



# **American Bridge**

## **Trump Policy Brief: Roll-Back Of Fuel Efficiency Standards**

**4.14.17**

## TRUMP'S ROLLBACK OF FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

The EPA announced that it would reconsider fuel efficiency standards implemented by the Obama administration on light-duty vehicles.

- ✓ The Obama administration set a 54.5 miles per gallon fleetwide target for light-duty vehicles by 2025, or about 36 mpg on the road.
- ✓ The Obama-era standards would have cut 6 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions, saved Americans more than \$1.7 trillion in fuel costs, and doubled the average fuel efficiency of light-duty vehicles by 2025.
- ✓ The EPA's decision to reconsider its fuel standards came at the request of a consortium of automakers, who complained about having to produce more hybrid and plug-in vehicles.
- ✓ The Obama administration found that automakers were already exceeding predicted technology innovations regarding fuel efficiency, despite complaints from industry insiders that the standards were too ambitious.
- ✓ Reducing fuel efficiency standards could increase carbon emissions by the transportation sector, which already accounted for over 30 percent of the country's total CO2 emissions.
- ✓ Carbon emissions are associated with serious health conditions, such as asthma, child lung disease, gastrointestinal illnesses, and heat-related deaths.

### The EPA Announced That It Would Reconsider Fuel Efficiency Standards Put In Place By The Obama Administration

#### THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION INTENDED TO REEVALUATE OBAMA-ERA FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS FOR LIGHT-DUTY VEHICLES

**The EPA Announced That It Intended To Reconsider Greenhouse Gas Standards For Light-Duty Vehicles Produced For Model Years 2022-2025.** According to a notice by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "EPA announces its intention to reconsider the Final Determination of the Mid-Term Evaluation of greenhouse gas (GHG) standards for model year (MY) 2022-2025 light-duty vehicles and to coordinate its reconsideration with the parallel process to be undertaken by the DOT's NHTSA regarding Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for cars and light trucks for the same model years." [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, [3/13/17](#)]

- **Light-Duty Vehicles Included Passenger Cars, Light-Duty Trucks, And Medium-Duty Passenger Vehicles.** According to a notice by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "The Mid-Term Evaluation was established to review standards set in a 2012 joint rulemaking by the EPA and NHTSA, which set federal GHG emissions and CAFE standards for MY 2017 and beyond for light-duty vehicles. 2017 and Later Model Year Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards, Final Rule, 77 FR 62,624 (Oct. 15, 2012). These

standards, codified for EPA at 40 C.F.R. 86.1818-12, apply to passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles (i.e., sport utility vehicles, cross-over utility vehicles and light trucks), collectively referred to in this notice as light-duty vehicles.” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, [3/13/17](#)]

**EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt And Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao Signed The Notice On March 13, 2017.** According to a notice by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “The Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Elaine Chao, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, signed the following Notice on March 13, 2017 and we are submitting it for publication in the Federal Register.” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, [3/13/17](#)]

### **The Obama-Era Standards Would Have Required Light-Duty Vehicles To Get 54.5 MPG By 2025, A Benchmark The Obama Administration Considered Achievable As Recently As January 2017**

**The Obama Administration Implemented A Program That Would Have Brought The Average Industry Fleetwide Fuel Economy Standard For New Light-Duty Vehicles To 54.5 Miles Per Gallon By 2025.** According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “The national program for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and fuel economy standards for light-duty vehicles (passenger cars and trucks) was developed jointly by EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The standards were established in two phases: Phase 1 - Model years 2012 - 2016; and Phase 2 - Model years 2017 - 2025. Together the final standards are projected to: Result in an average industry fleetwide level of 163 grams/mile of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in model year 2025, which is equivalent to 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) (if achieved exclusively through fuel economy improvements)” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, accessed [3/15/17](#)]

