NEGATIVE: CAFE Standards - Good

By Katherine Baker

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFÉ) standards are federal rules that require car manufacturers to meet standards for fuel mileage of the cars they sell in the U.S. AFF plan repeals them.

CAFÉ is good because it produces net benefits. Consumers benefit because they save more money on fuel than the extra cost of the cars' fuel efficiency technology. There's no harm to car manufacturers because the technology already exists to improve vehicle fuel efficiency. And there's no harm to vehicle safety, because CAFÉ isn't making cars substantially lighter in such a way that anyone is being harmed in accidents.

Strategy Note: Be careful about running both the significance arguments saying nothing will change and the Disadvantages. Pick the group of arguments you think are the best and run with those, or else be prepared to argue "in the alternative" that both arguments independently justify a Neg ballot no matter which one comes true.

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NEG PHILOSOPHY / OPENING QUOTES

The net benefits of fuel efficiency standards

Union of Concerned Scientists, 2012. (UCS puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet’s most pressing problems. Joining with people across the country, we combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.) "A Brief History of U.S. Fuel Efficiency Standards" Ethical Disclosure: Article is undated but references policies and studies from 2012. <http://www.ucsusa.org/clean-vehicles/fuel-efficiency/fuel-economy-basics.html#.WbwinNWPKUk>

Investing in technologies that increase the fuel economy of America's vehicle fleet will create domestic jobs, save consumers money at the pump, cut global warming pollution, and put us on a path to cut projected U.S. oil consumption in half over the next 20 years.

Increasing fuel economy helps tackle oil consumption and climate change problems.

Union of Concerned Scientists, 2012. (UCS puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet’s most pressing problems. Joining with people across the country, we combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.) "A Brief History of U.S. Fuel Efficiency Standards" Ethical Disclosure: Article is undated but references policies and studies from 2012. <http://www.ucsusa.org/clean-vehicles/fuel-efficiency/fuel-economy-basics.html#.WbwinNWPKUk>

Increasing fuel economy—a measure of how far one travels on a gallon of fuel (mpg)—is not a silver bullet. Yet, sound fuel economy policy and good engineering can deliver the cleaner and more fuel-efficient cars, trucks, and SUVs we need to help tackle our oil consumption and climate change problems.

Benefits of standards: Reduce oil consumption, saved gas money, public health, environment, automotive investment, jobs, and auto industry recovery.

Union of Concerned Scientists, 2012. (UCS puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet’s most pressing problems. Joining with people across the country, we combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.) "A Brief History of U.S. Fuel Efficiency Standards" Ethical Disclosure: Article is undated but references policies and studies from 2012. <http://www.ucsusa.org/clean-vehicles/fuel-efficiency/fuel-economy-basics.html#.WbwinNWPKUk>

Benefits of Fuel Economy Standards. These standards will reduce America’s consumption of oil, save consumers money at the gas pump, and protect public health and the environment by curbing global warming pollution. They will also help spur investments in new automotive technology, creating jobs and helping sustain the recovery of the American auto industry.

Reverse advocacy: support for current CAFE standards.

Russ Mitchell, 2017. (Reporter for LA Times) “Public dumps on Trump plan to reconsider automobile fuel economy standards” September 6, 2017. <http://www.latimes.com/business/autos/la-fi-hy-epa-cafe-hearing-20170906-story.html>

Dozens of people — including environmentalists, academics and a former general in the U.S. Marines — blasted that plan, citing global warming, jobs, and consumer savings among the reasons. Nearly everyone who offered testimony at the Environmental Protection Agency hearing strongly supported the current standards, which call for a fleet average of about 40 miles per gallon in real-world driving by 2025, up from the mid-20s today.

TOPICALITY

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFÉ) was defined by Congress as an Energy Policy

Dr. Allan R. Hoffman 2007 (PhD; Senior Analyst, Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy, US Dept of Energy) "The Origins of CAFÉ" Oct 2007 <https://www.aps.org/units/fps/newsletters/2007/october/hoffman.html>

The Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) performance standards, enacted into law in 1975 (Title V, Energy Policy Conservation Act), have governed the fuel economy of new passenger automobile fleets in the U.S. for the past 32 years.  They were a response to the oil embargo imposed by OPEC in late 1973.  Much has been written about the CAFE standards in the intervening years, and they are again in the news as Congress considers increases in the standards in response to higher fuel costs, global climate change, and national security concerns related to oil imports.  This article adds to this literature by providing a first-hand account of CAFE’s origins.

INHERENCY

1. Trump rollback

Trump Administration has begun process of rolling back CAFÉ standards

Sonari Glinton, 2017. (NPR Business Desk Correspondent based at our NPR West bureau. He covers the auto industry, consumer goods, and consumer behavior, as well as marketing and advertising for NPR and Planet Money.) “Trump Administration Takes Key Step To Rolling Back Auto Fuel Standards” August 14, 2017. <http://www.npr.org/2017/08/14/543474251/trump-administration-takes-key-step-to-rolling-back-auto-fuel-standards>

The Trump administration has begun the process of rolling back tough fuel standards for America's car and light truck fleet. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Transportation Department have opened the public comment period on the rewriting of standards for greenhouse gas emissions for cars and light trucks for model years 2022-2025.

