

June 20, 2007

The Honorable _____
United States Senate/United States House of Representatives

Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator/Representative _____:

The undersigned organizations are writing to share our concerns about proposed increases to Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. A dramatic change to CAFE will reduce vehicles' safety, raise auto prices, cause greater gasoline consumption, eliminate auto manufacturing jobs, and harm our environment.

CAFE standards will force manufacturers to produce, and drivers to buy, smaller, lighter, less-safe vehicles. An analysis performed by *USA Today* found that 46,000 people died in traffic fatalities that would have survived in bigger, heavier cars between 1975, when CAFÉ standards were first mandated, and 1999. That's roughly 7,700 deaths for every mile per gallon gained, the analysis shows. Small cars simply don't have enough excess space to take on the force of a collision, leaving drivers vulnerable to severe injury or death.

Increased automotive fuel mileage mandates also ignore the monetary costs to consumers, as though technology and cars were free. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that already-scheduled CAFE increases will cost American drivers more than \$6.71 billion between 2007 and 2011. Likewise, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) found that raising CAFE standards further would cost drivers \$2.4 billion a year. In most cases, those price increases will not be recovered due to the increased fuel economy regulations.

CAFE's most ironic effect is that it causes greater gasoline consumption. Since 1960, highway travel has climbed 139 percent – more than offsetting increases in fuel economy over that period. In addition, as vehicle mileage increases, the cost of driving is actually held down – in some cases encouraging more miles to be driven. Hiking fuel economy regulations would actually lead to more traffic on our roads, not savings at the pump or less carbon emissions as CAFÉ advocates argue. Indeed, by one estimate, CAFE increases would raise volatile organic compound pollution by 2.30 percent, oxides of nitrogen pollution by 3.82 percent, and carbon monoxide pollution by 4.97 percent.

Finally, increased CAFE standards will have a damaging effect on American automotive jobs. CBO found that increasing mileage requirements would cost the struggling American auto industry a staggering \$1.2 billion per year. Worse yet, one analysis estimates that under the most extreme CAFE proposals American automakers could lose as much as \$9.3 billion per year – while foreign firms would gain an annual \$4.4 billion. With the U.S. auto economy already struggling, how could Congress consider mandating these changes?

In light of these serious issues, we urge you to oppose raising CAFE standards and vote “no” when the proposed legislation comes to a vote.

Wednesday, June 20, 2007

Sincerely,


 Larry Daniel
 President
 America's Independent Trucker's Association, Inc.




 J. William Lauderback
 Executive Vice President
 American Conservative Union




 Jeff Mazzella
 President
 Center for Individual Freedom




 George Landrith
 President
 Frontiers of Freedom

