

General Motors Wants the Trump Administration to Back a Nationwide Electric Vehicle Program

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On Friday, General Motors announced its [support of a National Zero Emissions Vehicle \(NZEV\)](#) program. The program, modeled on California's electric vehicle efforts, would [gradually increase the percentage](#) of electric vehicles that car manufacturers must produce each year in their fleet, beginning in 2021 at seven percent. The company said the plan would lead to seven million long-range electric vehicles [on the road by 2030](#). GM is asking the Trump administration to implement the plan nationwide, which would relieve automakers from having to follow specific electric vehicle sales requirements in individual states. GM announced its proposal through comments to the Environmental Protection Agency's Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient rule that was announced this summer; [the rule](#), in part, rolled back Obama-era emission standards.

GM has been pushing for electric vehicles for a while. The company already has a successful electric vehicle in its Chevrolet Volt. GM stated that the NZEV program would "[promote innovation](#) in the United States and help the US to become a leader in "[technologies of the future](#)."

While General Motors' proposal seems like a noble effort to move towards cleaner technology, it is important to note that the NZEV program could create a multitude of economic benefits for GM. First, some of General Motors' competitors have been slower to break into the electric vehicle market. Given GM's successful Volt and focus on electric vehicles, the company is likely better positioned than some of its major competitors to increase its production of electric vehicles.

Second, following a nationwide mandate on electric vehicle production would be easier for automakers rather than requiring manufacturers to meet individual states' electric vehicle production mandates. California has one of the strictest electric vehicle standards in the country. The state wants 15.4 percent of car sales to be from either electric vehicles or other zero emission vehicles by 2025. Nine other states have also adopted this standard. In January, California Governor Jerry Brown announced his goal of having [five million zero-emission vehicles](#) in California by 2030, a goal much more ambitious than that proposed by General Motors; there are currently around 350,000 of these vehicles on the state's roads. By having a single standard that applies to all fifty states, automakers would not need to make different cars for different states, which would likely reduce production costs.

The Trump administration has been an outspoken critic of California's electric vehicle measures and goals, arguing that consumers do not want electric vehicles. As a result, the Trump administration claims, automakers must spend billions on cars that have to be sold at a loss. The administration has also said it is considering [banning California](#) from enacting its own emissions standards.

