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### **Some People Are Really Upset About The 2021 Suburban and Tahoe**

By Thom Taylor

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They only debuted a couple of days ago and already there are some people really upset about the all-new 2021 Chevy Suburban and Tahoe. As you might have guessed already it’s environmentalists that are voicing their complaints about the larger, heavier SUVs. With climate concerns and global warming becoming more of a concern every day, larger SUVs with marginal fuel economy are not what was expected by environmentalists.

With the Suburban and Tahoe being clean-sheet designs they feature much more space inside and size outside. They also weigh more. But, GM only increased mileage slightly and that is what it is being called out on. Some say GM will spend billions advertising the SUVs to influence purchases.

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But Dwight Schoenefeld, lead development engineer on the SUVs says, “People wanted a greater ability to haul families and their cargo, so that was the baseline that set our decision-making process.” GM took the challenge coming up with a Tahoe seven inches longer while the Suburban gained an inch.

Through those increases, GM gave the Tahoe 67% more cargo space than the previous version. Suburban space increased by 5%. Legroom was added for third-row seating also. But fuel economy barely increased even with the latest technology lending a helping hand.

Stop-start technology has been incorporated into the electronics which can turn off up to six cylinders, helping to save gas. Unfortunately, it is not helped by the added weight. When you look at mileage figures for the 2010 Tahoe with a V8 compared to the new 2020 the 15 mpg for City driving is the same for both. The figure for Highway mileage increased by only one mpg to 22 mpg.

The Suburban has always been a target because of its size and weight

The Suburban is a particular target for environmentalists because it is one of the least efficient new vehicles produced. Scientists are banging the drums louder because 98% agree heat-trapping gasses from burning coal, oil, and gas are driving the temperature increases we are seeing. The last five years have seen the highest temperatures on record. 2019 looks like it will be just slightly below the warmest in 2016.

Carbon emissions from transportation account, for 23% of all heat-trapping emissions. The US fuel economy standards have been lax for trucks. John German, a senior fellow with the International Council on Clean Transportation says big trucks only have to decrease emissions by 1.5% each year from 2017 2019. Cars, on the other hand, must improve by 4%. The thresholds have always been more lenient with trucks because of their commercial impact on businesses.

GM has already gone on record promising 20 new fully electric vehicles by 2023. But, it has also taken sides with the Trump administration's attempts to stop California from setting its own emissions standards. This would allow Trump to lower the required figures which would make it less likely a company like GM would be motivated to make wholesale changes so abruptly.

In the meantime, the war between environmental issues and GM look like they will only get more divisive.

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