

MEDIA STATEMENT

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White House Follows States' Lead on Clean Cars

Congress Urged to Protect New Standards by Rejecting Efforts to Weaken Clean Air Act

Washington, DC—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Transportation today will unveil landmark final rules to improve vehicle fuel economy and cut global warming pollution. The new standards, which are based on the clean cars program first developed by California and later adopted in 13 other states, are the **first-ever** federal limits on global warming pollution – from any source. However, Senator Lisa Murkowski's "Dirty Air Act" and six separate measures in the House would block the new standards and all other Clean Air Act limits on global warming pollution. Environment America Federal Global Warming Program Director Emily Figdor released the following statement in anticipation of today's announcement:

"Thanks to the states' leadership, the cars of tomorrow will be cleaner and cost less to fuel than the cars of today. These historic standards are a huge step toward breaking America's oil dependence and tackling global warming.

"Weakening the Clean Air Act would be one of the worst moves Congress could make for the nation's environment, our economy, and our energy security. Today's announcement is clear evidence that the Clean Air Act works. Congress must reject Big Oil's attempts to roll back the law and deny the country the oil savings and pollution-reduction benefits of these new standards – and of other key actions to move America to clean energy.

"We applaud President Obama, EPA Administrator Jackson, and DOT Secretary LaHood for their tremendous leadership in putting cleaner cars on America's roads."

Background:

- * Passenger vehicles are the second largest source of global warming pollution nationwide.
- * The Clean Air Act allows (1) California to set auto emission standards that are stronger than federal standards; and (2) other states to adopt California's auto emission standards.
- * In 2002, California passed a law establishing first-of-their-kind standards to cut global warming pollution from new passenger vehicles. A total of 13 other states – Arizona, Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington – then adopted the California standards.
- * In 2007, Congress passed the first increase in fuel economy standards in 32 years; those standards require an average fuel economy of 35 miles-per-gallon by 2020.
- * In May of 2009, President Obama announced an agreement, supported by the world's largest automakers, the United Auto Workers, and the states, to establish uniform standards to reduce global warming pollution from new vehicles by 30 percent and achieve an average fuel economy of 35.5 miles-per-gallon by 2016. The standards will apply to cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles, which are responsible for almost 60 percent of all U.S. transportation-related global warming pollution, and will cover model years 2012 through 2016.
- * Senator Lisa Murkowski's "Dirty Air Act" (S.J.Res. 26) would effectively veto EPA's scientific finding that global warming pollutants threaten human health and the environment. Without this "endangerment finding," EPA could not enforce the new clean cars standards or take action to reduce global warming pollution from other types of sources. The companion resolution in the House – introduced by three separate sets of members, including the Republican leadership (H.J.Res. 77), Democrats Ike Skelton (MO) and Collin Peterson (MN; H.J.R. 76), and Republicans Jerry Moran (KS) and Marsha Blackburn (TN; H.J.Res. 66) – and three additional House bills (H.R. 391, H.R. 4396, H.R. 4572) also would block the clean cars program and otherwise undermine the Clean Air Act.