

Opening Statement
Chair Jan Schakowsky
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce and Subcommittee on Environment and
Climate Change
Hearing on “Driving in Reverse: The Administration’s Rollback of Fuel Economy and Clean Car
Standards”
June 20, 2016

Good morning, thank you for being here with us.

Today’s hearing is about the Trump Administration’s proposed rollback of fuel economy and greenhouse gas standards for cars and light-duty trucks.

In 2007, Congress directed the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to strengthen Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for cars and light-duty trucks, with the goal of reducing U.S. dependence on imported oil by improving fuel efficiency.

These standards have been a resounding success. Consumers have saved nearly \$85 billion in fuel costs and the clean car industry supports nearly 288,000 jobs.

But just two months after the Obama Administration determined to continue improving CAFE standards through model year 2025, the Trump Administration announced a change in course.

In August 2018, EPA and NHTSA released a notice of proposed rulemaking —known as the Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule —freezing these standards at model year 2021 levels.

Few proposals have been more blatantly misnamed than this.

The SAFE Vehicles Rule is not “Safer.” While the EPA and NHTSA claim that the rule would reduce vehicle fatalities, independent analyses and even career EPA staff dispute the findings and have said that the rule would result in more deaths.

The rule is not “Affordable.” Hardworking families are projected to spend an additional \$3,300 on gas over the life of their vehicle.

And according to the EPA and NHTSA’s own conclusions, the rule would eliminate 60,000 jobs in the U.S. automotive industry. Rolling back clean car standards will damage the economy and puts people out of work, which by the way will make it harder for them to buy cars.

The rule is not more “Fuel-Efficient.” Again, EPA and NHTSA’s own analysis estimates that the rule will dramatically increase air pollutants, and increase fuel consumption by nearly 80 billion gallons.

The fact that the Trump Administration now seeks to dismantle policies that would reduce these emissions and make our environment cleaner is inexcusable.

Climate change is the existential crisis of our time and in 2018—one year of Trump Administration policies—CO2 emissions jumped 2.6% in the U.S.

The Administration should abandon this proposal and end their assault on consumers, the environment, and safety.