



Poll Shows 2-to-1 Opposition to Hybrid Car Access to HOV Lanes

Results of month-long poll of on-line readers shows little support for hybrid car incentive.

([PRWEB](#)) February 3, 2005 -- Congress may soon be debating whether or not drivers of hybrid electric cars will be permitted to drive alone in High Occupancy Vehicle "Diamond" lanes during rush hour traffic. While California, Arizona and Virginia have all passed legislation allowing such access, Congress must revise current law which bans such access on any highways built with federal funds. HOV access is seen as an incentive for consumers to buy more fuel efficient, low-pollution vehicles.

Congressmen Darrell Issa (R.CA) and State Representative Brad Sherman (D-Sherman Oaks) are slated to introduce the "Hybrid Vehicle Access Act" in Washington, D.C. this week, which would allow hybrid cars that get better than 45 mpg to drive in the HOV lanes.

Currently, hybrid car drivers are entitled to a \$2000 federal income tax deduction when they purchase approved models that include the Toyota Prius, Honda Insight, Civic and Accord and the Ford Escape Hybrid. Some 88,000 gasoline-electric hybrids were sold in the United States in 2004. Projections in 2004 by California's Air Resources Board estimated that the number of hybrids in the state by 2007 at 110,000. California's HOV law would limit the number vehicles granted access to 75,000.

In Virginia, where hybrid drivers commuting into Washington, D.C. every day can already take advantage of that state's law, complaints are being raised that its HOV lanes are already congested by many of the nearly 7,000 gasoline-electric cars registered in the state last year.

A recent San Jose Mercury News poll of its readers indicated that they disapproved of hybrid car access in HOV lanes by 6-to-1, results that are confirmed by a month-long poll conducted by EVWorld.Com (<http://www.evworld>) of its readers, who were asked specifically, "Should hybrid-electric vehicles be given unrestricted access to HOV Diamond lanes regardless of their fuel efficiency rating?"

It is this aspect of California's law that has rankled American automakers, Ford Motor Company, in particular, because its Escape Hybrid's EPA fuel economy average is 33.5 mpg, double the efficiency of its non-Hybrid counterpart.

A total of 697 EV World readers responded to the survey and 65% answered "No", while 30% checked "Yes". Just over 4 percent replied they were "Unsure". This response strongly suggests that among EV World readers, an estimated 15% of whom own hybrid vehicles, that any legislation that permits HOV access should have a minimum fuel efficiency requirement associated with it. It may also indicate, like the Mercury News poll, general opposition to the HOV incentive for any and all hybrid vehicles.

About EV World

Published weekly online since 1998, EV World features original content on a wide range of topics related to advanced, alternative fuel technologies from the latest in battery, hybrid-electric and fuel cell vehicles to renewable energy progress and policy. The publication has interviewed such notables as General Wesley Clark, former CIA director James Woolsey and "The Hype About Hydrogen" author Joseph Romm. Interviews are available in text and MP3 audio format. EV refers to "electric vehicle."



While premium content is available to subscribers only, much of the site, including daily news updates and archived interviews and feature stories, are available free to all readers. EV World conducts reader polls each month, with this month's question being, "Do you believe that China's growing appetite for oil will eventually bring it into conflict with the United States"?

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