



Kelley Blue Book
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BLUE BOOK BRIEFING

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The latest video and written news stories by the editorial staff of Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com

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All-new and updated video and written reviews from the editorial staff of Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com, and links to consumer reviews and ratings on KBB.com

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Zero-Emission Vehicles or Zero-Emission Zones?

- Jack R. Nerad, vice president, executive editorial director and executive market analyst, Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com

Unless you've been living in a yurt in Wyoming for the past year, you have no doubt seen the flurry of enthusiasm surrounding pure-electric vehicles. The Tesla Model S sedan is currently on many buyers' "most wanted" lists, and all-electrics in general have seen their fortunes rise over the last several months. What's behind the surge? Well, there is no doubt that the Model S channels a cool vibe that has, in many ways, made it the car of the hour. And there is no doubt that the American populace as a whole is getting more environmentally conscious. But it should be noted another reason for the sudden uptick in electric vehicle sales is the California zero emission vehicle (ZEV) mandate. To continue to sell cars in California, manufacturers with annual sales greater than 60,000 units "must produce and deliver for sale" a minimum of 12 percent Zero-Emission-Vehicles this year and in 2014, and the percentage kicks upward from there. Before complete panic sets in, one should note that the California Air Resources Board does allow some alternative compliance options, most notably buying credits, but there still has been a very clear and direct reason why car manufacturers, who had exhibited no real interest in selling electric vehicles suddenly not only offered them, but also offered red-hot, hard-to-pass-up deals on them. Very simply, they want to stay in business.

But after visiting the recent Frankfurt motor show and asking a lot of very smart engineers and product planners at Volkswagen and Audi some very pointed questions, one might well ask "Is mandating the sale of zero-emission vehicles the right public policy?" Or is there another way

to reach – or perhaps exceed – the same goal, while making life better for both consumers and carmakers. First, of course, one has to ask, "What is the goal of the mandate? Is it to severely curtail pollution and carbon dioxide emissions in highly congested urban centers like, for example, downtown Los Angeles or is it to begin to eliminate carbon dioxide emissions everywhere, including rural areas?"

If it is designed to accomplish the latter mandating the sale of ZEVs, which could make sense, but it could put a terrible burden on those in rural areas who, by necessity, travel longer distances than the typical city dweller. For urban commuting a ZEV might work just fine, but the limited range of a ZEV could make it impractical for use in the country. And make no mistake, even if country dwellers don't buy ZEVs, they are still paying for them in the form of direct subsidies to ZEV buyers from governments and in higher prices for conventional cars that offset the sold-at-a-loss ZEVs.

A completely different approach is worthy of examination. If the key goal is to cut both pollution and carbon emissions by the largest amount, doesn't it make more sense to mandate Zero-Emission Zones than to mandate Zero Emissions Vehicles?

What, you might ask, is a Zero-Emission Zone? A designated geographic area in which any driving taking place must be done by either zero-emission vehicles or by other vehicles (plug-in hybrids, "conventional" hybrids, for example) operating in

electric-only mode. The zero-emission zones might be areas like central Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and San Francisco, and other defined areas like the San Fernando Valley, San Gabriel Valley and Riverside County, Calif.

The major benefit is consumers and car companies alike would not be burdened with the high cost/low benefit of the typical ZEV. Instead, consumers could get the benefits of buying one vehicle that could be used as a zero-emission vehicle during daily urban commutes and still have the flexibility to be used on long trips without suffering range paranoia or, even worse, finding your car riding on a flatbed to the charging station. Given such a new regulatory environment, we might well see widespread adoption of plug-in hybrids, much-improved air quality in congested areas and a significant decrease in carbon dioxide emissions overall. If the new-age plug-in hybrids were equipped with internal combustion engines using clean-burning, low-carbon-dioxide-producing natural gas, a fuel we have in abundance, all the better.

No, this scenario doesn't end combustion in automobiles altogether, and that is the goal of some environmentalist groups, but the ZEV mandate doesn't end combustion in automobiles either. Given the fact California's regulations are typically adopted by Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and Vermont, changes in them would have national implications. We believe they could be changes for the greater good.

LATEST NEWS STORIES ON KBB.COM:

Check out the very latest news stories by visiting KBB.com and clicking the the *KBB.com Top Picks* tab on the home page. The following latest news stories by KBB.com's editorial staff went live on the site or were updated during August 2013.

