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Becker said there is likely to be a 30- or 60-day comment period on the restoration of the waiver.

***The Wall Street Journal* first reported the news Wednesday. Bloomberg also reported the news.**

An EPA spokesman said the agency did not have comment at this time. The Department of Transportation, NHTSA and the White House did not immediately respond to multiple requests for comment by *Automotive News*.

Biden administration proposes to reinstate Calif. authority to set tougher emissions rules **Two-part strategy expected over the next week**

Audrey LaForest
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The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has proposed to withdraw its portions of a Trump-era rule that sought to block states including California from setting their own greenhouse gas emissions standards and zero-emission vehicle mandates, the Department of Transportation said Thursday.

The action is a first step by the Biden administration to reinstate California's authority to restrict tailpipe emissions and set ZEV mandates, following President Joe Biden's executive order in January, which directed the Transportation Department and the EPA to reconsider by April the Trump administration's 2019 decision to revoke the state's authority.

The president's executive order also directs a review of fuel-efficiency standards for light vehicles. New limits are expected to be announced by the end of July.

“The transportation sector is the biggest contributor to greenhouse gases in our economy, which means it can and must be a big part of the climate solution,” Transportation Secretary Pete

Buttigieg said in a statement. “This proposed rule would be an important step towards protecting public health and combating climate change.”

NHTSA has opened a 30-day comment period on the withdrawal notice. If finalized, the regulatory action would “establish a clean slate” and no longer prevent states from implementing regulations tougher than the national standard.

“States have been leading the way, especially over the last four years, when it comes to cleaning up pollution and addressing climate change,” Steven Cliff, NHTSA’s acting administrator, said in a statement. “NHTSA’s proposed rule would remove unnecessary barriers to state leadership in regulating greenhouse gases and other air pollutants that spew from the tailpipes of cars.”

The EPA is also expected to take action by restoring a waiver it had previously provided to California, allowing the state to limit greenhouse gas emissions from vehicle tailpipes and set ZEV mandates.

Two-part process

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Federal litigation

In a 2019 lawsuit, California and 23 other states and environmental groups challenged the Trump administration's decision that federal law prevents California from setting its own rules.

A group of automakers — including General Motors, Stellantis, Hyundai, Kia, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Subaru and Toyota — and the National Automobile Dealers Association intervened in the lawsuit, with the goal of supporting one national fuel economy and greenhouse gas program.

Last November, GM withdrew its support of the Trump administration in the suit. NADA and the remaining automakers [withdrew](#) in February.

During his confirmation hearing, EPA chief Michael Regan told U.S. senators he would work to ensure states can set their own standards.

"I think that the California waiver exists for a reason," he said. "I think there's a process that we should follow. If those states follow those processes and want to be champions in this arena, then they can go forth and conquer, and the rest of the country can learn from these first-mover opportunities that they're taking advantage of."

Biden is hosting a [virtual climate summit](#) with world leaders, including China's Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin, through Friday. The administration on Thursday said it has [committed the U.S.](#) to achieving a 50 to 52 percent drop in emissions below 2005 levels by 2030 — an effort that supports the president's goals of achieving a carbon-pollution-free power sector by 2035 and net-zero emissions by 2050.

The emissions target is [supported by GM and Ford Motor Co.](#) as well as other major corporations.

<https://www.autonews.com/regulation-safety/biden-administration-proposes-reinstate-calif-authority-set-tougher-emissions>