



May 8, 2023

Mr. John Podesta
Senior Advisor to the President for Clean Energy Innovation and Implementation
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Podesta,

Last week, you told [Reuters](#) that Toyota Motor Corporation is “fully now committed under their new leadership to electrification,” based on a private conversation with the automaker. We do not know what Toyota told you privately, but its actions and its lack of a time-bound, public commitment to produce only zero-emission vehicles remain deeply concerning. We urge you to push the company to make public commitments commensurate with being “fully committed” to fixing the climate crisis: phasing out internal combustion vehicles on a schedule aligned with Paris goals, cleaning up its supply chains, and ending its anti-climate lobbying.

Toyota has not committed to phase out internal combustion vehicles, and its public announcements fall far short of matching President Biden’s goal of 50% of vehicle sales being electric by 2030.

Under CEO Koji Sato’s predecessor, Mr. Akio Toyoda, Toyota Motor Corporation [lobbied to delay electric vehicle \(EV\) adoption](#) so rigorously that the company was ranked the [most obstructive automaker in the world](#) on climate policy for [two years running](#). Toyota’s anti-climate lobbying includes opposing California’s authority to set clean car standards as recently as 2019. Mr. Sato has not made any public statement about Toyota’s lobbying, much less committed to support rather than oppose sound and much-needed climate policies like the EPA’s recently proposed [Multi-Pollutant Emissions Standards for Light-Duty and Medium-Duty Vehicles](#).

Toyota’s 2019 commitment to sell 3.5 million all-electric vehicles per year by 2030 would only account for one-third of the company’s current vehicle sales—far short of what is needed to meet White House goals or science-based climate targets. Last month, Sato announced an interim goal that would amount to electric vehicles making up only 10% of Toyota’s sales in 2026, despite that [40% of Americans](#) are in the market for an electric vehicle as their next car.

Toyota’s continued reliance on plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) is concerning. Company executives have [overstated](#) the benefits of PHEVs, as shown by recent research indicating their real-world fuel consumption and carbon emissions are on average [three to five times higher than expected](#). It is important to note here that when Toyota says, “electrified,” it often means not just

battery electric vehicles (BEVs), but also fossil-fuel-powered vehicles like [hybrids](#). It is important to be sure that Toyota did not use the term in this confusing, if not misleading, manner when speaking with you.

Toyota's refusal to lead a rapid transition to electric vehicles and its advocacy against EV policies not only thwarts climate progress, but harms American families every year. Air pollution from burning fossil fuels is responsible for [one in five deaths globally](#). Far from leading on this problem, Toyota has [cheated on emissions testing](#), going to extra lengths to endanger consumers and the public at large, actions for which the EPA fined the company a record \$180 million in 2021.

In March of this year, 54 consumer and environmental groups [wrote](#) to ask Koji Sato to commit to phase out production of internal combustion engine vehicles in the U.S and Europe by 2030 and globally by 2035, and to end Toyota's [anti-climate lobbying](#). He has not responded.

In short, Toyota's recent record flatly contradicts the notion that it is fully committed to phasing out fossil fuel vehicles. We are glad that you are engaging with Toyota, and we urge you to push it to commit publicly to be an engine for good in fighting the climate crisis.

Sincerely,

Public Citizen