Videos Posted to KBB.com:

[*2014 Toyota Corolla Prototype Review*](#)

[*2012 VW Passat TDI Long-Term Wrap-Up*](#)

[*Driving VW's GTD in Germany - 2015 Golf & GTI Preview*](#)

[*Volkswagen XL1 Review - Driving VW's ÜberHybrid in Germany*](#)

Written Stories Posted to KBB.com:

[*2015 Audi A8/S8 lineup makes Frankfurt debut*](#)

[*2015 BMW i8 will highlight the automaker's Frankfurt debut list*](#)

[*2015 Chevy Colorado and GMC Canyon pickups previewed*](#)

[*2015 Mercedes-Benz GLA-Class unveiled*](#)

[*2015 Mercedes-Benz S 500 Plug-in Hybrid revealed*](#)

[*2015 Volkswagen TDIs will get a more efficient turbodiesel engine*](#)

[*2014 BMW 328d officially earns 45-mpg highway EPA rating*](#)

[*2014 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray First Review: The Return of the King*](#)

[*2014 Chevrolet Volt gets \\$5,000 price cut, starts at \\$34,995*](#)

[*2014 Chevy Malibu 2.5L ups EPA city ratings by 14 percent*](#)

[*2014 Chevy Silverado/GMC Sierra pickups first NHTSA 5-star aces*](#)

[*2014 Fiat 500c GQ Edition arrives here early next year*](#)

[*2014 Ford F-150 to offer CNG/LPG fuel option*](#)

[*2014 Ford Fiesta ST: Subcompact with Attitude*](#)

[*2014 Infiniti G37 Sedan gets new lease on life, big cut in price*](#)

[*2014 Lamborghini Gallardo LP 570-4 Squadra Corse revealed*](#)

[*2014 Mini Cooper debut timed to honor birthday of its creator*](#)

[*2014 Nissan Rogue teased for Frankfurt*](#)

[*2014 Porsche Macan SUV will debut in Los Angeles*](#)

[*2014 Scion iQ Monogram Series offers limited-edition charm*](#)

[*2014 Volkswagens will offer new Car-Net telematics system*](#)

[*2013 Fiat 500 Cattiva and Cattiva Turbo special editions unveiled*](#)

[*2013 Fiat 500e adds zap to a rapidly expanding clan*](#)

[*2013 Porsche 911 5M Porsche Fans edition unveiled*](#)

[*2013 Smart Fortwo Electric Drive: At Long Last, Love*](#)

[*BMW Concept M4 Coupe revealed*](#)

[*BMW Concept X5 eDrive unveiled*](#)

[*Cadillac Elmiraj Concept points the way toward tomorrow*](#)

[*Coastal California in the 2014 Kia Sorento*](#)

[*Exploring Austin in the 2013 Honda Accord Coupe*](#)

[*Ferrari 458 Speciale will take center stage in Frankfurt*](#)

[*First Pic: Infiniti Q30 Concept*](#)

[*Ford reduces EPA ratings on its 2013 C-MAX Hybrid*](#)

[*Galpin Auto Sports Ford GTR1 revealed*](#)

[*Infiniti Q30 Concept teased for Frankfurt Auto Show*](#)

[*Kia confirms B-segment concept for Frankfurt*](#)

[*Lincoln launches new Black Label Collection luxury packaging*](#)

[*Mustang Countdown series celebrates Ford's legendary pony car*](#)

[*New Shelby Cobra 427 S/C is emissions-free and strictly for kids*](#)

[*New Volkswagen Golf R debuts in Frankfurt*](#)

[*New-gen Audi Quattro Concept teased for Frankfurt*](#)

[*NHTSA mandates online consumer access to all auto recall notices*](#)

[*Nissan's Outlook: Next-gen Titan and Autonomous Driving*](#)

[*Ram 1500 Rumble Bee Concept unveiled*](#)

[*Ram Pickup Concept teased - Return of the Rumble Bee?*](#)

[*Spyker B6 Venator Spyder Concept unveiled*](#)

[*Toyota Hybrid-R Concept coming to Frankfurt Auto Show*](#)

[*Toyota Matrix discontinued for 2014*](#)

[*Toyota Yaris Hybrid-R Concept previewed for Frankfurt*](#)

[*Volvo details new Drive-E engine technology*](#)

[*10 Tips for First-time Car Buyers*](#)



NEW-VEHICLE REVIEWS ON KBB.COM:

The following new-vehicle reviews written by KBB.com's editorial staff went live on the site or were updated during August 2013. To see any new-vehicle review from KBB.com's editorial staff, please visit KBB.com and click on the *Car Reviews* tab, then select the make and model.

[2014 Audi Q5](#)

"Even in a sea of luxury SUVs, the 2014 Audi Q5 stands out with its brilliant looks."

