

OPPOSE SB778, 779, 781, 782, 785/HB1372, 1378

Topic: Virginia Clean Cars Standards

Bill Patrons: Sen. Stuart, Newman, DeSteph, Reeves, McDougale/Del. Fowler, Wilt

Reasons to oppose:

- Current Virginia law requires the State Air Pollution Control Board to adopt Clean Cars standards to control tailpipe pollution from cars and light-duty trucks, which it has done. These standards are one of the best tools available to curb transportation emissions such as carbon pollution and toxic air emissions, and they will provide many other benefits—including improved public health and equity, expanded consumer choice, and economic growth.
- These bills would repeal the Clean Cars standards and eliminate the Air Board's authority to adopt tailpipe pollution standards, depriving Virginian of the multiple benefits of these provisions.

Overview:

Under the federal Clean Air Act, Virginia can choose to follow the federal tailpipe emissions standards or adopt more protective standards developed by California and used by 17 states (called the Clean Cars standards). In 2021, the General Assembly directed the Air Board to adopt the Clean Cars standards (HB1965; Bagby), and these for cars and light-duty trucks were unanimously adopted in December 2021.

The Clean Cars standards ramp up protections over more than a decade and will bring both cleaner gas-powered vehicles and a greater variety of electric vehicles to the Commonwealth. Transportation is the largest source of carbon pollution in Virginia, and most of these emissions come from cars and light-duty trucks. It is also a leading source of other harmful air pollutants. Transportation pollution disproportionately impacts low-income communities, and contributes to significant public health issues statewide. Owning an electric vehicle already saves the typical driver up to \$10,000 over the lifetime of the vehicle compared to a gas car due to reduced fuel and maintenance costs, and reduced reliance on imported oil can help secure Virginia's energy future.

These bills would repeal the Clean Cars standards and eliminate the Air Board's authority to adopt tailpipe emissions standards. Repeal proponents claim Virginia should set its own emissions standards, but it has no legal authority to do so. As a result, these bills would significantly hamper Virginia's ability to control transportation pollution and benefit from cleaner vehicles.



Southern Environmental Law Center

Trip Pollard
804-343-1090
tpollard@selcva.org
www.southernenvironment.org



Virginia Conservation Network

vcn@vcnva.org
(804) 644-0283
www.VCNVA.org

This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.