



Senator Feinstein Seeks Federal Approval to Allow Hybrids to use Diamond Lanes

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Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today announced plans to introduce legislation that would allow California and other States to implement legislation permitting hybrid vehicles to use diamond or high occupancy vehicle lanes.

California enacted legislation (AB 2628) last year that allows hybrid vehicles that get 45 miles-per-gallon or better to use diamond lanes until 2008. However the law cannot go into effect without federal approval.

“Hybrid vehicles are the wave of the future, and we should be doing everything we can to encourage their use,” Senator Feinstein said. **“The use of high-mileage hybrids will help reduce our State’s thirst for gasoline. Californians won’t drive more, they will just need less gas to power their vehicles on their regular car trips. Additionally, increased use of hybrids could have a major effect on reducing the emissions that cause global warming.”**

“Changing the law to allow these hybrid vehicles to use diamond lanes certainly makes sense,” Senator Feinstein said. **“I hope that the Senate will act on this legislation quickly.”**

A measure allowing States to permit hybrids to use high-occupancy vehicle lanes was included in the last year’s transportation bill, which was approved separately by the Senate and the House. However, a final conference report was never agreed to, and the bill was not signed into law.

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