[2014 Audi S8](#)

"...blending the highest levels of luxury and performance..."

[2014 Audi TT](#)

"...year-round driving pleasure in a package that is both eye-catching and inspiring..."

[2014 Buick LaCrosse](#)

"...a thoroughly credible alternative to the established imports..."

[2014 Cadillac XTS](#)

"...a mature, comfortable full-size sedan with the presence and prestige for which Cadillac is known..."

[2014 Chevrolet Malibu](#)

"...an unpretentious family sedan that is laudably quiet and comfortable..."

[2014 GMC Acadia](#)

"...seating for up to eight people, including a 3rd-row seat that can accommodate adults..."

[2014 Hyundai Equus](#)

"...has the style, performance, luxury and features to bring its value pitch to the flagship-sedan category..."

[2014 Infiniti QX50](#)

"...curvaceous styling, a smooth and powerful engine, car-like driving characteristics, and a stunning interior..."

[2014 Infiniti QX80](#)

"Infiniti's design philosophy for the QX80 is related to "executive jet" interiors."

[2014 Jeep Cherokee](#)

"Not only can it climb mountains, but it offers creature-comforts that might well be the best in class."

[2014 Mazda Mazda3](#)

"The new Mazda3 drives as great as it looks, and introduces new technology and safety features not found in any of its rivals."

[2014 Mercedes-Benz C-Class](#)

"If you think the price of German engineering is out of reach, think again."

[2014 Mercedes-Benz GLK-Class](#)

"...opulent enough to announce your success, but versatile enough to actually be useful."

[2014 Mercedes-Benz M-Class](#)

"...the M-Class demonstrates an ability to be all things to all customers."

[2014 Nissan 370Z](#)

"...terrific performance, sharp looks inside and out, an impressive image, all at an affordable price..."

[2014 SRT Viper](#)

"...a compelling proposition for those who believe too much is never enough."

[2014 Toyota Tundra](#)

"...allure with Toyota's reputation for quality in general and this model's excellent resale value in particular."

[2014 Toyota Yaris](#)

"...in addition to its budget-friendly starting price of around \$15,000, the Yaris holds its value well over the years."

September Auto Sales Expected To Dip 2 Percent, According To Kelley Blue Book

Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate at 15.7 Million

IRVINE, Calif., Sept. 26, 2013 - [New-vehicle sales](#) are expected to decline 1.8 percent in September 2013 to a total of 1.17 million units, according to Kelley Blue Book [www.kbb.com](#), the leading provider of new and used car information.

“September 2013 new-vehicle sales represent the first year-over-year drop since May 2011, due to slower retail sales, two fewer sales days in the month, and this year’s Labor Day sales included in August 2013 totals,” said Alec Gutierrez, senior analyst at Kelley Blue Book. “Despite the cool down this month, Kelley Blue Book forecasts sales will remain on track to exceed 15.6 million units in 2013 because of strong product introductions from automakers.”...

[MORE](#)

Kelley Blue Book Highlights the 10 Best Lease Deals for September

KBB.com Reports This Month's Hottest Lease Deals on Popular Models; Some Luxury Car Leases Under \$300 Monthly

IRVINE, Calif., Sept. 26, 2013 - Temperatures cool as summer comes to an end, but expert editors from Kelley Blue Book [www.kbb.com](#), the leading provider of new and used car information, have identified red-hot lease deals available nationwide from a variety of auto manufacturers for September.

“October 1 is the traditional start of the new model year, and car dealers hate to begin the new year with a big inventory of previous model year vehicles on hand, so now is a particularly good time to look for deals,” said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director at Kelley Blue Book. “You should remember, though, that any 2013 model you buy will be a year older in just a matter of days.” ... [MORE](#)

Experian Automotive's AutoCheck Vehicle History Reports Now Available On Kelley Blue Book's KARPOWER Online Platform

Dealers Benefit from Additional Provider to Help Effectively Market Inventory

IRVINE, Calif., Sept. 16, 2013- Experian Automotive's AutoCheck® vehicle history reports are now available on KARPOWER Online®, announces Kelley Blue Book, [www.kbb.com](#), the leading provider of new and used car information.

