

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
April 9, 2003

OPPOSE CAFE AMENDMENTS!

Dear Colleague:

Amendments that increase Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards are not as simple nor as innocent as they may appear.

The Current System is Working

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is implementing a challenging but responsible increase in CAFE standards for SUV's, pick-up trucks, and mini-vans for model years 2005 through 2007. Moreover, NHTSA is expected to release the details of its proposed CAFE increase for beyond model year 2007 within the coming months. The current system is working well to produce increases in CAFE standards that stretch the abilities of manufacturers while minimizing the impact on our economy and preserving passenger safety and American jobs. Amendments that statutorily and arbitrarily increase CAFE standards will not achieve the same balanced outcome.

American Jobs Will Be Sacrificed

The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) opposes amendments that would statutorily increase CAFE standards. It recently stated that:

"The UAW strongly believes that fuel economy increases of this magnitude are neither technologically or economically feasible The end result could be severe disruptions in . . . production and the loss of thousands of jobs for UAW members and other workers."

Arbitrary increases in CAFE standards will not only adversely affect the wages, benefits, and jobs of American auto workers, they will also negatively affect workers in the many industries that relate to the design, production, or sale of automobiles.

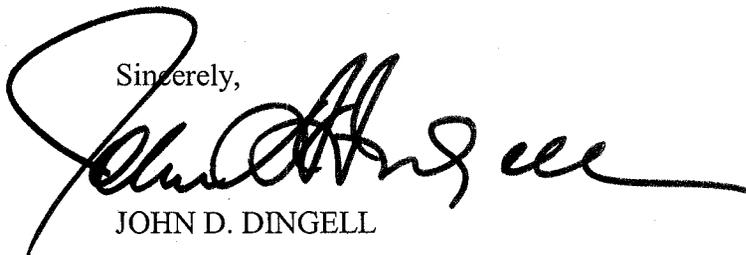
Vehicle Safety Will Be Compromised

Arbitrary CAFE increases force auto manufacturers to produce smaller, lighter cars. According to an analysis of Federal data and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety data, after CAFE standards were first announced in 1975, approximately 46,000 people died in crashes who would have survived if CAFE had not encouraged smaller, lighter cars. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Federal agency in charge of vehicle safety, stated that "any government action that may cause significant reductions in vehicle size and weight raises a particularly serious safety issue." (*Federal Register*, February 3, 1993, vol.58, p.6948) And the National Academy of Sciences echoed these concerns when it stated in a July 2001 report that an increased share of subcompact cars could lead to a corresponding increase in highway fatalities.

Oppose Any Amendment to Increase CAFE Standards

The system is working as it was designed, and any arbitrary increase in CAFE standards would sacrifice American jobs and the safety of the cars, SUV's, and mini-vans that transport our families. I encourage you to oppose any amendment that would statutorily increase CAFE standards.

Sincerely,


JOHN D. DINGELL