- **In January 2017, The Obama Administration Found That Their Target Fuel Efficiency Standards Were Still Appropriate Based On The Latest Technical Information And Input From Industry Stakeholders.** According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “In this final order, the Administrator is making a final adjudicatory determination (hereafter ‘determination’) that, based on her evaluation of extensive technical information available to her and significant input from the industry and other stakeholders, and in light of the factors listed in the 2012 final rule establishing the MY2017-2025 standards, the MY2022-2025 standards remain appropriate under section 202 (a) (1) of the Clean Air Act.” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, [January 2017](#)]

### **THE STANDARDS WOULD HAVE BOOSTED THE REAL-WORLD GAS MILEAGE OF U.S. PASSENGER VEHICLES BY MORE THAN 10 MILES PER GALLON**

**The Obama Administration’s 54.5 MPG Standards Would Have Amounted To Approximately 36 Miles Per Gallon On The Road.** According to Vox, “In 2011, the Obama administration began crafting sweeping new rules that would steadily increase the efficiency of US passenger vehicles through 2025. By the final year, the Environmental Protection Agency expects new cars and light trucks sold in the US to average roughly 36 miles per gallon on the road, up from 25 mpg today. [...] By 2025, the EPA noted, new cars and light trucks on the road would average about 36 miles per gallon on the road under Obama’s proposed rules (you sometimes see this reported as 54.5 mpg, but that’s a different metric).” [Vox, [3/15/17](#)]

- **As Of March 2017, The Average Fuel Efficiency On The Road For U.S. Passenger Vehicles Was 25 MPG.** According to Vox, “In 2011, the Obama administration began crafting sweeping new rules that would steadily increase the efficiency of US passenger vehicles through 2025. By the final

year, the Environmental Protection Agency expects new cars and light trucks sold in the US to average roughly 36 miles per gallon on the road, up from 25 mpg today.” [Vox, [3/15/17](#)]

## **THE OBAMA-ERA STANDARDS WOULD HAVE CUT 6 BILLION TONS IN GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, SAVED AMERICANS MORE THAN \$1.7 TRILLION IN FUEL COSTS, AND DOUBLED FUEL EFFICIENCY**

**The Standards Would Have Cut 6 Billion Metric Tons Of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Over The Lifetimes Of Vehicles Sold In Model Years 2012-2025.** According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “The national program for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and fuel economy standards for light-duty vehicles (passenger cars and trucks) was developed jointly by EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). [...] Together the final standards are projected to: [...] Cut 6 billion metric tons of GHG over the lifetimes of the vehicles sold in model years 2012-2025” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, accessed [3/15/17](#)]

**The Standards Would Have Saved More Than \$1.7 Trillion In Fuel Costs, And Reduced America’s Dependence On Oil By More Than 2 Million Barrels Per Day In 2025.** According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “The national program for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and fuel economy standards for light-duty vehicles (passenger cars and trucks) was developed jointly by EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). [...] Together the final standards are projected to: [...] Save families more than \$1.7 trillion in fuel costs; and Reduce America’s dependence on oil by more than 2 million barrels per day in 2025.” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, accessed [3/15/17](#)]

**The Obama Administration Standards Would Have Nearly Doubled The Fuel Efficiency Of Cars And Light-Duty Trucks Compared To 2012 Levels.** According to a press release by the Obama administration Office of the Press Secretary, “The Obama Administration today finalized groundbreaking standards that will increase fuel economy to the equivalent of 54.5 mpg for cars and light-duty trucks by Model Year 2025. When combined with previous standards set by this Administration, this move will nearly double the fuel efficiency of those vehicles compared to new vehicles currently on our roads.” [Office of the Press Secretary, [8/28/12](#)]

**The Standards Would Save Consumers Thousands Of Dollars In Lower Fuel Costs Over The Lifetime Of Their Vehicles.** According to Vox, “By 2025, the EPA noted, new cars and light trucks on the road would average about 36 miles per gallon on the road under Obama’s proposed rules (you sometimes see this reported as 54.5 mpg, but that’s a different metric). The standards would add about \$875 to the average sticker price of new models, but consumers would save roughly three times that much in lower fuel costs over the lifetime of their vehicles.” [Vox, [3/15/17](#)]

