

Public comments overwhelmingly support Clean Cars and Trucks standards in New Mexico

Albuquerque, NM — After three public-comment sessions over two days, 65 New Mexicans have spoken up strongly in favor of the health, economic and climate benefits of Clean Cars and Trucks standards.

The Environmental Improvement Board and the Albuquerque Bernalillo Air Quality Control Commission will continue hearings on Advanced Clean Cars and Trucks standards through Thursday and will hold one more public-comment session at 6 p.m. Wednesday. The board was unable to hear at least a dozen supportive commenters within the hour allotted to comments at 1 p.m. That's in addition to hundreds of [written public comments](#) submitted in support so far.

The Clean Cars and Trucks and Heavy Duty Omnibus standards are among the [most effective climate policies New Mexico could adopt](#) and have documented [life-saving health benefits](#), especially for communities living near heavily traveled transportation routes. EVs save drivers thousands on fuel and maintenance and are expected to cost less upfront than gas cars by the time these standards take effect in 2027. They are already considerably less expensive to operate because of lower "fuel" and maintenance costs.

A few notes from Tuesday's public comments:

EVs cost less than gas cars to operate and are fun to drive: Several New Mexicans testified that they had a hard time finding EVs in New Mexico and have sometimes had to go out of state to find them, but when they did, [several bought new or used all-electric cars or plug-in hybrids for less than \\$25,000](#) and simply plug them into their wall outlets to charge overnight (at PNM and other utilities' discounted non-peak rate of about 3 cents per kwh).

Charging infrastructure is going in fast: On Tuesday, the Transportation Department's Jerry Valdez testified about the state's buildout of public EV chargers, going from 543 on Sept. 30 to 705 today, including in locations like Española, San Jon, Socorro, Questa, Angel Fire, Ojo Caliente, Rito and more. Many more are planned in the three years before the standards take effect for the 2027 model year.

Plug-in hybrids: Plug-in hybrids, which run 30-50 miles on battery and switch to gas when the battery runs out, qualify as "Clean Cars" under these standards, which would require automakers to supply increasing percentages of new EVs to New Mexico. They are a great first step into EVs for drivers who aren't quite ready to give up gas.

Below is a chart is from Dr. Paul Charlton, an emergency-medicine physician in Gallup, who testified about the need to adopt policies like Clean Cars especially for frontline and low-income communities:

Table 2: Cumulative Public Health Benefits of ACC II Scenarios, 2027–2050

Health Metric	ACC II Flex	ACC II Flex + Clean Grid	ACC II Full + Clean Grid
Avoided Premature Deaths	85	87	93
Avoided Hospital Visits ^a	80	81	86
Avoided Minor Cases ^b	48,291	49,443	52,482
Monetized Value, 2021 dollars (billions)	\$1.0	\$1.1	\$1.1

^a Includes hospital admissions and emergency room visits.

^b Includes reduced cases of acute bronchitis, exacerbated asthma, and other respiratory symptoms, and reduced restricted activity days and lost workdays.

More information:

Environment Department proposal: <https://www.env.nm.gov/transportation/>

Sierra Club: <https://www.sierraclub.org/advanced-clean-cars/>

Comprehensive [Q and A on these issues](#).