



Trump Slashes Fuel-Economy Standards in Blow to Climate, Health, EV Market

Dan Becker, director of the Center for Biological Diversity's Safe Climate Transport Campaign, said in a news release that the previous standard was "the biggest single step any nation has taken to save gas, money at the pump, and auto pollution."

"Trump is tanking sensible mileage standards at the worst possible time for consumers, who're getting hit with sky-high prices at the pump," Becker said. "Consumers will pay the price for these reckless rollbacks while Trump's Big Oil and Big Auto buddies reap the short-term profits. This move spells short- and long-term disaster for people's health, the planet, and even U.S. automakers who'll sit on the sidelines while clean cars advance around the world."

"Trump's creating a perfect storm to crush competitiveness of domestic car companies, drive up consumer costs and kill the climate," said Becker. "There's nothing Trump won't sacrifice on the altar of fealty to Big Oil and auto polluters, whether it's our health or our wallets. Trump's rollbacks are speeding us toward a sicker, poorer America."

One observer called the move a "disaster for people's health, the planet, and even U.S. automakers."

By Dennis Pillion
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The Trump administration Monday finalized the [rollback of a major fuel economy standard](#) for cars and trucks, a move critics say will cause more climate-warming pollution, human health problems and higher fuel costs for consumers.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a part of the Department of Transportation, published new Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards Monday, greatly reducing the fuel efficiency for new passenger cars and light trucks made between 2022 and 2031.

The Department of Transportation estimates that the new standards would correspond to an industry fleetwide average of about 34.9 miles per gallon for new vehicles in model year 2031. The previous standard, set in 2022 during the Biden administration, would have required around 50.4 miles per gallon, driving automakers to invest more heavily in gasoline-free electric vehicles.

The DOT said in a news release the move would give automakers more flexibility, reduce the average cost of a new vehicle and encourage new car sales. The Trump administration continued to call the Biden rules an EV “mandate.”

“Thanks to President Trump’s leadership, we have finally ended the illegal mandate that forced automakers to produce more expensive electric vehicles that American families didn’t want,” Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said.

The Alliance for Automotive Innovation, a group that advocates on behalf of auto manufacturers, praised the new standards.

“The standards finalized under the previous administration effectively required a switchover to electric vehicles that was out of step with market realities and customer demand,” John Bozella the Alliance’s president and CEO, said in a news release. “Today’s final rule is an appropriate course correction.”

But the changes will likely mean that new cars produced will be less efficient and emit more greenhouse gases and harmful air pollutants that studies show are [responsible for 9 million deaths](#) per year worldwide.

“Today’s rule to weaken fuel economy standards will create more air pollution, harm health and accelerate climate change,” American Lung Association President and CEO Harold Wimmer said in a news release.

“For decades, fuel economy standards have ensured that new cars, SUVs and pickup trucks are more efficient, which saves lives and money,” Wimmer said. “There is no reason to weaken standards that are technologically feasible and have a direct benefit for the quality of the air people breathe.”

Transportation accounts for about [28 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions](#), according to the Environmental Protection Agency, more than electric power generation (25 percent) or industry (23 percent).

Monday’s rule finalized plans Trump [announced in December](#) to reduce the fuel efficiency standards. But in between, the war in Iran has [sent gas prices skyrocketing](#) to an average of [\\$4.48 per gallon](#), according to the American Automobile Association.

Jason Schwartz, regulatory policy director at the Institute for Policy Integrity at New York University’s School of Law, said the repeal will result in higher fuel costs for consumers and make them more vulnerable to “price shocks” in the cost of gasoline.

“The 2024 fuel-economy standards were projected to save consumers \$80 billion in fuel costs and reduce more than \$125 billion in damages from climate change,” Schwartz said. “Today,

[the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration] made those savings disappear, and households that are already stretched thin will pay the price.”

The Institute for Policy Integrity says more than **\$17 billion in projected annual consumer savings** are now at risk due to regulatory rollbacks by the Trump administration.

Environmental and health groups and others say they plan to contest the new standards.

“Americans need relief from high costs, but instead Trump is giving automakers a free pass on pollution and handing families the bill—at the pump and with their health,” Katherine García, director of the Sierra Club’s Clean Transportation for All program, said in a news release.

“The Sierra Club will fight this senseless rollback every step of the way,” Garcia said. “We’re going to continue to fight back against this administration’s dangerous and costly attacks on cleaner cars and public health.”

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The rollback also comes as EVs from China are taking off around the world, including **places like Argentina**. Chinese EV maker BYD surpassed Tesla in 2025 as the world’s largest producer of electric vehicles.

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