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Truck and Engine Manufacturers Support Lemon Law Reform in Wisconsin

The Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA) joins other vehicle manufacturers, dealers and business groups in Wisconsin in supporting needed changes to the state's vehicle lemon law. The current law includes several provisions that invite abuse and have resulted in unwarranted, extravagant monetary awards.

EMA is the trade association that represents, among other members, manufacturers of medium and heavy-duty trucks and buses.

EMA supports legislation recently introduced by Representative Kramer and Senator Petrowski to fine-tune the existing law. We encourage other legislators to support their efforts. "EMA and its members support the need to ensure that motor vehicle owners in Wisconsin continue to have a fair and reasonable process to resolve disputes regarding nonconforming vehicles", said Jed Mandel, EMA President. "At the same time, that process should not allow vehicle owners and their attorneys to "game" the system in order to receive unjust and unwarranted cash rewards or new vehicles."

Several provisions in the existing law require amendment, including the unreasonable and very-short 30-day time period within which a replacement vehicle has to be delivered. Commercial and heavy-duty vehicles often are specially manufactured to owner specifications, and it is not always possible to deliver a comparable vehicle within the currently mandated 30-day time period. Amendments also are needed to: 1) more clearly define out-of-service, 2) delete the provision mandating double-damages, 3) set a timeframe in which owners can ask for refunds or replacement vehicles, and 4) eliminate incentives to owners and their attorneys to delay final settlements past 30-days and thus forcing manufacturers to pay larger awards.

"The current Wisconsin law needs some revisions to ensure a fair playing field for all parties and to prevent extravagant and unjustified damage awards. Those awards hurt consumers in Wisconsin by raising the cost of vehicles sold in the state. The amendments proposed by Representative Kramer and Senator Petrowski address those problems while maintaining adequate protections for vehicle owners," added Mandel. "We thank the sponsors for their efforts and ask all Wisconsin legislators to support the bill."

The Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association represents worldwide manufacturers of internal combustion engines and on-highway medium- and heavy-duty trucks. EMA works with government and industry to help the nation achieve its goals of cleaner air and safer highways, and to ensure that environmental and safety standards and regulations are technologically feasible, cost-effective, and provide safety and environmental benefits. For more information, contact Joe Suchecki at 312-929-1978 or jsuchecki@emamail.org.