KARPOWER Online is a powerful sales tool designed to value, manage and market vehicle inventory online. With this tool, customers also can access Kelley Blue Book® Values, including Suggested Retail, Lending, Trade-In, Certified Pre-Owned (CPO) and Auction values with ease, in addition to vehicle history reports... [MORE](#)

10 Best New Cars Unveiled At Frankfurt Auto Show; 2014 Porsche 918 Spyder Ranked No. 1

KBB.com Expert Editors Name Top Picks from 2013 Frankfurt Auto Show

IRVINE, Calif., Sept. 11, 2013 - With all-new and concept vehicles being revealed at the 2013 Frankfurt Auto Show, Kelley Blue Book [www.kbb.com](#), the leading provider of new and used car information, expert editors outlined the most inspiring of them all in their list of [10 Best New Cars Unveiled this Week](#).

The players, the hustlers and everybody who loves new cars and future cars focused their attention on Germany's Frankfurt Auto Show this week to see who's coming out with what and who can impress the journalists and the car-buying public with their genius... [MORE](#)

Industry New-Car Transaction Prices Up Nearly One Percent Year-Over-Year, According To Kelley Blue Book

Chrysler Group Shows Greatest Transaction Price Gains, Volkswagen Drops More Than 7 Percent from Last Year

IRVINE, Calif., Sept. 4, 2013 - The estimated average transaction price for light vehicles in the United States was \$31,657 in August 2013, down \$138 (0.4 percent) from last month and up \$221 (0.7 percent) year-over-year, according to Kelley Blue Book www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new and used car information.

"Chrysler and Honda continue to strengthen their transaction prices from this time last year with strong redesigns among some of their popular models, including RAM 1500, Jeep Grand Cherokee and Honda Accord," said Karl Brauer, senior analyst for Kelley Blue Book. "Consumers are spending top dollar for some of the latest and greatest models, while other brands are forced to cut prices in order to move vehicles off dealership lots." ... [MORE](#)

Kelley Blue Book Highlights Labor Day Weekend New-car Deals

KBB.com Reports Hot Holiday Lease, Cash Back, Financing Deals on Popular Models

IRVINE, Calif., Aug. 28, 2013 - Holiday weekends, especially those that occur later in the year, are a great time for car shopping, so the experts from Kelley Blue Book www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new and used car information, have identified standout deals available nationwide from a variety of auto manufacturers over the upcoming long Labor Day weekend.

"With dealers now adding a variety of 2014 model-year vehicles to their inventories, Labor Day weekend should provide a great opportunity for new-car shoppers to snag a hot deal, especially on the remaining new 2013 models," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com. "This weekend new-car shoppers can find many lease, cash-back and subsidized financing deals on different mainstream favorites, from affordable sedans, luxury cars, sports cars, minivans and more." ... [MORE](#)

Crossovers, Pickup Trucks Lift August Sales Nearly 14 Percent, According To Kelley Blue Book

Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate Still on Track to Hit 15.6 Million Units in 2013

IRVINE, Calif., Aug. 22, 2013- [New-vehicle sales](#) are expected improve 13.6 percent in August 2013 to a total of 1.46 million units, according to Kelley Blue Book www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new and used car information. While affordable financing and generous incentive offers continue to more than offset any downside risk associated with steadily rising average transaction prices, low supply continues to impede the growth of major automakers such as Ford, Subaru and Hyundai. Given current market conditions, Kelley Blue Book believes that sales will remain on track to hit 15.6 million units in 2013... [MORE](#)

Male New-Car Shoppers Prefer Luxury Automakers While Females Favor Import Brands, Reports Kelley Blue Book

Men More Likely To Consider Lincoln, Women Prefer Volvo According to KBB.com

IRVINE, Calif., Aug. 20, 2013 - When it comes to buying a new car, men and women have different car shopping characteristics according to Kelley Blue Book www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new and used car information. Research from Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence based on KBB.com traffic and survey data of more than 13,000 U.S. adults show men are more likely to consider a vehicle from domestic American manufacturers or European luxury brands, while female new-car shoppers are more likely to consider a vehicle from an import automaker... [MORE](#)

About Kelley Blue Book (www.kbb.com)

Founded in 1926, Kelley Blue Book, The Trusted Resource®, is the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry. Each week the company provides the most market-reflective values in the industry on its top-rated website KBB.com, including its famous Blue Book® Trade-In and Suggested Retail Values, and Fair Purchase Price, which reports what others are paying for new cars this week. The company also provides vehicle pricing and values through various products and services available to car dealers, auto manufacturers, finance and insurance companies, and governmental agencies. For two years running, Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com ranked highest in its category for brand equity and was named Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year in the 2012 and 2013 Harris Poll EquiTrend® study. Kelley Blue Book Co., Inc. is a subsidiary of AutoTrader Group, which includes AutoTrader.com, vAuto, VinSolutions and HomeNet Automotive. AutoTrader Group is a majority-owned subsidiary of Cox Enterprises.