programs to achieve their desired scale of impact as part of a deeper and more expeditious decarbonization agenda.

A comprehensive suite of policies and investments are required to provide clear directional signals to vehicle buyers and manufacturers alike. In concert with adopting these rules, Rivian strongly recommends that Washington take additional steps including permitting direct sales of electric vehicles (discussed further below), providing for an expanded role for EV manufacturers in the state's pending Clean Fuels Program now under regulatory development, and reducing barriers to the installation of new charging infrastructure. We look forward to working with Ecology, other agencies and policymakers, and all stakeholders to enact a full menu of public policies in support of Washington's goals.

To Further Accelerate Transportation Electrification in Washington, the State Should Reevaluate its Ban on the Direct Sale of EVs

While not the subject of this proposal, allowing direct sale of vehicles by manufacturers to consumers is a key complementary policy for increasing EV sales and Rivian wishes to take this opportunity to encourage Washington to reevaluate its ban of the practice.

The importance of direct sales for the success of the EV market is already evidence in Washington. Most EVs sold in Washington in 2018 were from a single manufacturer selling direct to the consumer using a manufacturer-specific exemption from the state's direct sales ban. Maintaining this ban and single exemption artificially constrains the market, limits consumer choice, and prevents other EV makers—including pioneering new entrants like Rivian, from ramping up sales of their products.

The legacy third-party dealership model does not align with Rivian's business or those of other new entrants. Rivian intends to ensure the entire customer experience is done the

“Rivian Way.” Among other things, this highly curated and EV-centric approach includes direct communication between the customer and Rivian’s EV experts from vehicle pre-order through delivery and ongoing service. This level of EV knowledge and service cannot be matched by decentralized dealer networks with highly variable service quality and that are often more interested in selling the internal combustion engine vehicles already on their lots that come with greater long-term maintenance needs.

The dealership model is also a significant barrier to entry for new manufacturers. Launching a dealer network and filling dealer inventories requires massive capital investment and incurs delivery delays. The direct sales model is crucial for Rivian and the EV industry to fill orders quickly, optimize customer experience, and flow capital back to the manufacturing process during the critical launch phase. The bottom line for Washington is simple: allowing EV manufacturers to sell directly to consumers will increase EV sales from new manufacturers. As Washington redoubles its efforts to reduce transportation emissions and meet the challenge of climate change, it should use every available tool and make direct sales available to every EV manufacturer.

Conclusion

Rivian supports Washington’s drive to reduce emissions and improve the environment by adopting California’s ZEV requirements and the ACT rule this calendar year. Our products are proof that now is the time to adopt ZEV and ACT. In addition to adopting ZEV and ACT, Washington must reexamine and remove direct sales bans to best ensure that broad electrification becomes a reality in Washington.

Please contact me with any questions. Rivian looks forward to working with the State of Washington and the Department of Ecology to ensure that the fullest benefits of the ZEV and ACT rules are realized.

Sincerely,

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