



Boxer, Feinstein Tell President To Let California Fight Global Warming

National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration's Rule Wrongly Tries To Undermine State Climate Change Laws

March 31, 2006

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein (both D-Calif.) today sent a letter to President Bush urging him to reverse his Administration's attempts to undo California's efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles.

Senator Boxer said: **"This Administration is trying to slam the door on California's pioneering efforts to address the grave crisis of global warming. On the same day that President Bush described his ideas to respond to climate change, his own Administration issued a rule that would hurt the fight against global warming. This rule includes an attempt to override California and 10 other states' efforts to promote innovative technological solutions to climate change and it should be withdrawn immediately."**

Senator Feinstein said: **"The Administration refuses to act to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases we emit. California has taken the lead in combating climate change by setting its own tough vehicle emission standards, and many states have adopted these same standards for decades. California's action on this issue should be applauded, not hindered."**

Following is the Senators' letter to President Bush:

March 31, 2006

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to ask that you reverse your attempt to override California and other state efforts to cut global warming emissions from automobiles. The National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration's (NHTSA) new corporate average fuel economy rule wrongly attempts to undermine state laws that fight climate change and conflicts with your recently stated approach to global warming.

Global warming is a grave crisis that endangers our nation's public health, economic growth and environment. We must act now to stop this devastating threat.

In 2005, the National Academies of Science for eleven nations, including the United States, stated that "[t]he scientific understanding of climate change is now sufficiently clear to justify nations taking prompt action." Recent studies warn that we may be nearing a tipping point that triggers irreversible damage to our planet.

On March 29, 2006, you stated that your approach to address climate change focused on using technology to reduce oil use and air pollution. Among other innovations, you cited continued investment in hybrid technologies as being an element of your plan.

In 2002, California adopted a pioneering law that requires "feasible and cost-effective" greenhouse gas reductions from automobiles, which create 30 percent of our nation's carbon dioxide emissions. California's program uses innovative technologies, including hybrids, to reduce greenhouse gasses by 30 percent in 2016. Ten states have adopted California's program.

On March 29, 2006, NHTSA issued a rule that wrongly says that federal law preempts states' greenhouse gas emissions standards. The NHTSA does not have authority to regulate emissions, so it is improper for the agency to try to stop states from acting. This rule attempts to inhibit state policies that spur technological innovations, a keystone of your stated approach to climate change.

We strongly urge you to withdraw the preemption language in the preamble. Special interests may want to end state protections, but federal law authorizes them and threats to public health demand such safeguards.

Sincerely,

Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator