

The New York Times

Dan Becker, the director of the Safe Climate Transport Campaign at the Center for Biological Diversity, an environmental group, said weakening the standards would extend the manufacturing of gas-powered vehicles and prevent the United States from countering China's dominance of the global electric car market.

"While Trump tells G.M., Ford and others that they needn't make gas-saving cars, China is telling its carmakers to take advantage of the lack of U.S. competition and accelerate their efforts to grab the world's burgeoning clean car market," Mr. Becker said in a statement.

Trump Expected to Significantly Weaken Fuel Economy Rules

Executives from top automakers were invited to attend the announcement at the White House on Wednesday.

By Lisa Friedman and Maxine Joselow
2 December 2025

The Trump administration is expected on Wednesday to propose weakening automobile fuel efficiency standards that were set under President Joseph R. Biden Jr. to spur the sale of electric vehicles, according to three people familiar with the plan.

Executives from major automakers including Ford Motor, General Motors and Stellantis were invited to attend the announcement at the White House, according to the three people, who asked not to be identified because they were not authorized to discuss the event.

Details of the proposed plan, first reported by Reuters, were not immediately available. But President Trump teased the announcement during a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, saying that his administration was taking steps to lower the price of gasoline-powered cars and dismantle policies that promote electric vehicles.

“We’re bringing back the automobile business,” Mr. Trump said, adding, “I think we’ll be bigger than we’ve ever been in the auto business.”

The White House and the Transportation Department did not immediately respond to questions about the announcement. Representatives for Ford, General Motors and Stellantis declined to comment.

Congress established the Corporate Average Fuel Economy, or CAFE, standards in 1975 as a way to curb the country’s dependence on foreign oil. Since then, the efficiency rules have been regularly tightened, compelling automakers [to improve the distance their vehicles travel on a gallon of gas](#). The standards have also helped to introduce innovations like hybrid and electric vehicles.

The rules have significantly reduced the greenhouse gas emissions that spew from automobile tailpipes and are dangerously warming the planet. Transportation is the single largest source of greenhouse gases in the United States.

Under a rule finalized in June 2024, the Biden administration required automakers to achieve an average fuel efficiency of about 50 miles per gallon for new vehicles by model year 2031. To comply, federal officials expected that manufacturers would increase the sales of electric vehicles, which use no gasoline and would help boost the average fuel efficiency across their product lines.

Biden administration officials estimated that the rule would lower fuel costs by \$23 billion while preventing more than 710 million metric tons of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere by 2050 — the equivalent of taking 165,000 cars off the roads.

When Mr. Trump took office, he immediately sought to eliminate federal support for electric vehicles, pledging to end what he called Mr. Biden’s “E.V. mandate.”

In January, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy [ordered his agency to revise](#) the fuel economy standards, saying the Biden administration had illegally taken into account the performance of electric vehicles, making the standards more stringent than they should have been.

Dan Becker, the director of the Safe Climate Transport Campaign at the Center for Biological Diversity, an environmental group, said weakening the standards would extend the manufacturing of gas-powered vehicles and prevent the United States from countering China's dominance of the global electric car market.

“While Trump tells G.M., Ford and others that they needn’t make gas-saving cars, China is telling its carmakers to take advantage of the lack of U.S. competition and accelerate their efforts to grab the world’s burgeoning clean car market,” Mr. Becker said in a statement.

Margo Oge, who served as the top regulator of vehicle emissions at the Environmental Protection Agency under Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, said the Trump administration’s changes would ultimately hurt consumers.

“At the end of the day, we’re going to end up with more pollution, and we’re not going to be able to save money at the pump as we would have been able to under the Biden administration,” she said.

Congress has already eased up on automakers. Mr. Trump’s domestic policy law, enacted in July, [eliminated fines for automakers](#) that fail to comply with federal fuel economy standards.

After announcing the proposal on Wednesday, the Transportation Department is expected to solicit public comments before finalizing the rule sometime next year. The E.P.A. is also expected to weaken limits on greenhouse gas emissions from cars and trucks in the coming months.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/12/02/climate/trump-fuel-economy-rules.html>