2. Flexible standards

Standards aren’t set in stone. They can flex based on consumer trends

CBS News, 2017. (well-known US news source) “Things to know about Trump's rollback of CAFE fuel-economy standards” March 16, 2017. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-cafe-fuel-economy-standards-rollback/>

CAFE standards are mile-per-gallon targets for cars and trucks set by the U.S. government. The standards are based on size and are weighted by sales. Each manufacturer has a different requirement based on the models it sells. Congress required the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to develop CAFE standards in 1975 after gasoline shortages during the Arab oil embargo. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began regulating greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles in 2007. The agencies work together to produce CAFE standards. The standard for passenger cars stayed at 27.5 mpg from 1990 until 2007. In 2009, the government set a fuel economy standard of 34.1 mpg for cars and light trucks by 2016. In 2012, it set a new target of 54.5 mpg by 2025. The number can change depending on the mix of vehicles customers buy. Right now, it stands at 51.4 mpg because people are buying more SUVs and trucks.

Lots of flexibility: If automakers can’t make the current standards, they will be loosened.

U.S. News & World Report, 2012 (Meg Handley: Staff Writer.) “54.5 MPG For All Cars by 2025 With New CAFE Standards? Not Exactly” Aug. 29, 2012. <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/08/29/545-miles-per-gallon-for-all-cars-by-2025-not-exactly>

The new CAFE standards, while "tough" according to some experts, give automakers a lot of flexibility. Each manufacturer and its vehicle type has different fuel efficiency targets based on its "footprint" and nothing in the rules say that automakers have to offer and sell vehicles that while more fuel efficient, aren't what consumers want to buy. The plan adjusts the miles-per-gallon targets to match the industry's real-world production tallies and market conditions at the end of the year. "The goal is flexible and based on their best guess of what the mix of vehicles will be in 2025," O'Dell says.

3. Standards not as high as they sound

True standards closer to 36 mpg.

U.S. News & World Report, 2012 (Meg Handley: Staff Writer.) “54.5 MPG For All Cars by 2025 With New CAFE Standards? Not Exactly” Aug. 29, 2012. <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/08/29/545-miles-per-gallon-for-all-cars-by-2025-not-exactly>

The Obama administration released new Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards this week, requiring automakers to raise the average fuel efficiency of new cars and trucks to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. But don't expect to see 54.5 miles per gallon dotting the window stickers of every new car anytime soon, or even by the 2025 deadline. "Bottom line, that isn't what you're going to see," says John O'Dell, senior editor at car-shopping site Edmunds.com. That's because of the way the government measures fuel economy—in more lab-like, less real-world conditions—so the actual mileage goal is closer to about 36 miles per gallon, O'Dell says. That's not to say, however, that fuel efficiency overall won't increase or that there won't be cars that get 54.5 miles to the gallon or more by 2025, he says. "There will be something out there with 54.5 miles per gallon or something close to that, but that is not going to be the predominant number," O'Dell says. "The numbers people see are going to be all over the map."

New "tough" 54.5 standard really works out to only 36 mpg

Mark Fischetti, 2011. (senior editor at Scientific American, overseeing coverage of energy and the environment) "Can U.S. Cars Meet the New 54 mpg CAFE Standards? Yes They Can" November 16, 2011 <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/can-cars-meet-the-new-54-mpg-cafe-standards-yes-they-can/>

"CAFE mpg still comes from the original pair of tests that are now widely viewed as bad predictors of real-world mpg. The 34.1 mpg CAFE target for 2016 is actually equal to only 26 mpg on a window sticker. The talked-about 2025 CAFE standard — usually described as 54.5 mpg — amounts to a figure of 36 mpg combined [highway and city driving] on a window sticker," writes Dan Edmunds, director of vehicle testing at Edmunds.com, on the company’s detailed CAFE explainer. (The Edmunds.com site is widely recognized as the go-to place for investigating new and used cars and automotive technology.) So if you walk into a showroom in 2025 and see car with a sticker that says it gets 36 mpg "combined," it meets the CAFE 54.5 mpg requirement. Suddenly the new rules don’t sound so difficult to attain.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. A/T "Consumer choice"

54.5 is average, not rule for every car. Gas guzzlers are still available

U.S. News & World Report, 2012 (Meg Handley: Staff Writer.) “54.5 MPG For All Cars by 2025 With New CAFE Standards? Not Exactly” Aug. 29, 2012. <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/08/29/545-miles-per-gallon-for-all-cars-by-2025-not-exactly>

For starters, every car rolling off the assembly line isn't required to have a fuel efficiency of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. That figure is just the average fuel economy automakers must deliver across the nation's passenger vehicle fleet by 2025. "There will be 10 miles per gallon trucks and 50 miles per gallon vehicles," O'Dell says.

2. A/T "Higher consumer cost for cars"

CAFÉ saves $140 billion in 2030 = $8000 over the life of a new vehicle – even after the extra cost of fuel-efficient technology

Union of Concerned Scientists, 2012. (UCS puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet’s most pressing problems. Joining with people across the country, we combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.) "A Brief History of U.S. Fuel Efficiency Standards" Ethical Disclosure: Article is undated but references policies and studies from 2012. <http://www.ucsusa.org/clean-vehicles/fuel-efficiency/fuel-economy-basics.html#.WbwinNWPKUk>

Consumer Savings: The standards will save consumers $140 billion in 2030.   When compared to a typical vehicle on the road today, a new car buyer will save more than $8,000 over the lifetime of a new 2025 vehicle, even after paying for the more fuel-efficient technology.

