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Walz Administration's Proposed Car Standards Not as Popular as They Claim

WEST ST. PAUL, Minnesota - The attempt by the Walz Administration to impose California Car Standards (what they call Clean Cars MN) on Minnesota car and truck drivers is not as popular as they claim. That is the conclusion of a statewide survey commissioned by the Minnesota Auto Dealers Association.

According to the highlights of the survey:

- Only one in nine Minnesotans want to bypass the legislature and move quickly to adopt the California standards.
- Two thirds of the respondents believe that the state should pursue a system of incentives rather than the mandates being proposed.
- And interest in electric vehicles remains very low.

"California rules do not fit the demands or lifestyle of Minnesotans," stated Scott Lambert, president of the Minnesota Auto Dealers Association. "Minnesotans purchase pick-up trucks and SUVs at the much higher rate of 82% compared to California's 55%. Also, because of our colder climate and relative lack of urban density, demand for electric vehicles is well below Californians."

"In the middle of this economic disaster caused by the pandemic, the Walz Administration is attempting to force dealers to accept more electric vehicles that they can't sell and accept fewer trucks that Minnesotans demand," continued Lambert.

"Beyond forcing a supply of cars that won't move, the California rules will result in higher prices for all vehicles. Even the MPCA admits that."

Steve Whitaker, MADA 2020 Chair and a dealer in the Twin Cities adds, "Sales in our industry are already down over 40% due to COVID and affordability concerns. Now for the state to move forward with a policy that will increase the cost of our product by hundreds of dollars adds insult to injury. A significant portion of our business comes from Wisconsin. Why would those customers bother to buy from us if they can get the same car back home for \$1,000 less?"

Lambert is quick to point out, "Once imposed, California rules cannot be amended or changed. Minnesota will need to comply absolutely with whatever California decides."

"California rules simply don't fit, and the survey proves Minnesotans recognize that," concluded Lambert.

The survey is a result of the Walz Administration seeking to impose California Emission Standards on Minnesota via rulemaking. The proposal is being pursued without approval of the Minnesota Legislature. The survey was conducted by the Morris Leatherman Company in late January and early February, well before the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic were known. (See attached survey summary.)

About MADA: Founded in 1919, the Minnesota Auto Dealers Association is a statewide trade association representing over 350 franchised new car and truck dealers across Minnesota with a workforce of over 20,000. MADA provides legal work, training, and legislative advocacy on behalf of its members.

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