



November 1, 2022

VIA EMAIL

Francisco Sanchez, General Counsel
American Honda Motor Co., Inc.
700 Van Ness Ave
Torrance, CA 90501-1486
fsanchez@honda.com

Re: Honda's Deceptive Built in USA Marketing

Dear Mr. Sanchez:

I am writing to you on behalf of Truth in Advertising, Inc. ("TINA.org"), a nonprofit consumer advocacy organization dedicated to protecting consumers from deceptive advertising. An investigation of American Honda Motor Co., Inc. has revealed that it is deceptively marketing certain vehicles as "built" in the United States when, in reality, the vehicles are assembled in the U.S. using imported parts. As you may be aware, according to the Federal Trade Commission, "built" is synonymous with "made" in the U.S.¹ and therefore requires that any vehicle being marketed as such must be "all or virtually all" made domestically and contain "no – or negligible – foreign content."²

For example, Honda is claiming on its Honda in America website and on social media that its vehicles are "built," "manufactured," and "made" in the U.S.³





In reality, however, all Honda vehicles assembled in the U.S. are made using a substantial amount of imported parts.⁴ As such, Honda's Made in the USA claims are deceptive and in violation of Section 5 of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45. To the extent similar deceptive claims are repeated in physical or digital labels, they would also be in violation of the FTC's Made in USA Labeling Rule, 16 CFR Part 323.

Honda has every right to boast of its assembly plants in the United States that create American jobs and strengthen the U.S. economy, but it cannot illegally embellish the amount of manufacturing that takes place domestically. Honda must ensure that its marketing messages are truthful, nondeceptive, and in compliance with the law.

We trust Honda will take immediate action to rectify this deceptive marketing.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Laura Smith, Esq.
Legal Director
Truth in Advertising, Inc.

¹ See *United States v. iSpring Water Systems, LLC, et al.*, Stipulated Order for Civil Penalties, Permanent Injunction, and Other Relief, Apr. 19, 2019, https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/cases/172_3033_ispring_water_systems_-_stipulated_order.pdf (“Made in the United States’ means any representation, express or implied, that a product or service, or a specified component thereof, is of U.S.-origin, including, but not limited to, a representation that such product or service is ‘made,’ ‘manufactured,’ ‘built,’ ‘produced,’ or ‘crafted’ in the United States or in America, or any other U.S.-origin claim.”). See also Made in USA Labeling Rule, 16 CFR Part 323 (“The term *Made in the United States* means any unqualified representation, express or implied, that a product or service, or a specified component thereof, is of U.S. origin, including, but not limited to, a representation that such product or service is ‘made,’ ‘manufactured,’ ‘built,’ ‘produced,’ ‘created,’ or ‘crafted’ in the United States or in America, or any other unqualified U.S.-origin claim.”)

² FTC, Complying with the Made in USA Standard, <https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/resources/complying-made-usa-standard>.

³ Honda in America, <https://hondainamerica.com/manufacturing/>; Honda in America Oct. 25, 2022 Tweet, <https://twitter.com/HondaInAmerica/status/1584958592784158723>; Honda in America Aug. 17, 2022 Tweet, <https://twitter.com/hondainamerica/status/1559940618767540226>. See also Honda in America June 22, 2022 Tweet, <https://twitter.com/HondaInAmerica/status/1539703043691712512>; Honda in America May 5, 2022 Tweet, <https://twitter.com/HondaInAmerica/status/1522297096648511490>.

Honda’s Made in USA marketing extends to local ads as well. See e.g., Honda is made in America, with factories right here in Ohio, YouTube, Feb. 19, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbUKoKSpqyo>; Honda: The Most American-Made Automaker, YouTube, Jan. 22, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDMIIU8kRKY>.

⁴ See U.S. Department of Transportation, NHTSA, Part 583 American Automobile Labeling Act Reports, <https://www.nhtsa.gov/part-583-american-automobile-labeling-act-reports>; U.S. Department of Transportation, NHTSA, Part 583 American Automobile Labeling Act Report for 2022 makes and models, <https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/2022-09/MY2022-AALA-Alphabetical-8-30-22.pdf> (showing that, at most, 20 to 75 percent of 2022 Honda vehicles are of U.S. content); U.S. Department of Transportation, NHTSA, Part 583 American Automobile Labeling Act Report for 2023 makes and models, <https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/2022-10/MY2023-AALA-Alphabetical-10-6-22.pdf> (showing that, at most, 30 to 75 percent of 2023 Honda vehicles are of U.S. content).

The only indication in Honda marketing materials that its vehicles are made using imported parts is in quickly disappearing fine print that is only present in certain materials. See e.g., Honda in America Aug. 17, 2022 Tweet, <https://twitter.com/hondainamerica/status/1559940618767540226> (screen shot below).



Honda products are built using domestic and globally sourced parts.

“Honda products are built using domestic and globally sourced parts.”