Automakers get tax credits for new standards to offset the cost, and consumers save back all the cost by using less gas

Mark Fischetti, 2011. (senior editor at Scientific American, overseeing coverage of energy and environment.) "Can U.S. Cars Meet the New 54 mpg CAFE Standards? Yes, They Can" 16 Nov 2011  <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/can-cars-meet-the-new-54-mpg-cafe-standards-yes-they-can/>

As for fuel-efficient technologies being too expensive to incorporate, the new rules (pdf) allow automakers to obtain significant tax credits for rolling them out. For consumers, EPA and the highway administration estimate that the technology needed to create cars that get 54.5 mpg—which will satisfy stiffer requirements for emitting fewer greenhouse gases—will raise the price of a car by about $2,000 in 2025. But they also estimate that car owners will earn that money back in two to three years through savings at the gas pump.

3. A/T "Higher cost to car manufacturers"

Automakers get a tax credit

Mark Fischetti, 2011. (senior editor at Scientific American, overseeing coverage of energy and environment.) "Can U.S. Cars Meet the New 54 mpg CAFE Standards? Yes They Can" 16 Nov 2011  <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/can-cars-meet-the-new-54-mpg-cafe-standards-yes-they-can/>

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Mileage improvement technology is already there

Mark Fischetti, 2011. (senior editor at Scientific American, overseeing coverage of energy and environment.) "Can U.S. Cars Meet the New 54 mpg CAFE Standards? Yes They Can" 16 Nov 2011  <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/can-cars-meet-the-new-54-mpg-cafe-standards-yes-they-can/>

Electric vehicles can certainly raise fleet averages. But changes to good ol’ gasoline-powered vehicles can achieve a great portion of the needed hike in fuel efficiency. The kicker is that many of the technology improvements have been sitting on auto industry shelves for years. And some of the improvements have already been rolled out in high-end gasoline vehicles and in standard hybrid cars.

Small changes can increase fuel efficiency

Mark Fischetti, 2011. (senior editor at Scientific American, overseeing coverage of energy and environment.) "Can U.S. Cars Meet the New 54 mpg CAFE Standards? Yes They Can" 16 Nov 2011  <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/can-cars-meet-the-new-54-mpg-cafe-standards-yes-they-can/>

In the past, independent engineering studies by experts at M.I.T., the University of Michigan, Argonne National Laboratory and the Natural Resources Defense Council have shown that gasoline-powered vehicles can get dramatically higher mileage by incorporating a number of incremental changes. Among them are continuously variable transmissions, which replace the inefficient gear-based transmissions cars have used for a century; starter-alternators that turn the engine off whenever the car is idling, saving gas whether the vehicle is stopped at a traffic light or rolling down a hill; direct fuel injectors that sip less gasoline than conventional fuel injectors; and regenerative braking, which converts friction at the wheels into electricity.

Existing technology can improve fuel efficiency (list was published in 2010)

Mark Fischetti, 2011. (senior editor at Scientific American, overseeing coverage of energy and environment.) "Can U.S. Cars Meet the New 54 mpg CAFE Standards? Yes They Can" 16 Nov 2011  <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/can-cars-meet-the-new-54-mpg-cafe-standards-yes-they-can/>

Changes to engines themselves, made possible by advanced, high-power electronics, can also raise fuel economy significantly. Continuous valve timing decreases the fuel that an engine needs. Cylinder deactivation halts two cylinders in a six-cylinder engine when that power is not needed—which occurs often when cars are cruising along at somewhat constant speed—thereby burning less fuel. Conversely, turbochargers can give a four-cylinder car the power of six cylinders during the relatively few moments when hard acceleration is needed, such as passing a truck on a hill, allowing larger cars to function well with smaller engines, thus getting better mileage. Vehicles can also cut weight to consume less fuel. Many of the technologies and the efficiency gains they offer, along with illustrations of how they work, are described in a detailed February 2010 Scientific American article titled Better Mileage Now.

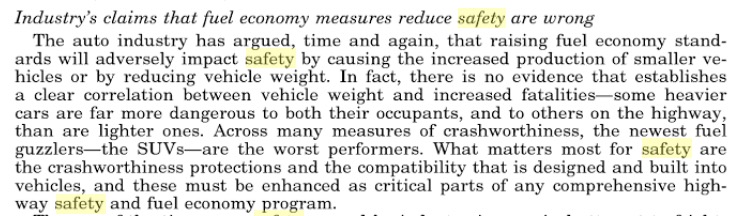
Example of small fuel efficiency changes that already exist: Toyota Prius

Mark Fischetti, 2011. (senior editor at Scientific American, overseeing coverage of energy and environment.) "Can U.S. Cars Meet the New 54 mpg CAFE Standards? Yes They Can" 16 Nov 2011  <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/can-cars-meet-the-new-54-mpg-cafe-standards-yes-they-can/>

Indeed, the mass-market mileage champ, the Toyota Prius, uses this incremental approach. Although a hefty series of batteries provides power in various circumstances, that only gets the car part way to reaching 45 or 50 mpg. The Prius has a continuously variable transmission. It uses regenerative braking. It has the stop-start feature that turns the engine off instead of idling. It also has a highly aerodynamic shape that cuts air resistance, and it travels on so-called low-rolling-resistance tires that reduce losses from road friction. Every one of these features can be incorporated into cars that run only on gasoline. Some vehicles already have some of the improvements: Honda, for example, has used continuously variable transmissions for years in many of its high-mileage cars.

