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WHITE HOUSE FINALIZES HISTORIC VEHICLE STANDARDS TO SAVE OIL, CUT POLLUTION, AND CREATE JOBS

WASHINGTON (April 1, 2010) – The White House today finalized [new clean car rules](#) from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Transportation, securing the largest boost in fuel economy in decades and, for the first time, using the Clean Air Act to require reductions in the amount of heat-trapping emissions from cars and light trucks.

“To paraphrase the vice president, this is a really big deal,” said Jim Kliesch, a senior engineer in the Union of Concerned Scientists’ Clean Vehicles Program. “Because of these standards, Americans will drive vehicles that save them money at the pump, cut the country’s oil dependence, and produce a lot less global warming pollution.”

The joint rule will boost the average fleet wide fuel economy of new vehicles sold in the United States to 34.1 miles per gallon by model year 2016. The standards also set national global warming pollution standards for vehicles at 250 grams per mile, roughly 25 percent less than the emissions produced by today's average new vehicle.

According to a UCS analysis, the new rule will:

- Reduce U.S. oil consumption by 1.2 million barrels per day by 2020, more petroleum than the United States presently imports from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait combined;
- Cut global warming emissions by 209 million metric tons in 2020, the equivalent of taking nearly 31 million of today's cars and light trucks off the road that year;
- Save drivers \$34 billion in 2020 even after they pay the cost of vehicle technology improvements. (This is based on \$2.75 per gallon. If gas prices spike to \$4 a gallon again, the new standards would save drivers \$58 billion in 2020.)
- Create up to 20,000 new jobs in the auto industry and up to 200,000 nationwide by 2020.

Today’s announcement demonstrates the important role that states have played in promoting clean vehicle technology. In 2002, California used its unique authority under the Clean Air Act to set the first global warming tailpipe emissions standards for cars and light trucks. Over time, 13 other states chose to adopt the California standards in an effort to reduce tailpipe pollution. Legal challenges to the state standards were struck down twice, by federal courts in Vermont and California, and in 2007 the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Massachusetts v. EPA* affirmed that the Clean Air Act gives authority to EPA and California to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. This ruling also directed EPA to address any threat climate change poses to human health and welfare. This legal decision formed the foundation for the EPA standards finalized today.

As part of the agreement that led to the new national standards, the states will defer to the new

federal standards through 2016, although they preserve the authority to set higher standards in the future.

“The states laid the groundwork for these national standards,” said Brendan Bell, a Washington representative in the Union of Concerned Scientists’ Clean Vehicles Program. “Because of their leadership, all Americans will enjoy the benefits of cleaner, more efficient vehicles.”

For more information on the benefits and structure of the new standards, please see UCS’s new factsheet - http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/clean_vehicles/National-Clean-Car-Standards-Fact-Sheet.pdf.

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The Union of Concerned Scientists is the leading U.S. science-based nonprofit organization working for a healthy environment and a safer world. Founded in 1969, UCS is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and also has offices in Berkeley, Chicago and Washington, D.C. For more information, go to www.ucsusa.org.