## **TRUMP’S ACTION PUT AUTOMAKERS, WHO COMPLAINED ABOUT BEING FORCED TO PRODUCE MORE HYBRID AND PLUG-IN VEHICLES, BEFORE CONSUMERS**

**February 2017: The Alliance Of Automobile Manufacturers Requested That The EPA Withdraw The Emissions Standards Pertaining To Light-Duty Vehicles For Model Years 2022-2025.** According to a letter by Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers president and CEO Mitch Bainwol to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency administrator G. Scott Pruitt, “I write on behalf of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers (Alliance), an association representing twelve leading manufacturers of cars and light trucks, to request that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) withdraw the Final Determination on the Appropriateness of the Model Year 2022-2025 Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards

under the Midterm Evaluation (Final Determination) which was announced on January 13, 2017 but never published in the Federal Register.” [Mitch Bainwol – Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, [2/21/17](#)]

**The Alliance Claimed That Industry Stakeholders Could Not Accurately Project The “Technological And Economic Feasibility” Of Fuel Economy Standards For Model Years 2022-2025.** According to a letter by Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers president and CEO Mitch Bainwol to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency administrator G. Scott Pruitt, “Then, in 2012, EPA and NHTSA took the unprecedented step of setting joint greenhouse gas and fuel economy standards over a decade in advance for MY 2022-2025 vehicles. [...] No agency ever had set emissions standards so far into the future, and all stakeholders understood that no one could accurately project the circumstances affecting the technological and economic feasibility of these standards.” [Mitch Bainwol – Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, [2/21/17](#)]

**The Alliance Complained That The Standard Would Force Auto Manufacturers To “Rely On Much More Expensive Electrified Technologies” Like Hybrids And Plug-Ins.** According to a letter by Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers president and CEO Mitch Bainwol to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency administrator G. Scott Pruitt, “EPA estimated that these standards will cost the industry at least \$200 billion. But EPA underestimated the burden. Contrary to EPA’s assumptions, manufacturers will have to rely on much more expensive electrified technologies (i.e., hybrids and plug-ins), driving up vehicle prices and depressing auto sales.” [Mitch Bainwol – Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, [2/21/17](#)]

### **Trump Administration Officials Claimed That The Automotive Industry Had Been Ignored Under The Obama Administration**

**EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt Said That There Had Been “Great Progress” Made On Fuel Efficiency, And That Calls By The Manufacturing Industry To Reevaluate The Standards Had Been “Largely Disregarded.”** According to CNBC, “Pruitt, who has pledged to roll back what he deems burdensome regulations, told CNBC that American automakers wanted to evaluate those standards. He said he believes the rule-making process was rushed. [...] ‘I think that what has been broken in that process is, one, not a recognition of the great progress that's been made with those standards, but two, those in Detroit, those that are manufacturing autos in this country, expressed to the EPA that they wanted to evaluate the impact of the previous standards. And that was largely disregarded.’” [CNBC, [3/9/17](#)]

**An Unnamed Senior White House Official Told CBS That The Obama-Era EPA Had Ignored Data Provided By The Automotive Industry That Argued Against The Obama Administration’s Fuel Economy Standards.** According to CBS News, “While the administration has not said explicitly it wants to weaken the standards, a senior White House official said the Obama-era EPA had ignored reams of data cited by the automotive industry. The official spoke on condition of anonymity at a White House briefing in order to outline the action, despite the president’s criticism of the use of un-named sources.” [CBS News, [3/15/17](#)]

### **Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne Admitted That Producers Of SUVs And Pickups Would Greatly Benefit From A Rollback In Fuel Economy Standards**

**Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne Said That He Thought Every Producer Of SUV And Pickups Would Benefit From A Rollback In Fuel Economy Standards.** According to NBC News, “With a presidential mandate aimed at government regulations, Scott Pruitt, the new head of the Environmental Protection Agency, is widely expected to roll back rules set during the Obama administration that would have boosted automotive fuel economy standards to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. [...] ‘I think every (automaker) that produces SUVs and pickups will benefit from (a) rollback,’ said Sergio Marchionne, CEO of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, during a media roundtable at the Geneva Motor Show on Tuesday.” [NBC News, [3/8/17](#)]