4. A/T "Car safety reduction / auto accident deaths higher with CAFÉ because cars get lighter"

No link between CAFÉ and safety risk

Joan Claybrook 2002 (attorney; former head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration during the Carter Administration) testimony before Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, 14 Jan 2002 <https://books.google.com/books?id=NTeK4UKf3awC&pg=PA18&lpg=PA18&dq=CAFE+standard+myth+safety+deaths&source=bl&ots=Cd0e3MtQ0Q&sig=21sZHD8qr2T431-GETgHitCgX6Y&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjntYSU1ePWAhWEzIMKHdZxCsAQ6AEIXDAL#v=onepage&q=CAFE%20standard%20myth%20safety%20deaths&f=false>

No link between CAFÉ standards and reduction in vehicle weight in small cars

Joan Claybrook 2002 (attorney; former head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration during the Carter Administration) testimony before Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, 14 Jan 2002 <https://books.google.com/books?id=NTeK4UKf3awC&pg=PA18&lpg=PA18&dq=CAFE+standard+myth+safety+deaths&source=bl&ots=Cd0e3MtQ0Q&sig=21sZHD8qr2T431-GETgHitCgX6Y&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjntYSU1ePWAhWEzIMKHdZxCsAQ6AEIXDAL#v=onepage&q=CAFE%20standard%20myth%20safety%20deaths&f=false>

In fact, the link between CAFÉ standards and reductions in vehicle weight at the low end of the vehicle weight range simply does not exist; while the heaviest vehicles were put on a diet and lost a thousand pounds, the lightest vehicles today are considerably heavier than their pre-CAFÉ counterparts. As was pointed out in the December 6, 2001, testimony of Clarence Dilow of the Center for Auto Safety, the original passage of CAFÉ standards did not result in light cars becoming lighter or less safe. In fact, the Honda Civic gained 800 pounds and went from failing NHTSA crash tests to receiving the best possible rating for crashworthiness—5 stars. Moreover, the Ford Pinto and Chevrolet Chevette, notably unsafe vehicles, were replaced by the safer models of the Ford Escort and Chevrolet Nova. Looking at the CAFÉ-weight relationship more broadly, as fleet fuel economy increased over time, vehicle weights did not move in any one direction. In 1975 cars weighing less than 2,500 pounds made up 10.8 percent of the new-car fleet, but only 2.6 percent in 2000. By contrast, cars in the over 4,500 pound weight class made p 50 percent of the new-car fleet in 1975 but only 0.9 percent in 2000. These data show that CAFÉ standards did not cause a uniform reduction in vehicle weight at the light vehicle level (although CAFÉ may have caused a reduction in average weight, as more cars were built in the 2,500-4,500 pound category). Because automakers could get proportionally more fuel savings from reducing the weight of the heaviest class of cars, those were the first targets for fuel economy improvements, and production numbers for cars in the lightest class actually decreased. Any improvement in the CAFÉ standards made today will likely have a similarly small impact on the weight or production levels of the smallest cars. It is not cost-effective to reduce their weights by very much, given the limited fuel economy improvement from doing so and the relatively higher cost of vehicle redesign.

Improvements in fuel efficiency can use existing technology (cross-apply our existing technology evidence above) without reducing vehicle weight

Joan Claybrook 2002 (attorney; former head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration during the Carter Administration) testimony before Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, 14 Jan 2002 <https://books.google.com/books?id=NTeK4UKf3awC&pg=PA18&lpg=PA18&dq=CAFE+standard+myth+safety+deaths&source=bl&ots=Cd0e3MtQ0Q&sig=21sZHD8qr2T431-GETgHitCgX6Y&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjntYSU1ePWAhWEzIMKHdZxCsAQ6AEIXDAL#v=onepage&q=CAFE%20standard%20myth%20safety%20deaths&f=false>

Major improvements in fuel economy are possible using currently available technology without any reduction in safety protection. A Department of Energy (DOE) study found that 85 percent of the fuel economy gains made following the 1975 CAFÉ law were from improvements in vehicle technology rather than weight reduction. The evidence strongly suggests that similar technology leaps are currently available or just around the corner, and that the recent stagnation and even backsliding in overall fuel economy is a trend that must be stopped. The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) pointed out in a report released in 2001 that today’s vehicles could become more fuel efficient at a price that would easily be made up in savings on fuel costs, and the necessary changes would have no negative impact on safety.

