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*--Dan Becker, director of the safe climate campaign*

## **Ford, industry blast Obama on EPA's greenhouse regs**

Brent Snively and Todd Spangler, Detroit Free Press 10:54 a.m. EST December 1, 2016

**The battle between the industry and the Obama administration sets up the the potential that the incoming Trump administration could scale back the regulations automakers initially agreed to in 2012**

Ford on Wednesday accused the Obama administration of playing "eleventh-hour politics" after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said it would recommend keeping strict greenhouse emission standards in place through 2025, despite a major industry lobbying effort aimed at relaxing those standards..

Ford signaled that it hopes that President-elect Donald Trump will roll back the regulations.

Ford's uncharacteristically harsh public statement was at the forefront of a chorus of criticism hurled at the EPA and the Obama administration after the government tossed aside concerns

repeatedly expressed by the industry since July about emission regulations that will take effect between 2020 and 2025.

The battle between the industry and the Obama administration also sets up the the potential that the incoming Trump administration could take control of the review process and scale back the regulations automakers initially agreed to in 2012.

“It is deeply disappointing that eleventh-hour politics in a lame-duck Administration has short-circuited a data-driven process for developing regulation,” Ziad Ojakli, Ford's group vice-president of government and relations, said. "Ford and the industry stand ready to work with the next Administration and Congress to find a way forward."

The Auto Alliance, the industry's leading lobbying group, sent a letter to Trump's transition team that specifically asked the incoming team take part in the mid-term evaluation of automotive regulations “to ensure that these are consistent with the policy objectives of the new administration.”

Gloria Bergquist, vice president of the alliance, said it's an open question whether the EPA can conclude a public comment period and “turn it around and finalize” the decision before Trump's inauguration on Jan. 20. The U.S. Department of Transportation, which oversees a related set of fuel economy standards, has not completed its regulatory review.

Bergquist said the EPA made its announcement without coordinating with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "What if NHTSA comes up with a different standard?" said Bergquist.

The Trump transition team did not immediately respond to questions Wednesday.

The auto industry argues that the regulations scheduled to take effect from 2020-25 will cost automakers billions and will force the industry to introduce technology consumers are not willing to pay for, pushing consumers out of the new vehicle market.

The U.S. EPA and the Obama administration view the regulations as one of the current president's signature achievements because automakers have aggressively improved fuel economy and cut emissions as they complied.

According to the EPA, the average per vehicle cost for automakers to meet the 2025 standards, compared to the 2021 standards, is just \$875. With the fuel efficiency gains from the new vehicles the EPA estimates a consumer with a five-year loan would break even on the additional vehicle cost within one year.

By law, the EPA and the U.S. Department of Transportation, which separately regulates fuel economy, had until April 2018 to make a final determination.

Janet McCabe, EPA acting assistant administrator for the office of air quality division, repeatedly denied the agency was trying to speed up the mid-term review process in an attempt to prevent a Trump administration from making changes.

The agency's decision to reach its conclusion early was "based on exhaustive analysis, public comments, and thorough consideration of an extensive technical record," she said.

Here is roundup of key reactions from automakers, industry groups and politicians:

"The evidence is abundantly clear that with low gas prices, consumers are not choosing the cars necessary to comply with increasingly unrealistic standards. Wishing this fact away does no one any favors, and getting this wrong has serious implications."

-- *Auto Alliance, which represents 12 major automakers*

"Washington today decided to make new cars and trucks more expensive for America's working men and women. The outgoing administration has chosen to halt progress on fuel economy by enacting a policy that will delay the introduction of safer and cleaner vehicles by making them more expensive."

--*Peter Welch, president of the National Automobile Dealers Association*

"General Motors is disappointed that EPA changed the process and decided to advance the timetable for completing the Mid-term Review of the 2022-2025 model year fuel economy requirements. This unexpected action appears to dismiss the many comments and questions raised by automakers."

-- *General Motors*

"I look forward to working in the next congress with the new administration to pare back all of the legacy saving regulatory actions this administration will continue to advance as their January 20th deadline approaches."

--*U.S. Sen Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., chairman of the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"Today I spoke with Administration officials and expressed concerns about the Environmental Protection Agency's process in developing today's proposal."

--*U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich.*

"This action is completely unnecessary and will have grave consequences on jobs and manufacturing ... with the clock ticking on the administration, the regulatory frenzy is under way"

*--Fred Upton, R-Kalamazoo, and two other Republican members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee*

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"The decision today was based on a lengthy, technical review. It simply reaffirms an existing regulation. For this process to be undone, an equally significantly technical analysis would have to be completed and would have to come up with contradictory findings."

*--John Boesel, president and CEO of CALSTART, a lobbying group for clean transportation technology.*

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