

House resolution opposing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rollback of federal motor vehicle emissions standards

Offered by: Representative McCormack of Burlington

Whereas, the federal Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards, the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards, and the waiver allowing California vehicle emissions standards to be more stringent than those of the federal government have saved tens of thousands of American lives, reduced U.S. carbon emissions by millions of tons of CO₂, and saved American motorists billions of dollars in fuel costs, and

Whereas, these programs and the waiver authority are under the jurisdiction of the federal Clean Air Act and have contributed to a modern automobile that lasts longer, requires far fewer tune-ups, pollutes the air considerably less, and requires less fuel to operate, and

Whereas, in the 1970s, U.S. Representative James Jeffords fought for the strongest possible auto emissions standards and unsuccessfully advocated for a minimum mileage standard instead of the adopted average standard, and

Whereas, Vermont has joined with other states and the District of Columbia, including Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Washington in adopting the more stringent California vehicle emissions standards, and

Whereas, if fuel efficiency had not improved from 2005 through 2015, including as a result of the current standards adopted in 2012, households would have spent 25 percent more on fuel, and

Whereas, even with the slightly higher purchase price attributable to incorporating the technology required to comply with the 2012 standards, the average new vehicle buyer starts saving during the first month of ownership, and

Whereas, the International Council on Clean Transportation recently found that, due to technological improvements and innovation, compliance costs for model years 2022–2025 will be 34 percent to 40 percent lower than originally projected, and

Whereas, auto manufacturers are already complying with the 2012 standards, and more than one-half of the new vehicles introduced in 2017 already meet the 2020 level of the standards, and 32 percent comply with the 2025 level, and

Whereas, Synapse Energy Economics has reported that the 2022 and 2025 standards will create more than 100,000 U.S. jobs in the auto industry by 2025 and more than 250,000 by 2035, and

Whereas, the American Lung Association recently released a poll showing that voters overwhelmingly support the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) current fuel efficiency standards for cars, SUVs, and light

trucks in model years 2022 to 2025, and the poll also found that nearly seven in 10 voters want the EPA to leave current fuel efficiency standards in place, and

Whereas, the best-selling passenger car in America — while more fuel efficient than its earlier models— earned the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s highest-possible, 5-star rating in every safety category and earned a 2017 Top Safety Pick Plus designation from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, now therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That this legislative body commends the Agency of Natural Resources and the Vermont Attorney General for their expressed opposition to the EPA’s proposal to roll back any of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards or CAFE Standards or to revoke the emissions waiver granted to California under the Clean Air Act, and be it further

Resolved: That this legislative body urges the Vermont Attorney General to join in any legal action against the EPA’s authority to adopt these regulatory changes, and be it further

Resolved: That the Clerk of the House be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the EPA Administrator, the Secretary of Natural Resources, the Vermont Attorney General, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.