SOLVENCY

1. Too late to change: Auto industry already committed

Too late. Auto industry already preparing for 2025

Paul A. Eisenstein, 2017. (CNBC contributor. He has over 30 years of experience covering the auto industry.) “Trump Rolls Back Obama-Era Fuel Economy Standards” Mar 16 2017. <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/autos/trump-rolls-back-obama-era-fuel-economy-standards-n734256>

California Governor Jerry Brown called the move “an unconscionable gift for polluters,” adding that his state will launch a lawsuit, along with New York, challenging the re-opening of the review. “If they succeed, we’ll pay more at the pump, depend more on oil from bad countries, drive up the trade deficit and pollute our kids,” said Dan Becker, director of the Safe Climate Campaign. Ordering the mid-term review reopened, a final decision might not be made until as late as April of 2018. That raises the question of how the auto industry will respond. Key planning moves, particular when it comes to investments on advanced powertrains and other key, energy saving technologies, must be made years in advance, and several industry officials said they’ve already begun laying out strategies, and making preliminary investments, reaching out to 2025.

Automakers committed to standards already. Removing them won’t change anything.

Paul A. Eisenstein, 2017. (Paul A. Eisenstein is a CNBC contributor. He has over 30 years of experience covering the auto industry.) “Trump Rolls Back Obama-Era Fuel Economy Standards” Mar 16 2017. <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/autos/trump-rolls-back-obama-era-fuel-economy-standards-n734256>

In recent months, General Motors CEO Mary Barra has said the automaker “remains committed” to adding more plug-in hybrids and battery-electric vehicles, such as the Chevrolet Volt and the Chevy Bolt EV. Foreign-based makers seem even more determined to stay the course with high-efficiency gasoline and alternative-power vehicles. “No matter what happens in the U.S., we will not change any of our plans for electrified vehicles and more efficient vehicles,” Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn declared during a news conference at the Geneva Motor Show last week. That stand was echoed by Steve Center, the vice president of the Environmental Business Office at American Honda. “It doesn’t change anything. We, as an organization, have beliefs, and we are going to tear up our plans.”

2. Global market

CAFÉ rollback won't help automakers because they have to sell fuel efficient cars in other markets globally

Paul A. Eisenstein, 2017. (CNBC contributor; over 30 years of experience covering the auto industry.) “Trump Rolls Back Obama-Era Fuel Economy Standards” Mar 16 2017. <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/autos/trump-rolls-back-obama-era-fuel-economy-standards-n734256>

One reason why all makers, Detroit, European or Asian, may find it difficult to make major shifts in their strategies is the fact that they all operate on a global scale. With a few exceptions, notably their big pickups, automakers design their vehicles to be sold around the world. And so, said Nissan’s Ghosn, even if the U.S. rolls back CAFE, the likelihood is for even tougher emissions standards in other key markets, such as Europe, Japan and China. “We’re going to have to keep an eye” on those rules, and develop vehicles accordingly, he said, no matter what happens in the U.S.

3. California standards

Repealing standards doesn’t change anything. Automakers will still have to meet standards for California

CBS News, 2017. (CBS News is a well-known US news source) “Things to know about Trump's rollback of CAFE fuel-economy standards” March 16, 2017. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-cafe-fuel-economy-standards-rollback/>

There are caveats. Automakers will still have to meet rising fuel economy standards in China and Europe, so they won’t stop making efficient vehicles. If gas prices rise, U.S. consumers might demand more fuel-efficient cars. Finally, California and other states have a history of passing stricter standards than the rest of the country. If that continues, automakers would have to keep their most fuel-efficient models in U.S. showrooms, since California is the biggest market in the U.S.

California can counter roll back.

Nathan Bomey, 2017. (business reporter for USA TODAY; peviously, he covered Detroit's historic bankruptcy and General Motors for the Detroit Free Press.) “What lower gas-mileage standards would mean for car and gas prices” March 15, 2017. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2017/03/15/donald-trump-epa-fuel-economy-standards-cafe/99210330/>

Still, "California can effectively counter a move to roll back the federal standards by retaining and even strengthening its own standards, creating dueling systems of emission control that would be unworkable for the industry," former Obama EPA official Bob Sussman wrote in February for the Brookings Institution.

California influences automakers

Nathan Bomey, 2017. (business reporter for USA TODAY; peviously, he covered Detroit's historic bankruptcy and General Motors for the Detroit Free Press.) “What lower gas-mileage standards would mean for car and gas prices” March 15, 2017. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2017/03/15/donald-trump-epa-fuel-economy-standards-cafe/99210330/>

Because it's such a large market that cannot be ignored, California has a significant influence on automakers. The state has imposed regulations requiring automakers to sell fuel-efficient and alternative-powertrain vehicles, setting a higher environmental benchmark for the industry than the Environmental Protection Agency.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Consumers & Economy Hurt

Lower fuel consumption pumps more dollars into the economy

CBS News, 2017. “Things to know about Trump's rollback of CAFE fuel-economy standards” March 16, 2017. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-cafe-fuel-economy-standards-rollback/>

“The standards benefit consumers and the economy,” said Sue Reid, vice president of energy programs at Ceres, a non-profit environmental group, said in a conference call Wednesday to discuss the Trump administration’s action. “When consumers spend less money at the pump, they have more resources to drive into the economy.”

