

For Immediate Release

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STATEMENT ON THE NEW FUEL ECONOMY REGULATIONS
by Arthur Stamoulis, Director of Government Affairs, Clean Air Council

"The new standards will do nothing to lower gas prices in Pennsylvania.

"Making a couple minor improvements in fuel economy for SUVs and pick-ups is a completely inadequate response to the looming oil crisis facing this nation. It won't help at the pump and won't reduce America's dependency on foreign oil. The new rules will also have zero impact on the growing trend away from fuel-efficient cars towards monster SUVs. Amazingly, the new rules completely exempt enormous vehicles like the Hummer from any fuel economy standards at all.

"These rule changes are a way for the President to act like he's doing something about gas prices, without actually doing anything. It is a gift to the oil industry at a time when oil companies are raking in record profits.

"If the average American is to get any relief from high energy costs, the President and Congress need to get serious about improving the fuel economy of all cars and trucks. It is a step that is needed to protect manufacturing jobs as well. A study released this summer shows that if the U.S. auto industry does not respond to rising oil prices by producing more fuel efficient vehicles, there will be a substantial decrease in auto industry employment. Soaring gasoline prices have made real fuel efficiency improvements a must for both autoworkers and daily commuters."

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BACKGROUND: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is expected to release new fuel economy regulations for light trucks, including Sports Utility Vehicles, later this evening. According to wire reports, the new standards set up different categories based on a vehicle's weight. Depending on weight class, the new regulations require either no fuel economy standards or minimal fuel economy improvements of a couple miles per gallon.

To read the report on fuel economy standards and auto industry job creation, visit:

www.cleanair.org/CAFE.pdf

Clean Air Council is a statewide environmental organization.