

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 10, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Acting Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Chao and Acting Administrator Wheeler:

We write to request that the Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency hold a public hearing in Oregon on the recently proposed rule to freeze the fuel economy and vehicle greenhouse gas emissions tailpipe standards. This proposed rule, entitled “The Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks,” would have a significant impact on the economy, the environment, and consumers in our state and around the country. Our constituents deserve an opportunity for public engagement on a rule with such clear ramifications.

This proposed rule would freeze the light-duty fleet’s fuel economy standards at 37 mpg and carbon dioxide emissions at around 240 grams per mile from model year 2020 through model year 2026. Improvements in fuel economy have been critical to keeping the U.S. auto industry competitive, reducing pollution and associated negative health impacts, and saving consumers billions at the fuel pump. By 2030, the previous fuel standards would have saved the average car owner more than \$6,000 over the life of the car, cut new vehicles carbon emissions by 50%, sustain 288,000 jobs, and reduced our nation’s oil consumption 2.4 million barrels per day.

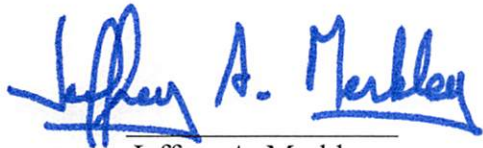
The Administration’s analysis of its own proposal shows how badly it would hit consumers’ wallets, the climate, and the American auto industry, including a loss of 60,000 jobs by 2030. Outside experts note this figure may actually underestimate the damage: the Union of Concerned Scientists found that freezing the fuel economy standards would cause consumers to spend an additional \$50 billion on gasoline by 2035 and would reduce gross domestic product by \$8 billion in 2025.

The proposal also announces the agencies’ intent to prevent California from setting its state-level vehicle greenhouse gas emissions standards, as explicitly allowed in the Clean Air Act. Oregon, along with 12 other states and the District of Columbia, has chosen to follow California’s more stringent requirements to protect air quality and public health, as explicitly permitted by the Clean Air Act. Oregonians should have an opportunity for a public hearing to voice concerns over a proposal that takes away the ability to set their own environmental and public health standards. The Administration should appreciate that this is especially important at a time when wildfires are leading to dangerous air quality levels for much of the state.

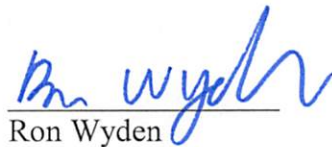
Elected officials from the west coast region, representing more than 55 million people with a combined GDP of \$3 trillion dollars, have already spoken out against changes to the fuel economy and vehicle greenhouse gas emissions standards. One public hearing on the West Coast is not adequate to hear these concerns. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency provide our constituents an in-person opportunity to voice their concerns with this proposal and its impacts.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



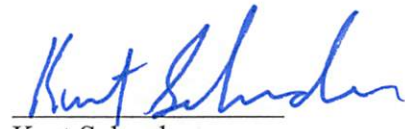
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress

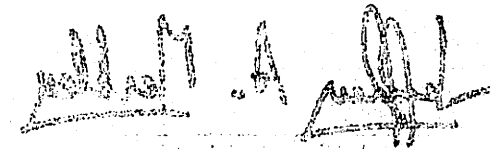
The undersigned hereby certify that the above named person is a resident of the State of California and is entitled to the benefits of the laws of this State. This certificate is given in accordance with the provisions of the laws of this State and is subject to the provisions of the laws of this State.

Witness my hand and seal of office this _____ day of _____, 19____.

Notary Public



Notary Public
State of California



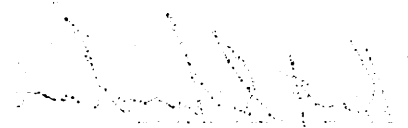
Applicant
State of California



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