CAFÉ is economically beneficial

CBS News, 2017. “Things to know about Trump's rollback of CAFE fuel-economy standards” March 16, 2017. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-cafe-fuel-economy-standards-rollback/>

The federal fuel-efficiency requirements have their roots in the 1970s, when Americans tended to drive gas guzzlers, only to face sticker shock at the pump following the 1973 OPEC oil embargo. Under the Obama administration, the standards were tightened again, with the goal of pushing fuel economy standards to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. Under President Donald Trump, that goal is now in limbo. Mr. Trump on Wednesday announced plans to re-examine the fuel mandates, taking a step back from Obama-era environmental regulations. Trump administration officials contend that the rules stifle economic growth. By contrast, fuel-standard advocates say the rules help consumers save money by reducing their costs at the gas pump, while also making automakers more competitive with foreign competitors.

CAFÉ saves money. From 2005 to 2015, people spend $523 less in gas

Nathan Bomey, 2017. (business reporter for USA TODAY; peviously, he covered Detroit's historic bankruptcy and General Motors for the Detroit Free Press.) “What lower gas-mileage standards would mean for car and gas prices” March 15, 2017. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2017/03/15/donald-trump-epa-fuel-economy-standards-cafe/99210330/>

It's indisputable that higher fuel economy requirements would save consumers money at the pump. The Consumers Union, the policy arm of Consumer Reports, said in a recent report that the average buyer of a 2015 model-year vehicle spent $523 less on gasoline than for a 2005 vehicle.

1. US Automotive industry damaged

Turn: Rolling back fuel standards hurts US automakers globally.

CBS News, 2017. (CBS News is a well-known US news source) “Things to know about Trump's rollback of CAFE fuel-economy standards” March 16, 2017. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-cafe-fuel-economy-standards-rollback/>

American automakers also stand to lose if they fail to produce vehicles that are competitive with overseas manufacturers, said David Richardson, executive director of Impax Asset Management, a $7 billion investment firm that focuses on strategies including renewable energy and energy efficiency. “Our American jobs president is missing an important point,” he said. The potential rollback “means that fuel-efficient cars could be made somewhere else.” He added, “We see it as a shortsighted effort that won’t be productive in terms of creating better American technology in the automobile sector, and that’s a shame.”

Brink: Takes time for job gains to be realized. We might not be seeing the benefits yet, but we will by 2030.

The BlueGreen Alliance, 2012. (national, strategic partnership between labor unions and environmental organizations dedicated to expanding the number and quality of jobs in the green economy.) “Gearing Up” June 2012. <https://www.bluegreenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/062812-GearingUp_Final.pdf>

We estimate that the proposed rule will lead to a net gain of approximately 320,000 jobs by 2025 and 570,000 jobs by 2030. Compared to the reference case (the pathway the economy would be expected to take in the absence of the proposed standards), this represents increases of 0.19 percent and 0.30 percent by 2025 and 2030, respectively. Job gains are smaller in earlier years when fuel savings are only beginning to accumulate. Because the proposed standards affect only new car sales, it takes time for the effect on the stock of vehicles to materialize. It is important to keep in mind that the proposed standards for 2025 builds on the 2016 standards, which themselves would deliver greater job growth than the estimate here since the energy saved to incremental cost ratio is even higher for that regulation.

Impact: Fuel economy standards are key to jobs

Nathan Bomey, 2017. (business reporter for USA TODAY; previously, he covered Detroit's historic bankruptcy and General Motors for the Detroit Free Press.) “What lower gas-mileage standards would mean for car and gas prices” March 15, 2017. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2017/03/15/donald-trump-epa-fuel-economy-standards-cafe/99210330/>

But the BlueGreen Alliance, which represents union and environmental interests, warned Tuesday that the U.S. has more than 1,200 facilities in 48 states manufacturing "key technologies that go into meeting fuel-economy standards." "Effective, long-term standards are critical to maintaining robust advanced technology investment, innovation, and job growth, as well as to continuing to position the domestic industry as a global leader," the organization said in a December report.

Impact: CAFÉ Standards support jobs.

Russ Mitchell, 2017. (Reporter for LA Times) “Public dumps on Trump plan to reconsider automobile fuel economy standards” September 6, 2017. <http://www.latimes.com/business/autos/la-fi-hy-epa-cafe-hearing-20170906-story.html>

Union representatives came out to support the standards, they said, not only because they reduce emissions, but also because they create jobs. Dan Boone, president of United Steelworkers Local 970 in Cleveland, said the regulations push innovations that in turn create jobs, such as lightweight steel to improve fuel economy. “We’re now doing some manufacturing for Tesla and they’re about as green as you can get,” Boone said. “It’s important to keep those standards strong and keep driving innovation.”

Impact Quantification: SQ CAFÉ Standards will gain 570,000 jobs by 2030 (or be lost with an AFF ballot)

The BlueGreen Alliance, 2012. (national, strategic partnership between labor unions and environmental organizations dedicated to expanding the number and quality of jobs in the green economy.) “Gearing Up” June 2012. <https://www.bluegreenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/062812-GearingUp_Final.pdf>

We estimate that the proposed rule will lead to a net gain of approximately 320,000 jobs by 2025 and 570,000 jobs by 2030. Compared to the reference case (the pathway the economy would be expected to take in the absence of the proposed standards), this represents increases of 0.19 percent and 0.30 percent by 2025 and 2030, respectively. Job gains are smaller in earlier years when fuel savings are only beginning to accumulate. Because the proposed standards affect only new car sales, it takes time for the effect on the stock of vehicles to materialize.

