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New Vehicle Labels Encourage Cleaner Cars

Washington, DC—Today the Obama administration announced new fuel economy window labels for passenger vehicles that will help Americans shopping for a new car better identify each car's projected pollution emissions and its gasoline costs. Cars and light trucks emit more than 15 percent of the global warming pollution created each year in the United States, but some new cars and trucks emit much less pollution than others—and will save their owners more at the gas pump. The new labels are expected to help car buyers more easily identify these cleaner, more fuel-efficient cars.

“Information is power—in this case, the power for Americans to choose the cleanest new cars,” said Nathan Willcox, Federal Global Warming Program Director for Environment America. “These new labels are an important step toward getting cleaner, more fuel-efficient cars on the road, which will cut air pollution and ease Americans’ pain at the pump.”

The new labels, which will be rolled out for new cars and light trucks starting with model year 2013 vehicles next year, will include several pieces of information that will help Americans buying a new car:

- Emissions of smog-forming pollution and carbon dioxide pollution, as well as a 1-10 rating showing how a model's emission levels compare to other new vehicles.
- Projected annual fuel costs for each vehicle, as well as how each vehicle's fuel costs over a five year period compare to other new vehicles.
- Projected city, highway and combined miles per gallon fuel efficiency performance, as well as a separate estimate of how many gallons will be required to fuel a vehicle for 100 miles of travel.
- Labels for plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and electric vehicles, which will better illustrate fuel savings and decreased pollution levels that these advanced vehicles will achieve compared to conventional gasoline vehicles.

Samples of the new labels can be viewed at <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/label/>

While Environment America praised the new labels, the organization noted that the labels do not incorporate a clear letter grade system—in which the least-polluting and most fuel efficient cars would receive an “A”—for which Environment America and others had advocated. Given the lack of a letter grade and the need to make all cars as clean and fuel-efficient as possible, Environment America again called on the Obama administration to ensure that new cars meet a 60 miles per gallon standard by 2025. The administration is expected to propose new fuel efficiency and global warming pollution standards this fall for cars and light trucks for model years 2017-2025.

“At the end of the day, we need all of our cars to be clean, and the biggest step the Obama

administration can take toward that goal is to move clean cars into the fast lane by making sure that new cars and trucks meet a 60 miles per gallon standard by 2025,” said Willcox. “This is the single biggest step we could take toward getting off of oil—protecting our shores from oil drilling, cleaning our air and saving Americans billions at the gas pump.”

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Environment America is a national federation of 29 state-based, citizen-funded environmental advocacy groups working for a cleaner, greener, and healthier future.

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