

THE DRIVING FORCE

November 1, 1997

Delivering up-to-date information to America's car clubs

Volume 1, Issue 1

SEMA Action Network (SAN): An Increasingly Effective Tool in Uniting Auto Enthusiasts and Industry

The SEMA Action Network (SAN) is now 173 auto clubs strong! This exciting partnership between SEMA and hobbyists from 30 states is proving to be a formidable alliance in opposing detrimental state legislative and regulatory proposals and supporting those that are advantageous.

The recent passage of S.B. 42, which exempts older vehicles from California's mandatory emission inspection program (see related story below), is just the latest example of the power of a unified effort.

To further enhance SEMA's ability to deliver timely and relevant information to auto clubs, we are pleased to present the first edition

of a new publication designed specifically for you -- "The Driving Force."

This monthly newsletter is packed with information on recent legislative and regulatory developments which we hope you will disseminate widely to your fellow club

members. Let us know what you think about "The Driving Force," and how we might improve it to better meet your needs.

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Calif. Governor Signs Bill Exempting Older Cars from SMOG Inspection

Hobbyists celebrated a significant legislative victory when California Governor Pete Wilson signed into a law a bill (S.B. 42) that will exempt older vehicles from the state's mandatory emission inspection program.

The new law moves the 1965 exemption cutoff forward to include all pre-1974 vehicles. These vehicles will be exempted from the obligations of the biennial emissions inspection until the year 2003. After 2003 all vehicles 30 years old and older are exempted from inspection. The exemption will also apply to the required inspections due upon transfer of ownership or upon registration of a vehicle previously registered outside

the state.

Under the new law, pre-1974 vehicle hobbyists will be able to add performance equipment, including late-model engine upgrades, without fear of unfair treatment at smog checks; performance modifications will enable the expansion of suspension, styling, tire and wheel opportunities and the California muscle car market will be made more accessible to enthusiasts. In addition, enactment of S.B. 42 in California will lend weight to a joint effort by SEMA and hobbyists in 1998 to introduce the bill as a model for other states to follow. For a copy of the press release, order SEMA Fax-on-Demand document # 1050.



Calling all wordsmiths! Come up with a more creative name for this new newsletter and win a deluxe 1988 Day Racer Calendar/Scheduler. All entries must be sent to Linda Spencer at the SEMA D.C. office by November 28.

Courtesy of the Specialty Equipment Market Association

Action Network Mobilizes on Ozone Standards: Hundreds of Letters Sent to Congress

In response to a SEMA-issued nationwide alert to its Action Network, hundreds of automotive enthusiasts have sent letters to their representatives in support of legislation to halt new ozone standards. The bills (H.R. 1984/S. 1084) would impose a 4-year moratorium on the establishment of new standards for ozone and fine particulate matter.

EPA's new air quality standards are problematic because they are based upon unreliable scientific findings, and will result in tougher pollution controls on

all sources, leading to pressure for vehicle scrappage programs, more stringent standards for vehicle emission inspections and more vehicles in more counties being tested for emissions. SEMA supports the moratorium legislation which would provide more time to investigate the need for more stringent air-quality standards and to ensure that legislative decisions would be made based upon reliable scientific research. For a copy of the Action Alert, order Fax-on-Demand #1020.

Governor Wilson Rejects Eased Standard for Aftermarket-Equipped Vehicles

Governor Wilson has decided not to sign a bill (S.B. 772) to reduce the burdens of SMOG Check II inspection for vehicles equipped with specialty add-on or modified parts. S.B. 772, which passed unanimously in the legislature, sought to simplify certain aspects of the SMOG inspection procedure and end the common referral of aftermarket-equipped vehicles to special referee stations. In a letter to the California Senate rejecting this

legislation, the Governor noted his agreement on the need to eliminate needless referral of vehicle owners to BAR referee facilities, but took issue with provisions that constrained BAR from conducting functional checks of the EGR and spark timing. For a copy of the press release, order SEMA Fax-on-Demand document # 1050.

"Clean Screen" Exemption Also Signed into Law

Governor Wilson signed into law legislation (A.B. 1492) that will allow the Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) to explore allowing the full or partial exemption of certain vehicles from biennial certification requirements based on motor vehicle emission profiles. These profiles, which will be culled from a vehicle model's

emission performance history, would enable the motor vehicle inspection program to accurately identify both high and low-emitting vehicles. The exemption, dubbed "Clean Screen," would also rely on remote sensing to determine which vehicles consistently comply with emission limits.

Bill to Prohibit Altered Suspensions Approved by Colorado Review Committee

The Colorado Legislature's Transportation Review Committee has given preliminary approval to a draft bill that would prohibit any person from operating a motor vehicle on a public highway if the configuration of the vehicle has been altered from the original manufacturer's specifications. This measure is specifically designed to ban vehicles with altered suspensions, but also pertains to tire or wheel



size, body height, chassis configuration and steering system. While this bill has not been formally introduced and Review Committee approval does not ensure passage, SEMA has been informed that action on the legislation will be an immediate priority when the legislature reconvenes in 1998. For a copy of the Legislative Notice, order SEMA Fax-on-Demand document # 1026

SEMA - Government Relations Office

1317 F Street N.W. Washington, DC 20004 Phone (202) 783-6007 FAX (202) 783-6024

Chris Kersting, VP, Government Affairs • Linda Spencer, Director of Government Relations

Steve McDonald, Director of State Relations • Joe Hill, Research Coordinator • Tony Mills, Layout Designer