1. Reduced Wages and Economic Growth

Link: Wage increase and GDP increase with standards

The BlueGreen Alliance, 2012. (national, strategic partnership between labor unions and environmental organizations dedicated to expanding the number and quality of jobs in the green economy.) “Gearing Up” June 2012. <https://www.bluegreenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/062812-GearingUp_Final.pdf>

We also analyze impacts of the proposed standards on wages and GDP, estimating a net wage increase of $49 billion (in 2010 dollars) and a net GDP increase of $75 billion (in 2010 dollars) by 2030. The net change in wages represents a 0.46 percent increase from the reference case, while the net change in GDP represents a 0.30 percent increase. This result implies that the proposed standards lead to rising wages.

Impact: Harmed economy, job loss, and lost wage opportunity. The standards will improve all three of these.

The BlueGreen Alliance, 2012. (national, strategic partnership between labor unions and environmental organizations dedicated to expanding the number and quality of jobs in the green economy.) “Gearing Up” June 2012. <https://www.bluegreenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/062812-GearingUp_Final.pdf>

These proposed standards would reach the equivalent of 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) and 163 grams of carbon dioxide per mile (g/mi) for the average new vehicle in 2025. Hereafter we refer to these proposed joint fuel economy and greenhouse gas pollution standards simply as “the proposed standards.” In this report, we analyze the macroeconomic impacts of the proposed standards with particular attention to the net gain in U.S. employment. Our analysis finds that the proposed standards will create an estimated 570,000 jobs (full-time equivalent) throughout the U.S economy, including 50,000 in light-duty vehicle manufacturing (parts and vehicle assembly) by the year 2030. Real wages are projected to increase even faster than job growth. This implies that the proposed standards will both lead to new jobs and, on average, higher-paying jobs across the U.S. economy. By 2030, we also find a net increase of about $75 billion in annual Gross Domestic Product (all monetary values in 2010 dollars).

1. Increased dependence on foreign oil

Link: Fuel standards reduce oil consumption by 3 million barrels/day in 2030

Union of Concerned Scientists, 2012. (UCS puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet’s most pressing problems. Joining with people across the country, we combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.) "A Brief History of U.S. Fuel Efficiency Standards" Ethical Disclosure: Article is undated but references policies and studies from 2012. <http://www.ucsusa.org/clean-vehicles/fuel-efficiency/fuel-economy-basics.html#.WbwinNWPKUk>

Oil Consumption: Nearly doubling the average fuel efficiency of new cars and light trucks is the single biggest step our nation can take to reduce oil use. When taken together, the two phases of fuel economy standards will result in oil savings in 2030 of more than 3 million barrels per day. This is roughly equivalent to the U.S. imports from both the Persian Gulf and Venezuela combined.

Link: Reliance on foreign oil leads to vulnerability

Russ Mitchell, 2017. (Reporter for LA Times) “Public dumps on Trump plan to reconsider automobile fuel economy standards” September 6, 2017. <http://www.latimes.com/business/autos/la-fi-hy-epa-cafe-hearing-20170906-story.html>

Retired Marine Gen. James Conway, chief executive at Securing America’s Future Energy, talked about emissions standards as a national security issue. He said the standards represent “one of the greatest weapons” against reliance on foreign oil. The U.S. still relies on imports for its oil needs, leaving it vulnerable to foreign national oil companies and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries. OPEC, several speakers noted, has fought U.S. domestic production in recent years by increasing oil supply and keeping prices low. Fuel savings in the U.S. represent “a preemptive strike against this coalition,” Conway said.

Impacts: Hurts US national security and fuels conflict overseas

Rebecca Lefton & Daniel Weiss 2010 (Lefton - Researcher for Progressive Media. Weiss - Senior Fellow and Director Climate Strategy at the Center for American Progress. ) " Oil Dependence Is a Dangerous Habit" 13 Jan 2010 <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/reports/2010/01/13/7200/oil-dependence-is-a-dangerous-habit/>

As a major contributor to the global demand for oil the United States is paying to finance and sustain unfriendly regimes. Our demand drives up oil prices on the global market, which oftentimes benefits oil-producing nations that don’t sell to us. The Center for American Progress finds in “[Securing America’s Future: Enhancing Our National Security by Reducing oil Dependence and Environmental Damage](http://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2009/08/pdf/energy_security.pdf),” that “because of this, anti-Western nations such as Iran—with whom the United States by law cannot trade or buy oil—benefit regardless of who the end buyer of the fuel is.” Further, the regimes and elites that economically benefit from rich energy resources rarely share oil revenues with their people, which worsens economic disparity in the countries and at times creates resource-driven tension and crises. The State Department cites oil-related violence in particular as a danger in [Nigeria](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_928.html), where more than 54 national oil workers or businesspeople have been kidnapped at oil-related facilities and other infrastructure since January 2008. Attacks by insurgents on the U.S. military and civilians continue to be a danger in [Iraq](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_921.html). Our oil dependence will also be increasingly harder and more dangerous to satisfy. In 2008 the United States consumed 23 percent of the world’s petroleum, 57 percent of which was [imported](http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/energy_in_brief/foreign_oil_dependence.cfm). Yet the United States [holds less than 2 percent of the world’s oil reserves](http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/international/reserves.html). Roughly 40 percent of our imports came from Canada, Mexico, and Saudi Arabia, but we can’t continue relying on these allies. The majority of Canada’s oil lies in [tar sands](http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/02/19/obama-and-canadas-controversial-oil-patch/), a very dirty fuel, and Mexico’s main oil fields are projected [dry up within a decade](http://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2009/08/pdf/energy_security.pdf). Without reducing our [dependence on oil](http://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2009/08/pdf/energy_security.pdf) we’ll be forced to increasingly look to more antagonistic and volatile countries that pose direct threats to our national security.