## **The Obama Administration Found That Car Makers Were Already Exceeding Expectations Regarding Technologies To Improve Fuel Economy By About 11 MPG Over Eight Years**

### **In January 2017, The Obama Administration Found That Their Target Fuel Efficiency Standards Were Still Appropriate Based On The Latest Technical Information And Input From Industry Stakeholders.**

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “In this final order, the Administrator is making a final adjudicatory determination (hereafter ‘determination’) that, based on her evaluation of extensive technical information available to her and significant input from the industry and other stakeholders, and in light of the factors listed in the 2012 final rule establishing the MY2017-2025 standards, the MY2022-2025 standards remain appropriate under section 202 (a) (1) of the Clean Air Act.” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, [January 2017](#)]

- **January 2017: The Obama Administration Found That Car Markers And Suppliers Were Developing “Far More Innovative Technologies To Improve Fuel Economy” And Reduce Greenhouse Emissions Than Anticipated.** According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “On January 12, 2017, Administrator Gina McCarthy signed her determination to maintain the current GHG emissions standards for model year (MY) 2022-2025 vehicles. Her final determination found that automakers are well positioned to meet the standards at lower costs than previously estimated. [...] Automakers are innovating in a time of record sales and fuel economy levels. The results of the Draft TAR show that manufacturers are adopting fuel economy technologies at unprecedented rates. Car makers and suppliers have developed far more innovative technologies to improve fuel economy and reduce GHG emissions than anticipated just a few years ago.” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, accessed [3/15/17](#)]

## **President Trump Announced The EPA Reevaluation At An Event In Detroit**

### **President Trump Announced Plans For His Administration To Re-Examine Federal Fuel Efficiency Requirements At The American Center For Mobility In Detroit.**

According to CBS News, “Moving forcefully against Obama-era environmental rules, President Donald Trump announced in Michigan his plans to re-examine federal requirements that regulate the fuel efficiency of new cars and trucks. ‘I’m sure you’ve all heard the big news that we’re going to work on the cafe standards so you can make cars in America again,’ he said during an appearance Wednesday at the American Center for Mobility in Detroit.” [CBS News, [3/15/17](#)]

- **Trump Said The Re-Examination Would “Help The Companies,” Which Would In Turn “Help You.”** According to CBS News, “‘I’m sure you’ve all heard the big news that we’re going to work on the cafe standards so you can make cars in America again,’ he said during an appearance Wednesday at the American Center for Mobility in Detroit. ‘We’re going to help the companies and they’re going to help you.’” [CBS News, [3/15/17](#)]

## **REDUCING U.S. FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS COULD INCREASE CARBON EMISSIONS BY THE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR, WHICH ALREADY ACCOUNTED FOR OVER 30 PERCENT OF CO2 EMISSIONS**

### **The U.S. Transportation Sector Accounted For 31 Percent Of The Nation’s CO2 Emissions.**

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “The combustion of fossil fuels such as gasoline and diesel to transport people and goods is the second largest source of CO2 emissions, accounting for about 31 percent of total U.S. CO2 emissions and 25 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2014.” [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, accessed [3/15/17](#)]

**Trump Administration Efforts To Alter Fuel Economy Standards Could Increase U.S. Carbon Emissions.** According to Vox, “At an event with automakers in Michigan, Trump is announcing that he’ll



tell the EPA to redo that midterm evaluation. Once that's done, the EPA could work with the Department of Transportation to develop new — and possibly less stringent — vehicle standards for 2022 to 2025. US automakers have asked Trump to rethink Obama's proposed rules, which they call overly aggressive and costly to meet. Depending on what tweaks are ultimately made, this could increase US carbon emissions.” [Vox, [3/15/17](#)]

