



Know your environment.
Protect your health.

An Open Letter to Auto Industry CEOs: Reject Trump's Rollback of Mileage Standards

In the wake of the 2008 economic meltdown, the federal government bailed out General Motors and Chrysler with a package of \$80.7 billion. Through a separate program, Ford got \$5.9 billion. A condition of the bailout was a commitment to better fuel efficiency, and in 2011 the Obama administration announced an agreement with the Big Three and other major automakers to increase the average efficiency of their vehicles to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025.

Promises, promises.

Less than a month after Donald Trump took office, the Auto Alliance, representing the 17 largest car companies, came begging for a rollback of the Obama standards. Last month, the Environmental Protection Agency finalized a rule to gut those standards even more severely than the Alliance wanted, capping 2025 mileage standards at about 40 mpg.

Over the life of the nation's car fleet, the rollback is estimated to permit an additional 1 billion or more tons of carbon pollution – the main driver of global warming and a leading cause of lung and heart disease and childhood asthma. Consumers will have to spend billions of dollars more on gasoline.

Sensibly, Ford, Honda, BMW, Volkswagen and Volvo have backed off from the Alliance's position and agreed to California's separate mileage standards, which roughly match the Obama-era rule. But GM, Fiat Chrysler and Toyota are siding with the Trump administration, backing its effort to revoke California's right to set its own standards.

As the CEOs of GM, Fiat Chrysler, Toyota and other companies supporting the rollback, you are complicit in Trump's reckless abandonment of the nation's most significant initiative to combat the climate crisis and the public health impacts of tailpipe emissions. Your support of the rollback in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic is a shameless betrayal of American taxpayers that shows callous disregard for the future of the planet and the health of your customers.

On their behalf, we challenge you to provide some answers:

- What is your policy for accepting taxpayer handouts going forward? "We got bailed out before; they'll bail us out again?"

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- Is your company's stated commitment to environmental responsibility anything more than marketing spin?
- Have you asked your customers how they feel about rolling back efficiency standards that would save them money and significantly reduce human health impacts?
- Have you politicized your company by offering support for President Trump's reelection in return for weakened fuel economy standards?
- Will you support the Trump administration in fighting the inevitable court challenge – from California and the 14 states that have committed to its standards – to overturn the rollback?

We're asking you these questions directly in the hope that you won't continue to hide behind a front group such as the Auto Alliance. Better yet, you could demonstrate your commitment to environmental responsibility and your customers' health by joining the automakers that agree to abide by the California standards.

You owe it to your customers to tell them the truth about your promises. EWG calls on you to join forces with California and the other states – cumulatively representing more than 40 percent of the U.S. population – in the commitment to fuel economy and climate stewardship.

Until we hear differently, we plan to urge our audience of millions that when the economy recovers and the time comes to shop for a new car, they should look to auto companies that stand by their word and a shared determination to fight air pollution and climate change. By that measure, right now your companies are rolling out nothing but lemons – and who would want to buy one of those?

Sincerely,

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