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### **California is Best in the Country on Solutions to Oil Dependence, But More is Needed**

Sacramento, CA – Rising gas prices are hitting drivers across California, but a new report released today by Natural Resources Defense Council with Sierra Club demonstrates that California is a leader in smart transportation policies that can help drivers feel less pain at the pump. The 2011 edition of “Fighting Oil Addiction: Ranking States’ Gasoline Price Vulnerability and Solutions for Change,” analyzes state and federal policies to help drivers. According to the report, California is among those states doing the most to get off oil, coming in first nationally, due in part to its adoption of strong state vehicle emissions and clean fuel standards as well as its policies that prioritize more efficient, sustainable transportation systems.

"Our oil dependence costs us more each day, whether it's the price at the pump, the dangerous pollution in our air, or the risks we take with our waterways that result in tragedies like the BP oil disaster last year," said Bill Magavern, Director of Sierra Club California. "California has done a lot to move beyond oil, but we also need the Obama administration to step up and increase vehicle fuel efficiency standards to 60 miles per gallon by 2025."

"There is no immediate solution to high gas prices, but smart transportation policies can reduce gas bills for all drivers, no matter where they live," said Deron Lovaas, NRDC's federal transportation policy director. "Better state policies that give residents transportation options, such as transit assistance and telecommuting options, can provide relief. Federal action – such as increasing vehicle fuel efficiency standards to 60 miles per gallon – would reduce oil price vulnerability across the board. We know we can't drill our way toward lower gas prices, so policies like these deliver."

On the federal level, in addition to calling for a 60 mpg standard, the new report recommends stronger investment in public transportation and in the maintenance and repair of decaying infrastructure, as well as the establishment of a national oil-savings objective. Over the next few years, California is prepared to implement SB 375, which aims to reduce sprawl, reduce the number of miles that citizens need to travel in vehicles to get to work or school or other daily tasks, and promote accessible public transit systems.

"California has already proven that setting strong emission standards here leads to national progress," said Magavern. "This fall, the California Air Resources Board has a chance to work with EPA and DOT to set a high bar nationally – we can't afford to pass up this opportunity to lead the rest of the country toward the cleanest cars possible."

The full report is available at: <http://www.SierraClubCalifornia.org/2011/05/26/report>

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