

New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board
Harold Runnels Building
P.O. Box 5469
Santa Fe, NM 87502

November 13, 2023

Subject: Concerns Regarding the Clean Car II Rules

Dear Board Members,

I hope this letter finds you well as I am writing to express my genuine concerns regarding the proposed Advanced "Clean Car II Rules". I definitely support the states commitment to environmental protection and welcome the initiative to reduce emissions through the adoption of cleaner vehicles, but I believe it is crucial to take into consideration the challenges faced by many New Mexicans. Infrastructure being the most important, followed by low-income residents who could struggle to make EV's affordable and sustainable.

My first concern involves the funding of these proposed policies. New Mexico lacks the financial stability to provide and build the infrastructure when compared to other Level II states. I have yet to see a plan that could support such a large infrastructure undertaking and quite honestly cannot see how it would be possible. If indeed our state were to utilize mill levies and other tax dollars, this would put an even larger burden on New Mexicans who are currently working to adapt with the high level of inflation we have seen over the past three years.

New Mexico most definitely has its own demographic and economic challenges that very much differentiate it from states like California. As we compare New Mexico to California, we must consider that New Mexico has a much lower "average" income and a higher percentage of its population living below the poverty line. The proposed Advanced Clean Car II Rules could inadvertently place a heavier financial burden on the citizens of New Mexico compared to those in more affluent states like California.

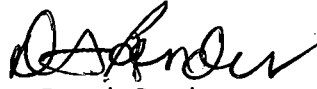
My next concern is the proposal mandating what a consumer purchases and a business provides. As a Car Dealer myself, I have zero issues with selling EV's and in fact I currently own one. But we have an obligation to provide a service to the customer that fulfils their requirements. Currently, EV sales are not in high demand nationwide and even less in New Mexico. As a primarily ag market, our stores will strive to meet the demand in our area, and the Electric Vehicle is currently not that demand.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the Environmental Improvement Board to consider these concerns in the context of New Mexico's demographic and economic realities. While I support the transition to cleaner vehicles for the benefit of our environment, it is vital that this transition is attainable for all residents, regardless of their income or location. We remain dedicated in our continued opportunities serving our great state and its people. I am confident that you will make the correct decision based on the information that clearly supports a much slower integration into the EV market.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Bender', with a stylized, cursive script.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darryle Bender', with a stylized, cursive script.

Darryle Bender
Owner