

Electric Auto Association



December 15, 2004

EAA Funds CalCars' PRIUS+ Plug-In Hybrid Project

The Electric Auto Association has voted to support the California Cars Initiative (CalCars), contributing funds and urging its members to join the effort to make "plug-in hybrid electric vehicles" (PHEVs) available to drivers worldwide.

The EAA declared its financial support in the form of a multi-phase research and development grant to CalCars' unique PRIUS+ project. "Our first installment represents a substantial and unprecedented expenditure for our group," said EAA Treasurer Gabrielle Adelman. CalCars' PRIUS+ project converts '04-05 Priuses into PHEVs, doubling the Prius' 50 mpg performance. "The goal is to demonstrate the technology and encourage automakers to build PHEVs. The first PRIUS+ prototype is now being tested in the San Francisco Bay Area," said Felix Kramer, CalCars Founder.

Ron Freund, EAA Chairman, explained why the EAA departed from its usual focus on electric-only vehicles (EVs). "PHEVs are inspired. They're a cost-effective way to combine existing technologies bringing the benefits of battery electric technology to market. Adding bigger batteries to conventional hybrid cars gives drivers the opportunity to do most of their everyday driving electrically – with zero pollution. Drivers benefit from the option to recharge every night and start every day 'topped off'. And if it's not convenient to plug in, the hybrid's gasoline engine can take charge and act like a conventional hybrid – propelling the car and recharging the batteries. Finally, mass production of PHEVs will reduce the cost of batteries and other EV components, paving the way to bring pure EVs back into the marketplace," said Freund.

"EAA members have been key participants in meetings, online discussions and garage-level engineering, design, and construction of the first PRIUS+ prototype. At EAA Events all over North America, we always get queries from the public asking about when and how they can purchase an EV or PHEV. So we wanted to step forward to publicly and financially support this excellent project. Others, who are in a position to do so, should look into this project and consider a tax-deductible personal contribution to help speed progress", said Kim Rogers, EAA Education Program Manager.

Details of the project can be found at www.priusplus.org, which includes pointers to the "open source"-style online group where the latest technical developments are discussed. Currently, DaimlerChrysler's Sprinter commercial van is the only PHEV under development by a major automaker, but a number of PHEVs have been built at universities and by small companies.

About the EAA

Founded in 1967, the EAA is a non-profit organization of volunteers dedicated to the promotion of electric-drive technology and to the support of owners of electric vehicles. Its worldwide membership is a source of knowledge and expertise about electric-drive technology. The EAA seeks to educate the public about the progress and benefits of electric-drive technology by organizing and participating in forums, meetings, and public events. The EAA also offers technical information and support to people who wish to convert gasoline-powered vehicles to electric power. In recent years, the EAA has established funds to maintain public EV charger stations. More information about the EAA is available at www.eaaev.org.

About CalCars

Founded in 2002, CalCars is a non-profit advocacy/technology development group. CalCars is comprised of volunteer entrepreneurs, environmentalists, engineers and others working together to spur adoption of efficient, non-polluting automotive technologies. CalCars promotes PHEVs for energy independence and reduced greenhouse gases. More information about CalCars is available at www.calcars.org

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CalCars/PRIUS+ www.calcars.org, www.priusplus.org

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