1. Environmental Harm

Link: CAFÉ standards reduce global warming pollution by 570 million metric tons

Union of Concerned Scientists, 2012. (UCS puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet’s most pressing problems. Joining with people across the country, we combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.) "A Brief History of U.S. Fuel Efficiency Standards" Ethical Disclosure: Article is undated but references policies and studies from 2012. <http://www.ucsusa.org/clean-vehicles/fuel-efficiency/fuel-economy-basics.html#.WbwinNWPKUk>

Environment: The two rounds of standards will reduce global warming pollution by as much as 570 million metric tons (MMT) in 2030. This is equivalent to shutting down 140 typical coal-fired power plants for an entire year.

Link and Impact: Lower Fuel economy = higher carbon emissions = climate change.

Nathan Bomey, 2017. (Nathan Bomey is a business reporter for USA TODAY, based in the Washington, D.C. area. Previously, he covered Detroit's historic bankruptcy and General Motors for the Detroit Free Press.) “What lower gas-mileage standards would mean for car and gas prices” March 15, 2017. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2017/03/15/donald-trump-epa-fuel-economy-standards-cafe/99210330/>

Lower fuel economy translates into higher carbon emissions. That contributes directly to climate change, which scientists blame for rising sea levels, extreme weather, harsher agricultural conditions, biodiversity loss and health concerns.

Impact: Climate Change threatens food and water supplies

Environmental Defense Fund 2014. (EDF is a nonprofit organization; one of the world’s largest environmental organizations, with more than two million members and a staff of 675 scientists, economists, policy experts, and other professionals around the world.) “Climate change’s effects plunder the planet” Ethical disclosure: Article undated but internally cites a 2014 report. <https://www.edf.org/climate/climate-changes-effects-plunder-planet>

Climate change is a major threat to agriculture. Where, how and when we grow food is vitally connected to our climate's normal patterns. Worldwide, farmers are struggling to keep up with shifting weather patterns and increasingly unpredictable water supplies. Farms are more likely to face attacks from weeds, diseases and pests, which reduce yield.

Impact: Climate change harms human health

Environmental Defense Fund 2014. (EDF is a nonprofit organization; one of the world’s largest environmental organizations, with more than two million members and a staff of 675 scientists, economists, policy experts, and other professionals around the world.) “Climate change’s effects plunder the planet” Ethical disclosure: Article undated but internally cites a 2014 report. <https://www.edf.org/climate/climate-changes-effects-plunder-planet>

Warmer, polluted air affects our health. A warmer atmosphere increases the formation of ground-level ozone – also known as smog – in polluted regions. Smog irritates lungs and triggers asthma attacks. Smoke from wildfires further degrades the air. Extreme summer heat means more deaths during heatwaves. Warmer freshwater makes it easier for disease-causing agents (such as bacteria) to grow and contaminate drinking water.

Impact: Climate change disrupts vital infrastructure.

Environmental Defense Fund 2014. (EDF is a nonprofit organization; one of the world’s largest environmental organizations, with more than two million members and a staff of 675 scientists, economists, policy experts, and other professionals around the world.) “Climate change’s effects plunder the planet” Ethical disclosure: Article undated but internally cites a 2014 report. <https://www.edf.org/climate/climate-changes-effects-plunder-planet>

Infrastructure and transportation are at risk. Hot weather, flooding and other extreme weather events damage infrastructure, put heavy burdens on electrical supplies and disrupt how we travel and commute.

SOURCE INDICTMENT

Center for Automotive Research: receives funding from auto industry

Nathan Bomey, 2017. (business reporter for USA TODAY; previously, he covered Detroit's historic bankruptcy and General Motors for the Detroit Free Press.) “What lower gas-mileage standards would mean for car and gas prices” March 15, 2017. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2017/03/15/donald-trump-epa-fuel-economy-standards-cafe/99210330/>

The Center for Automotive Research concluded in a September report that in eight out of nine scenarios, the U.S. economy would lose auto manufacturing jobs if current standards stay in place. The researchers analyzed three price levels for gasoline, based on U.S. Energy Information Administration projections — $2.44, $3 and $4.64. They matched that with three different estimates for the average cost per vehicle required to meet the CAFE mandates — $2,000, $4,000 and $6,000. The Center for Automotive Research has historically received some funding from the auto industry but said this study was independently funded.

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