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## **Greens protest as industry spurs states on clean-car sales**

**By: Maxine Joselow**

As automakers urged the governors of nine states this week to help boost sales of zero-emission vehicles, environmentalists are faulting the industry for failing to do its part to get more clean cars on the road.

In letters this week to governors whose states follow California's zero-emission vehicle mandate, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers encouraged them to adopt measures that would increase ZEV sales.

"Automakers have invested substantially in zero emission vehicles, including plug-in electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles, and have a big stake in selling them in large numbers," the alliance said in a news release. "The last thing we want to see is a zero emission vehicle sitting unsold on a dealer's lot."

At issue is the ZEV program launched by California to promote the use of electric vehicles, either fuel cell or plug-in. It requires automakers to sell a certain number of EVs, depending on the number of gasoline vehicles they sell.

The program is overseen by the California Air Resources Board and is followed by Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and Vermont.

The alliance letters highlight the number of unsold electric vehicles. Fully electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids represent only 1 percent of the U.S. car market, according to a report released today by the Electrification Coalition.

But environmentalists blame the auto industry for slow clean-car sales.

**"The auto companies are crying crocodile tears over not selling EVs and trying to blame the states," said Dan Becker, executive director of the Safe Climate Campaign.**

Simon Mui, senior scientist for the Natural Resources Defense Council's clean vehicles program, said automakers "are asking for all the carrots but saying there can't be sticks."

"I think that's unfair to states, because it puts the onus of responsibility for compliance back on the states, when in fact, just like any other industry, the automakers are responsible for meeting environmental targets," he said.

Automakers could do more to increase the availability of EV models beyond California, Mui said.

There were 44 models of ZEVs available in California last year, according to data compiled by NRDC based on vehicle registration information. In contrast, the group said, there were 15 models available in the District of Columbia and just 13 in Vermont.

"There are some models that are just not available when you go outside of California," said David Reichmuth, senior engineer in the Union of Concerned Scientists' clean vehicles program. "If you can't test drive it, if you have to order it, you're going to be much less likely to buy it than the one that's on the lot." In addition, automakers could spend more to promote ZEVs, Mui said.

General Motors Co. spent more than \$1 million last year on nationwide advertising for the Chevrolet Silverado, a pickup truck, according to the data compiled by NRDC. But it spent only around \$10,000 on advertising the Chevrolet Bolt, an electric vehicle.

Gloria Bergquist, a spokeswoman for the alliance, said in a statement to E&E News, "The ZEV program requires substantial investments by automakers, who have met that challenge and now have 58 ZEVs on sale with more coming. Now the challenge is getting these vehicles off the dealer showrooms and onto the roads. States can play an important role, especially buying ZEVs for their state fleets."