United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 25, 2011

The President
The White House
Washington DC, 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As authors and supporters of the Ten-in-Ten Fuel Economy Act (Public Law 110-140), we appreciate your efforts to implement this legislation by increasing the fuel efficiency of our nation's fleet of vehicles at the "maximum feasible" rate. We understand that your Administration is in stakeholder discussions regarding standards for cars, pick-up trucks, and SUVs from 2017 to 2025. We thank you for your efforts to build consensus around strong standards that meet the statutory mandate, and we encourage you to ensure that the standards resulting from these talks will not be weakened.

Your Administration's implementation of the Ten-in-Ten Fuel Economy Act for Model Years 2012 through 2016 will provide significant results for the American people and will dramatically improve our nation's energy security. These harmonized standards – the first fleetwide increase in Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards in 25 years – will raise the fleetwide average to the equivalent of 35 mpg by 2016, save about 1.8 billion barrels of oil, and reduce nearly a billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions over the lives of the vehicles covered. As a result, American consumers will have more efficient vehicle choices in the market just as the price of oil has risen substantially this year.

We strongly support the cooperative approach and methodology taken to date. As you know, the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have spent many months working cooperatively to draft harmonized standards regulating the fuel efficiency and pollution of cars, pick-up trucks, and SUVs from 2017 to 2025 consistent with the Ten-in-Ten Fuel Economy Act's mandate to increase standards at the maximum feasible rate. The agencies' technical assessment demonstrates that a significant increase in fleetwide fuel economy – six percent annually – is both technically feasible and cost effective for consumers.

We understand your Administration is currently discussing a proposal that would increase fuel economy five percent annually, based on additional analysis by EPA and DOT that demonstrates that this rate of increase would be the most accurate reflection of the statutory mandate. However, we understand that the industry continues to push for a less aggressive standard, particularly with regard to the least efficient and largest light duty vehicles produced, which would be significantly below what is technically feasible and cost effective. We encourage you to work to craft a fair standard that addresses industry concerns, but to ensure that standards will increase at the rate sound analysis has demonstrated to be technically feasible, cost effective to American consumers, and consistent with the "maximum feasible" increase mandated by law.

Your implementation of this law will save American consumers and businesses billions of dollars at the gas pump for decades to come. This year's spike in oil prices reminds us once again of the importance of efforts to reduce America's dependence on oil. We appreciate that your Administration has taken the initiative to propose harmonized standards that aggressively reduce both oil use and pollution.

We thank you for working to improve these regulations in order to assure that they attain the goals of the Ten-in-Ten Fuel Economy Act.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed

Jim Jeffords

Patrick Leahy

John F. Kerry

Jon Corzine

Tom Carper

Jeffrey A. Merkley

Frank R. Lautenberg

Barbara Boxer

Bill Nelson

Ben Cardin

Robert Menendez Maria Cantwell

cc: Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood
cc: Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson