

ACEEE • Alliance to Save Energy • Center for Auto Safety • Friends of the Earth • National Environmental Trust • Natural Resources Defense Council • Public Citizen • Sierra Club • Union of Concerned Scientists • U.S. PIRG • 20/20 Vision

June 21, 2005

Dear Senator:

America deserves an energy policy that makes the country safer and more secure. With gas prices continuing to rise, it is increasingly clear that America needs to cut its dangerous dependence on oil in order to protect consumers, clean up the environment, and enhance national security. Any responsible energy policy must include a provision to increase the fuel economy of America's vehicles.

Making our vehicles go farther on a gallon of gas is the biggest single step we can take to saving money at the gas pump, curbing global warming, and cutting America's dangerous dependence on oil. The Senate energy bill currently includes an oil savings target to reduce U.S. oil consumption 1 million barrels of oil per day by 2015, which passed overwhelmingly in the last Congress. To help meet this goal, the Senate should include measures in the bill to realize these savings.

We urge you to support the following amendments to increase Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards:

- **SUPPORT the Durbin amendment:** This amendment would raise fuel economy standards to 40 miles per gallon by 2017 for all passenger vehicles, while pickup trucks and other non-passenger vehicles would be increased to 27.5 miles per gallon. *This amendment would save nearly 3 million barrels of oil per day in 2020.*
- **SUPPORT the Feinstein-Snowe amendment:** This amendment would close the 'SUV loophole' by requiring light trucks to meet the same fuel economy standards as passenger cars (27.5 mpg) by 2011. In addition, the amendment expands fuel economy standards to include vehicles up to 10,000 lbs. GVWR and increases the fuel economy of the federal fleet. *This amendment would save more than 1 million barrels of oil per day in 2020.*

Please oppose any amendment that would weaken existing law and increase America's oil dependence:

- **OPPOSE the Levin-Bond amendment:** This anticipated amendment would create new barriers to future improvements in fuel economy standards as well as extending existing loopholes, such as the dual-fuel loophole. *This amendment would increase U.S. oil consumption by 130,000 barrels of oil per day.*

America's cars and trucks consume over 8 million barrels of oil per day and are a major source of the heat-trapping pollution that causes global warming. The technology exists today to make all vehicles go farther on a gallon of gas while improving safety and consumer choice. Because the standards would provide an incentive to use high-strength, light-weight materials in the fleet's heaviest vehicles, CAFE increases would also improve safety. Unless Congress takes meaningful steps to cut our oil dependence, the Department of Energy estimates that the U.S. will import over

65 percent of its oil and petroleum products by 2020 – a nearly 10 percent increase over current levels.

The good news is that we have the technology to cut our oil dependence. By using more efficient engines, smarter transmissions, and better materials, we can safely increase fuel economy while saving consumers money on gas. In poll after poll, Americans overwhelmingly support raising fuel economy standards. Consumers are lined up to buy clean, efficient hybrid cars and SUVs, yet most automakers still do not make them and those that do are not making enough. Raising fuel economy standards will encourage American automakers to improve their competitiveness by investing in technology at a time when they are falling behind foreign automakers.

Now more than ever, America needs an energy policy that lowers gas prices, protects the environment, and cuts the country's dangerous dependence on oil.

Sincerely,

Dan Becker Director, Global Warming Program Sierra Club	Joan Claybrook President Public Citizen
Clarence Ditlow Executive Director Center for Auto Safety	Kevin S. Curtis Vice President National Environmental Trust
Deron Lovaas Vehicles Campaign Director Natural Resources Defense Council	Anna Aurilio Legislative Director U.S. PIRG
Sara Zdeb Legislative Director Friends of the Earth	Michelle Robinson Washington Director, Clean Vehicles Program Union of Concerned Scientists
Therese Langer Program Director, Transportation Director American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy	Gail Hendrickson Director of Transportation Alliance to Save Energy
Tom Z. Collina Executive Director 20/20 Vision	