



## Outlawing Sale Of Gas Vehicles In NJ Is 'Unfair, Unjust,' Group Says

New cars sold in NJ will have to be all-electric by 2035, Gov. Murphy said. Here are the questions you should be asking, a trade group says.

**By: Eric Kiefer, February 16, 2023**



The New Jersey Gasoline, Convenience Store, Automotive Association issued a scathing statement in the wake of Gov. Phil Murphy's bombshell clean energy announcement on Wednesday. (Shutterstock)

NEW JERSEY — Outlawing the sale of gas vehicles in New Jersey? That's not only unfair, it's "unjust," an industry trade group argues.

The New Jersey Gasoline, Convenience Store, Automotive Association (NJGCA) issued a scathing statement in the wake of Gov. Phil Murphy's bombshell clean energy announcement on Wednesday, where he said that new cars sold in the state will have to be "zero-emission" within 12 years.

Speaking at Rutgers University, Murphy said the single-greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the state are cars and trucks. But vehicle owners aren't the only ones who have a stake in the game, he added.

"Yes, there are many consumer-focused reasons for us to put more [electric vehicles] on our roads," the governor said. "But I also think of the residents – largely African American and Latino – who live in the shadows of the overpasses and alongside the highways which were shoehorned into their communities, and where asthma rates from those years of breathing dirty air are many times higher than the rest of the state."

Several environmental advocacy groups have praised the governor's new goal of "100 percent clean energy by 2035," including the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Rethink Energy NJ campaign, the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters and the New Jersey Sierra Club.

But when it comes to electric vehicles, New Jersey residents should be asking several questions right now, according to the NJGCA.

"We have had no objection over the years to efforts by the government to incentivize the purchase of electric vehicles (EVs) or to install charging stations," the group said. "We have, and will continue to work on, ways to make it simpler and cheaper for our members to install EV fast charging stations."

"However, it is fundamentally unfair and unjust for the government to completely outlaw the sale of gasoline-powered vehicles," the group continued. "More than 95% of consumers continue to choose gas-powered cars for a wide variety of reasons, and that option should not be stolen from them by government fiat."

The NJGCA said the governor's proposal leaves a ton of practical questions about its viability:

**"Since it will skyrocket demand for electricity in the state, can New Jersey generate enough electricity to meet that demand entirely with zero emissions sources, while also bringing online so much new clean energy that it replaces existing natural gas usage, while also bringing on enough new clean energy to cover the increase in demand from the building electrification program? If all our cars are powered by electricity generated by natural gas, then what's the point? Will car manufacturers be able to meet that level of demand at a price that can be afforded? Will the state**

**be able to continue to pay for subsidies for that many new EV buyers, or are motorists going to be forced to pay significantly more for new and used cars in the future? Can these investments be made without huge increases in electric rates for residents and small businesses?”**

“Most gas stations in New Jersey are small businesses, and the majority are still operated by someone who only owns and operates that single location,” the group said. “Some are multigenerational family businesses; others have been the path to the American Dream for immigrants from all over the world.”

“We’re not even asking for a level playing field,” the NJGCA said. “We are just opposing a total government ban on a widespread, reliable technology that, in all its forms, has been widely used for a century.”

“Advocates say that EVs are great, so simply let the market speak for itself and let motorists decide for themselves what vehicle makes the most sense for their lives,” the group concluded.

#### **‘WHERE WILL THE INCREASED POWER BE SOURCED FROM?’**

The NJGCA isn’t the only group that has questioned the governor’s plan for all-electric new car sales.

“The California gas car ban that New Jersey is modeling includes unrealistic interim targets that mandates 35% of new passenger vehicles sold by 2026 produce zero emissions,” said Ray Cantor, deputy chief of government affairs officer at the New Jersey Business and Industry Association.

“That number increases to 68% by 2030,” Cantor said. “According to a recent analysis, only 5% of new car sales in the U.S. are powered by electric only.”

“That is an improving number which will increase more,” Cantor said. “However, such a steep ramp-up in electric-only vehicles over 12 years in New Jersey seems impractical, if not impossible, when you consider the lack of charging infrastructure and planning for it. Such a policy also begs the obvious question of where all this increased power will be sourced from.”

“Additionally, the increased costs of these vehicles must be considered,” Cantor said. “Purchase incentives that we have seen over the past year will likely not be permanent.”