



Feinstein, Allen Push for Federal Approval for  
States to Allow Hybrid Vehicles into HOV Lanes  
March 9, 2005

**Washington, DC** – U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and George Allen (R-Va.) today announced the introduction of legislation that would give California, Virginia and other States the authority to permit hybrid vehicles to use diamond or high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.

**“High-mileage hybrid vehicles offer a tremendous opportunity for drivers to save both money and gasoline by driving a very efficient car,”** Senator Feinstein said. **“Almost one-third of the greenhouse gases emitted in the U.S. come from cars, trucks and other vehicles. This legislation will offer an incentive to people to buy hybrids. We should be doing all we can to help reduce our thirst for gasoline and to cut emissions that cause global warming.”**

**“This bill is important because it will allow States that are as different as California and Virginia to determine for themselves whether or not use of HOV lanes will be an appropriate incentive for driving hybrid or alternative fueled vehicles,”** Senator Allen said. **“The pairing of a Democrat and Republican, Feinstein and Allen, Californian and Virginian on this legislation reflects the benefits of this proposal. We trust the people in the States to determine the best approach to meet their specific needs rather than dictating one prescription from Washington, D.C. for our diverse United States.”**

The legislation would authorize the U.S. Department of Transportation to grant waivers to states that want to allow hybrid vehicles to drive in HOV lanes.

A measure allowing states to permit hybrids to use HOV lanes was included in last year’s transportation bill, which was approved separately by the Senate and the House. A final conference report was never agreed to, however, and the bill was not signed into law.

**“It certainly makes sense to allow states to encourage drivers to consume less gas by letting them in diamond lanes,”** Senator Feinstein said. **“I hope the Senate will act quickly on this legislation.”**

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