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Fuel economy challenges: Special MBS 2008 sessions focus on manufacturing, policy and technology

ANN ARBOR, Mich., June 18, 2008 – The price of a gallon of gas—now averaging \$4 a gallon in the United States—is having a major impact on the international automotive industry and the way it conducts business. The implications of fuel-cost increases reach far beyond sales trends—technology, manufacturing, and policy are all critical components of the industry which must incorporate this new dynamic into future planning.

To address the impact of fuel costs on production, policy and powertrain technology, this year's Management Briefing Seminars, sponsored by the Center for Automotive Research (CAR), offers several sessions, Aug. 11-15 in Traverse City, Mich.

“Manufacturing for Fuel Economy” on Tuesday morning, Aug. 12, will provide insight into the near-term evolution of fuel economy technologies and their implications for manufacturers of both body and powertrain components and systems. The Tuesday afternoon session, “Energy, Efficiency, and Climate: What Role Auto?” will present a groundbreaking public dialogue between invited representatives of automotive, environmental, government and other experts on ideas aimed at improving the sustainability of the automobile, while growing the economy, achieving energy independence and providing jobs. Friday, August 15, the “Advanced Powertrain Forum” will convene a panel of experts from automotive, energy and alternative fuel organizations to address the challenges of future powertrains and fuels, and the necessary partnerships for success.

“Clearly the impact of gasoline at \$4 a gallon goes well beyond the gas station and consumers’ pocketbook. Manufacturing experts need to consider the accelerating pace of introducing new powertrain technologies and vehicle light-weighting strategies in their future planning,” said Dr. Jay Baron, president/CEO of CAR. Dr. Baron will chair three sessions on manufacturing, including “Manufacturing for Fuel Economy.”

“These three sessions highlight the critical role manufacturing, technology and policy play in creating a more sustainable product. It will put attendees at the center of the most important issue in the industry,” said Brett Smith, co-chair of both the “Energy, Efficiency and Climate” and “Advanced Powertrain” sessions, and the assistant director of the Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology group at CAR.

Selected speakers across the three sessions demonstrate a broad depth of industry knowledge, and include:

MaryAnn Wright, Chief Executive Officer, Johnson Controls-Saft and Vice President and General Manager, Hybrid Systems Group, Johnson Controls Inc.; **Joel Wiegert**, Director, Manufacturing, BorgWarner Turbo & Emission Systems; **Ronald Krupitzer**, Vice President, Automotive Applications, American Iron and Steel Institute; **Michael Bull**, Director of Technology, Automotive, Novelis Corporation; **Mike Stanton**, President and CEO, Association of International Automobile Manufacturers; **John DeCicco**, Senior Fellow, Environmental Defense; **Amory Lovins**, Cofounder, Chairman, and Chief Scientist, Rocky Mountain Institute; **Beth Lowery**, Vice President, Environment, Energy and Safety Policy, General Motors Corporation; and **John German**, Manager, Environmental and Energy Analysis, American Honda Motor Company, Inc.; **Wes Boslen**, Chief Marketing Officer and Vice President, Business Development, Coskata; **David Vieau**, President and CEO, A123 Systems; **Denise Gray**, Director, Global Vehicle Engineering, Hybrids, Electric Vehicles and Batteries, General Motors Corporation; **Lou Rhodes**, President, ENVI, Chrysler LLC and **Justin Ward**, Engineer, Advanced Technology Vehicles, Toyota Engineering & Manufacturing, N.A., Inc.

The Management Briefing Seminars is an automotive industry tradition, and attracts more than 1,200 attendees who participate in targeted sessions, senior-level executive panels and highly valued networking opportunities.

In addition to the special sessions on fuel economy, general automotive sessions on Wednesday and Thursday (Aug. 13-14) focus on critical global strategies, including future industry leadership. Additional speakers in the Aug. 11-12 sessions will address the globalization of manufacturing; the explosion of innovation and how it must be incorporated into products and processes; and the continued---and growing---impact of the connected vehicle. A Friday session will look at the changing financial landscape and includes three vice presidents of procurement from vehicle manufacturers.

An up-to-date listing of speakers and sessions is available on CAR's Web site: mbs.cargroup.org. For more information regarding MBS or to register at the early registration rates, contact the Center for Automotive Research at (734) 662-1287 or visit the Web site: mbs.cargroup.org

CAR's mission is to conduct research on significant issues related to the future direction of the global automotive industry, as well as organize and conduct forums of value to the automotive community.

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