

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 22, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
Department of Transportation
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Secretary Chao and Administrator Wheeler,

We are writing to object to the rollback of the existing car and light truck fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions standards that was finalized on Tuesday March 31, 2020. This would undermine efforts to limit tailpipe emissions and increase fuel economy, thus hampering one of the government's best methods of combating climate change. Not only is this woefully inappropriate as the world is consumed by responding to the COVID-19 global pandemic, but this consequential regulatory decision would allow cars on American roads to emit nearly a billion tons more carbon dioxide in comparison to the 2012 regulations.¹

We believe that this rollback reflects a complete disregard for science and could harm the economy over time. The administration's own draft economic analysis of the rule showed that it would hurt consumers by forcing them to buy more gasoline to fuel their less efficient cars. A recent analysis of the final rule² concluded that even with this administration's efforts to correct what a panel of government-appointed scientists, many of them selected by the current administration, found to be "significant weaknesses in the scientific analysis" of the rule,³ deep flaws still remain. This new standard would lead to nearly a billion more tons of carbon dioxide released and the consumption of about 80 billion more gallons of gasoline over the lifetime of the vehicles built during the terms of the rule.

This is yet another effort to undermine the United States' efforts to fight climate change, which has so far included pulling out of the global Paris climate change accord, weakening the rules to curb greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired electric plants, and undermining the basic science

¹ https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/30/climate/trump-fuel-economy.html?auth=login-email&campaign_id=9&emc=edit_NN_p_20200331&instance_id=17204&login=email&nl=morning-briefing®i_id=118295410§ion=whatElse&segment_id=23382&te=1&user_id=1470da37f9b120deb76540c324cc5e94

² <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/research/cr-finds-dot-and-epa-made-questionable-choices-in-trying-to-justify-the-rollback-of-federal-fuel-economy-and-vehicle-emissions-standards/>

³ https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/ld_cafe_my2021-26_nprm_2.pdf

that underpins environmental regulations. The 2012 policy was the first climate policy that targeted what is now the nation's largest source of climate-warming emissions: transportation.

The rollback also puts the United States out of step with the rest of the global auto market, moving it from one of the strongest fuel economy standards in the world to the weakest. This new "American Standard" would be lower than those of the European Union, China, India, Japan and South Korea. That could present long-term challenges to the United States' auto industry, as other automakers develop more sophisticated, high-efficiency, low-pollution vehicles while American ones focus on gas guzzlers.

During this difficult time in responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the United States should focus its efforts in helping Americans get the medical supplies, funding, and assistance necessary, not rolling back emissions standards that help to fight climate change and keep our air clean.

We strongly urge the administration to reconsider rolling back the 2012 emissions and withdraw it from publication in the federal register. Instead, we urge the administration to take all necessary steps to ensure public health protections are strengthened as we fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Mike Doyle
Member of Congress

Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress

Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress

Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer
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Deb Haaland
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Sean Casten
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Grace F. Napolitano
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Raúl M. Grijalva
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