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Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming
United States House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

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To Members of the Select Committee on Energy Independence
and Global Warming:

You are about to make a crucial decision that may be a turning point for our country. As you consider how high to raise our nation's CAFE standards, you are undoubtedly coming under a barrage of lobbying from various parties. Including us! The obvious question is, who do you believe?

On the one hand, you have people like Ed Markey, who's been trying to increase fuel economy for as long as we can remember. Admittedly, he's from Massachusetts. And yes, we've seen his haircut.

On the other hand, you have the automotive industry (i.e. car salesmen), whose ratings for honesty are below even those of Congress in public opinion surveys. Let's remember why:

In 1972, Ford President Lee Iacocca told you that if the "EPA does not suspend the catalytic converter rule, **it will cause Ford to shut down.**" Hm. That wasn't exactly right on the money, was it?

A couple of years later, car makers were back in front of you guys, squealing over proposed new fuel economy standards. Chrysler Vice President of Engineering, Alan Loofborrow, predicted that imposing fuel economy standards might **“outlaw a number of engine lines and car models including most full-size sedans and station wagons. It would restrict the industry to producing subcompact size cars---or even smaller ones—within five years.”** That thing got a Hemi, Alan?

As the industry triple-teamed Congress to keep America from improving fuel economy, a Ford Executive let fly this whopper: If CAFE became law, the move could result “in a Ford product line consisting either of **all sub-Pinto sized vehicles...**” Ask the man who drives an Expedition if that ever came to pass.

The onslaught of “we can’t... it’ll ruin us... you’re denying Americans a choice of vehicles” begins every time *we the people*—through our elected representatives—try to bring the auto industry, kicking and screaming into the modern era. And every time, their predictions of motorized-skateboard futures have failed to materialize. Let us repeat that, because the historical record bears it out to a tee. **Every single time they’ve resisted safety, environmental, or fuel economy regulations, auto industry predictions have turned out, in retrospect, to be fear-mongering bull-feathers.**

Isn’t it time we (you?) stop falling for this 50 year-long line of baloney?

The truth is, significantly higher average fuel economy can be achieved. In fact it’s **already** being achieved. And if we don’t push our own auto industry to set world class standards, they’ll be beaten again by the Japanese, the Koreans, and, maybe even the Chinese, who will do it with or without U.S. Congressional action.

There are technologies aplenty that **already exist** that could be used to meet much higher CAFE standards.

- Hybrid-electric vehicles. Hybrids offer, in many cases, a 50% increase in mileage over gasoline versions of the same vehicles. GM just introduced a hybrid Chevy Tahoe, that reportedly gets better city mileage than a Toyota Camry.
- Clean diesel engines. With new, clean diesel fuel now mandated in America, expect a surge of clean diesel engines in the next three to five years that get 25% better fuel economy than their gasoline counterparts.
- Diesel-electric hybrids. Combine the advantages of hybrids with more efficient diesel engines.
- Turbo chargers and super chargers. These force additional air into cylinders to wring more power out of available fuel.
- Cylinder deactivation. Cylinders that are not needed at any given moment, are deactivated, and instantaneously reactivated as soon as the driver demands additional power. Widely available now.
- Plug-in, series hybrids. Now on the drawing boards, plug-in hybrids allow drivers to charge up overnight, when the electric grid is underused, and they'll handle most commutes without ever firing up their internal combustion engines.
- Automatic stop-start technology. At least one energy analyst we spoke to believes that this simple technology, in and of itself, could result in a 10% decrease in fuel use. It's already used in hybrid vehicles, foreign and domestic, and is on its way in more vehicles in the next couple of years.
- Higher voltage electrical systems. These save fuel by allowing energy draining systems, such as power steering, and air conditioning, to be run electrically, instead of by draining power from the engine and using fuel.

- Regenerative braking. Captures energy otherwise lost when the car slows down to give a further boost to on-board battery systems.
- Safe, lightweight materials. Lightweight steel, aluminum and carbon fiber panels reduce weight, allowing a smaller, more efficient engine to propel a car just as fast on less fuel.
- Better transmissions. Six speed automatic transmissions, widely available now from Ford and others, increase fuel economy by 5% and offer smoother acceleration. Mercedes has seven speeds. Lexus has eight. Nissan has CVTs - continuously variable transmissions. All of these improve mileage AND performance.
- Common rail fuel injection. Now standard on modern diesels, this same high pressure fuel delivery technology is beginning to be used to increase fuel economy in gasoline engines, too.
- All wheel drive systems that use electric motors at the non-driven wheels, like on the Lexus RX350 hybrid, eliminate heavy, gas-wasting differentials and drive train components on cars designed to go in the snow.
- More appropriately sized and weighted cars. When we're facing a future of global oil wars and economy-killing gasoline prices, perhaps having single commuters drive 5,000 pound SUVs is something we'll just have to learn to live without. And modern computer electronics, such as stability control, can now ameliorate any driving dynamic issues that result from lack of mass.
- More appropriately powered cars. In 1964, the most powerful, over-the-top Mustang muscle car you could buy came with an optional, four-barrel, 271 horsepower engine. Today, that's what comes standard on the highest rated minivans. 275 horsepower. To take your kid to nursery school? What does this say about our national

priorities? Do we really want to send our kids to fight and die in the desert so that we can go 0-60 in eight seconds instead of ten seconds?

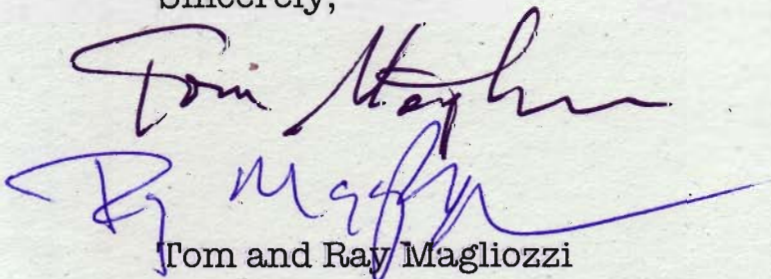
The truth is, **we could achieve a CAFE standard of 35 miles per gallon in five years if we made it a priority.** Every one of the above technologies is either available now or is well along in the pipeline. There's nothing "pie in the sky" here that hasn't been thought of or invented yet.

Look what American industry did in World War II. Look what we did with the space program. It's time to make energy independence just as high a priority. And it starts with you guys (and gals), our representatives. Don't buy the "can't do" bull this time.

Not only can it be done, but by increasing CAFE standards dramatically, you'll be helping the American automotive industry compete—by forcing them to synchronize their priorities with those of the American people, and the populations of other countries where they will be increasingly marketing their cars.

It's the job of private enterprise to design and sell products. **But it's the job of Congress to set our national priorities.** Trust us, the car companies won't go out of business because America insists that they build the world's best, most efficient cars. We urge you to set the bar high for American ingenuity. We have no doubt our car industry will make the grade—to the benefit of all Americans.

Sincerely,



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