Two Billion Cars: Is it Sustainable?

By

Dr. Dan Sperling
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2 Lecture Center Building F (LCF)
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(Co-hosted by Department of Civil and Materials Engineering, College of Engineering, and the Institute for Environmental Science and Policy at UIC)

Abstract

The world is headed toward two billion vehicles. Is this sustainable? Not without transforming vehicles, fuels, and transportation generally—not only in the U.S., but virtually everywhere. Professor Sperling will examine the roots of the problem: the resistant auto industry, dysfunctional oil markets, shortsighted government policies, and unmotivated consumers. He will focus on the role of innovation and policy in bringing about low carbon fuels, electric-drive vehicles, socially-responsible behavior, enhanced mobility services, and low-carbon cities. He will also address the role of research in the policy process and the phenomenon of experts rarely being leaders.

Biography

Daniel Sperling is Professor of Civil Engineering and Environmental Science and Policy, founding Director of the Institute of Transportation Studies, and interim Director of the Energy Efficiency Center at the University of California, Davis. Dr. Sperling was the lead author of the transportation chapter in the 2007 IPCC report, “Mitigation of Climate Change,” that won IPCC the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008. In February 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger appointed Dr. Sperling to the transportation seat on the California Air Resources Board. He is author or editor of 200+ papers and reports and 11 books (including Two Billion Cars, Oxford University Press), has served on 12 National Academies committees, including and a recent member of 13 National Academies committees on Energy Efficiency, Gasoline Taxes, Hydrogen, Transport in China, Biomass Fuels R&D, Sustainable Transportation, and related topics. Dr. Sperling was selected as a National Associate of the National Academies, and recently chaired the Future of Mobility committee of the (Davos) World Economic Forum. He has testified seven times to the US Congress on alternative fuels and advanced vehicle technology and been featured on Jon Stewart’s Daily Show and NPR’s Science Friday and Fresh Air. Professor Sperling earned his Ph.D. in Transportation Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley (with minors in Economics and Energy & Resources) and his B.S. in Environmental Engineering and Urban Planning from Cornell University. Professor Sperling worked two years as an environmental planner for the US Environmental Protection Agency and two years as an urban planner in the Peace Corps in Honduras.