



Defend Our Clean Car Standards

Fossil fuel lobbyists and their supporters in Congress, along with the Trump Administration, are attacking our country's critical "clean car" standards, which are needed to improve our air quality, reduce carbon pollution, and save Mainers money at the gas pump. We need your help to urge Maine's Congressional delegation to work at the national level for cleaner transportation for our health, our economy, and our future.

What are Clean Car Standards?

Transportation is a leading source of climate-changing carbon pollution in Maine and across the country. America's most significant action to clean up the transportation sector was implementing a new set of clean car standards in 2012 to boost vehicle fuel efficiency and reduce carbon pollution from tailpipes. By 2025, these standards will have roughly doubled fleet-wide fuel efficiency to 54.5 miles per gallon. These standards are set and enforced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Maine is one of 13 states that adopted stronger standards to reduce vehicle pollution and increase fuel efficiency, following the lead of California, and one of nine states to adopt standards for zero-emission vehicles. These better-than-federal motor vehicle standards are protected under the Clean Air Act.

Threats to Clean Car Standards

The fossil fuel industry, auto manufacturers, and corporate lobbyists are aggressively pushing to roll back cleaner car standards. Even though automakers helped write these standards, they are now taking every advantage the Trump Administration is offering to get out of their promise to the American people to make more fuel-efficient vehicles.

Congressional Threats to Standards

A group of six Senators, led by Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO), have introduced a bill that would roll back clean car standards. The bill puts manufacturers on a pathway to make vehicles that will miss current fuel efficiency targets by 8-10 miles per gallon (mpg) in 2025. This would mean more pollution and higher gas costs for Mainers. This bill places the interests of the auto industry ahead of the needs of Maine families who want clean air and vehicles that go farther on a gallon of gasoline.

Trump Administration Threats to Standards

President Trump ordered the EPA to "reevaluate" already-established clean car standards. This action, taken at the behest of auto manufacturers, marks the first step toward rolling back these important protections. The Trump Administration has also signaled that it may attempt to revoke states' abilities to set more stringent clean car standards, affecting the 13 states—including Maine—that voluntarily adopted these standards. Attacking these laws would be a direct assault on states' rights to reduce dangerous pollution from cars and trucks.

How Do Clean Car Standards Benefit Mainers?

Protect public health: Maine sits at the “tailpipe” of the country, with winds blowing pollution from other states into Maine. Cars and trucks are a main source of this pollution, which includes ozone, particulate matter, and other smog-forming emissions. Poor air quality increases respiratory ailments like asthma and bronchitis, heightens the risk of life-threatening conditions such as cancer, and burdens our health care system with substantial medical costs. Once fully implemented, clean car standards will stop the emission of six billion metric tons of dangerous tailpipe pollution. Reducing this pollution will improve both our air quality and the health of Mainers.



Save consumers money: When our cars and trucks get more miles to the gallon, consumers save money at the gas pump. In 2025, if clean car standards are fully implemented, consumers would save between \$3,200 and \$5,700 over the life of a new car. Right now, lower- to middle- income households report spending up to 10 percent of their income on gasoline, and when the price of gas spikes that figure multiplies. Rolling back clean car standards would harm hardworking Mainers who need them the most.

Reduce climate-changing pollution: Maine’s nature-based economy is at high risk of experiencing dangerous and costly disruptions from climate change. Clean car standards help to reduce our largest contributor to climate-changing carbon pollution. Once the standards are fully implemented the carbon emission reduction will be equivalent to shutting down 140 typical coal-fired power plants—and the pollution they emit—for an entire year.

Decrease our reliance on foreign oil: Mainers rely on out-of-state and foreign oil to run our cars. We currently send billions of dollars out of state each year to buy this oil. The amount of gasoline we would save in Maine by implementing these standards would fill 2,232 Olympic-sized pools.

Take Action for Cleaner Cars!

- Submit a comment to the EPA opposing the rollback of our clean car standards for cars model year 2022-2025 at nrcm.org/take-action.
- Sign our petition to the Maine Congressional delegation opposing any legislative rollbacks to clean car standards at nrcm.org/take-action.
- Submit a letter to the editor of your local paper advocating against weakening our clean car standards. Follow NRCM’s guide at nrcm.org/take-action/writing-letters-to-editors/ or contact kjackson@nrcm.org for a sample and instructions.
- Call Maine’s U.S. Senators and your U.S. Representative to tell them you oppose rolling back clean car standards. Find their info at nrcm.org/take-action/maines-congressional-delegation.

For more information contact Kristin Jackson, Federal Project Outreach Coordinator
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