## **INCREASED CARBON EMISSIONS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITIONS**

### **Carbon Emissions Contribute To Climate Change**

**Human Activity Increasing The Amount Of Carbon Dioxide In The Atmosphere Has Caused The Planet To Warm And Changed Weather Patterns.** According to NOAA, “Carbon dioxide belongs to a category of gases known as ‘greenhouse gases.’ These gases absorb warmth from their surroundings and re-radiate some of it back toward Earth’s surface, slowing the rate at which the planet loses heat. This ‘greenhouse effect’ is nothing new: plants and animals have enjoyed the benefits of its warming influence for billions of years. Without the greenhouse effect, Earth’s average temperature would fall below freezing. However, human activities are now increasing the concentration of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere, amplifying the natural warming caused by the greenhouse effect. During the Industrial Revolution, humans began burning coal, natural gas, and oil to power machines for manufacturing and transportation. Since then, we have burned more fossil fuels each decade, releasing vast amounts of carbon dioxide that were previously stored in the ground into the atmosphere. [...] The vast majority of climate scientists are concerned that the dramatic rise in carbon dioxide is causing the planet to warm. Likely consequences of global warming include sea level rise, shifting precipitation patterns, expansion of areas affected by drought, increasing numbers of severe heat waves, and more intense precipitation events.” [NOAA, accessed [4/14/17](#)]

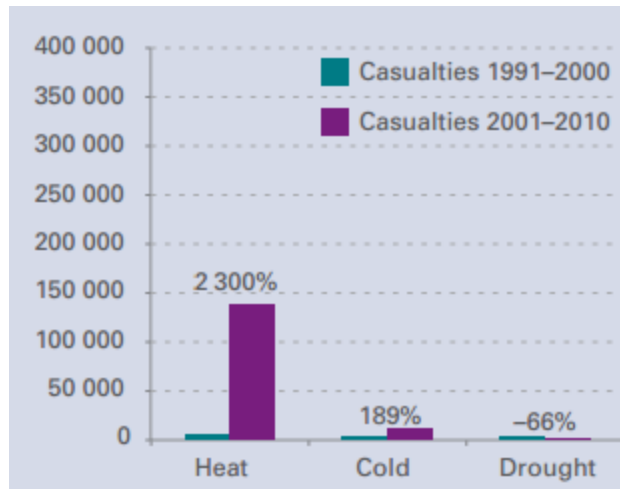
### **Climate Change Has Been Linked To Asthma, Child Lung Disease, Gastrointestinal Illnesses, And Heat-Related Deaths**

**Boston Resident Chiamaka Obiolo Testified To The Effect Of Climate Change And Pollution On Minority Neighborhoods As Half Of Her Classmates In Elementary School Had Asthma.** According to the Boston Globe, “[Chiamaka] Obiolo said the threat against science is a social justice issue. She said half of her classmates in elementary school had asthma, and she sees how pollution and climate change have affected minority neighborhoods in Boston.” [Boston Globe, [2/19/17](#)]

**University Of Michigan Professor Of Pediatrics And Director Of The Cystic Fibrosis Center Dr. Samya Nasr: Climate Change Has Had A Direct Impact On Child Health, Exacerbating Child Lung Disease.** According to an opinion by University of Michigan Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the Cystic Fibrosis Center Dr. Samya Nasr in the Detroit Free Press, “Despite what the court and governor might think, the climate will keep changing and those changes will have direct impact on human health. As a physician who treats children with lung diseases, I already see the impact of global climate change on my patients.” [Dr. Samya Nasr - Detroit Free Press, [2/26/16](#)]

**Climate Change Increases The Risk Of Gastrointestinal Illness As Well As Nervous And Respiratory Illness.** According to the EPA, “People can become ill if exposed to contaminated drinking or recreational water. Climate change increases the risk of illness through increasing temperature, more frequent heavy rains and runoff, and the effects of storms. Health impacts may include gastrointestinal illness like diarrhea, effects on the body's nervous and respiratory systems, or liver and kidney damage.” [EPA, accessed [2/21/17](#)]

**Between The 1990s And The 2000s, There Was A 2,300 Percent Increase In Deaths Related To Heat Worldwide.** According to a World Meteorological Organization chart, casualties related to heat increased by 2,300% between 1991-2000 and 2001-2010. This information is further detailed in the following chart:



[World Meteorological Organization, [2013](#)]