August 6, 2018

The Honorable Andrew R. Wheeler
Acting Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Acting Administrator Wheeler and Secretary Chao,

We write to you today with deep concern about your intent to severely weaken federal clean car standards covering vehicle emissions and fuel economy for model year 2021-2026 light duty vehicles. Air pollution, climate change, and fuel costs affect all Americans – but they disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color. The current clean car standards protect these communities while also supporting jobs in areas that are still recovering from the auto industry collapse a decade ago. For these reasons, as members of the Congressional Tri-Caucus representing these communities, we urge you to substantively engage with relevant state, territorial, and federal stakeholders to establish strong clean car standards through the next decade.

Families who live near high traffic zones and highways are exposed to high levels of hazardous air pollution from vehicle emissions. Tailpipe pollution has been linked to a variety of health problems, including asthma and other respiratory and cardiovascular conditions that can lead to premature death, as well as low birth weight and impaired fetal brain development, with lasting health and cognitive impacts. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recognizes this fact, stating that "economically disadvantaged and minority populations share a disproportionate burden of air pollution exposure and risk" and "experience higher residential

exposure to traffic and traffic-related air pollution than non-minorities and persons of higher socioeconomic status." [1]

Climate change, like air pollution, disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color. From coastal towns suffering from more severe tropical storms, to urban neighborhoods suffering from increasing heat waves, our communities are hit earliest and hardest by climate change. With transportation surpassing the energy sector as the largest source of greenhouse gas pollution, federal vehicle emissions standards are the most effective policy we have on the books to combat climate change. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must act to protect public health and should fully consider and adequately weigh the adverse public health impacts of air pollution and climate change as the agency proposes any changes to the existing standards.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is required by law to set fuel economy standards to reduce dependence on oil and protect American consumers from global price shocks. Fuel savings make a real difference for families who spend large proportions of their income on gasoline, and our constituents benefit greatly from strong fuel economy standards that save them money at the pump. Significantly and indiscriminately rolling back these standards will force families to spend hundreds of billions more on gasoline in the coming years, instead of spending their hard-earned income on more efficient vehicles, food, housing, medical care and other family needs.[2]

The current fuel economy standards are on track to save families an average of $3,200 per car and $4,800 per truck over the lifetimes of model year 2025 vehicles.[3] And as more fuel saving technology is adopted into new models, they will benefit used-car buyers in the future as well. These savings make a difference for many of our constituents who are working hard to stretch every dollar. As we see oil prices rising again, it makes no sense for DOT to roll back these standards.

Strong clean car standards have helped support over a quarter million jobs throughout the country since they were enacted a decade ago[4]. For communities experiencing higher unemployment than the national average, policies that support job growth and push American automakers to innovate and stay competitive globally should be kept in place.

Clean car standards benefit all Americans, especially low-income communities and communities of color. Protecting our children from dangerous air pollution and the pervasive impacts of

[1] Boehmer, Tegan K. *et al.* U.S. Center for Disease Control Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. *Residential Proximity to Major Highways — United States, 2010.* November 22, 2013, https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6203a8.htm
[2] Larsen, Kate *et al.* Rhodium Group. *Sizing Up a Potential Fuel Economy Standards Freeze.* May 3, 2018, https://rhg.com/research/sizing-up-a-potential-fuel-economy-standards-freeze/
[3] Baker-Branstetter, Shannon *et al.* Consumers Union. *Fueling Savings: Higher Fuel Economy Standards Result In Big Savings for Consumers.* September 7, 2016. https://consumersunion.org/research/fueling-savings-report/
[4] Blue Green Alliance. *Supplying Ingenuity II: U.S. Suppliers of Key Clean, Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Technology.* May 23, 2017, https://www.bluegreenalliance.org/resources/supplying-ingenuity-ii-u-s-suppliers-of-key-clean-fuel-efficient-vehicle-technologies/

climate change is a moral imperative. Economically, it will also save families money at the gas pump and help support hundreds of thousands of jobs across the country. Millions of Americans, many of whom we represent, benefit from these standards. As such, we strongly urge you to keep our nation's current clean car standards in place and work to ensure that America's auto industry has the regulatory certainty it needs to thrive through the 2020s and beyond.

Sincerely,

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress
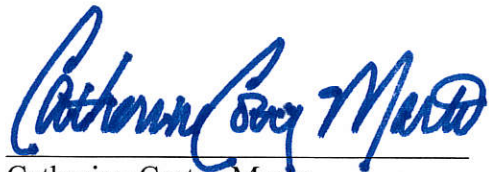
Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Cedric L. Richmond
Member of Congress

Robert Menendez
United States Senator
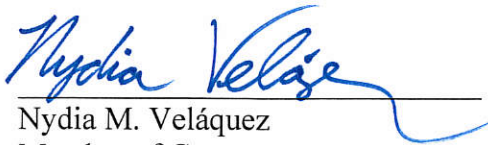
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Grace Meng
Member of Congress
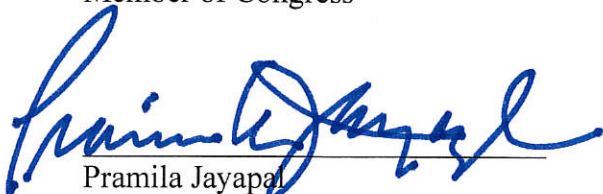
Nydia M. Veláquez
Member of Congress

Hakeem S. Jeffries
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress
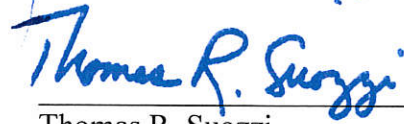
Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress
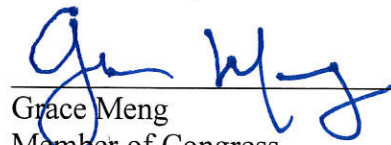
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress
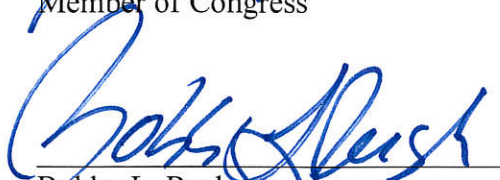
Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress
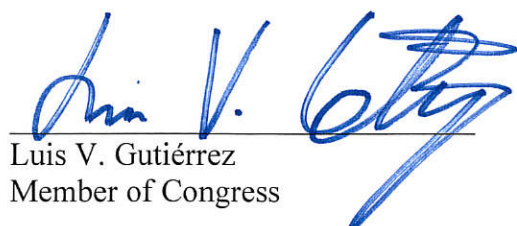
Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

Ben Ray Luján
Member of Congress

John Lewis
Member of Congress

Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress
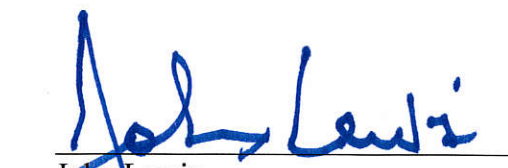
Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress
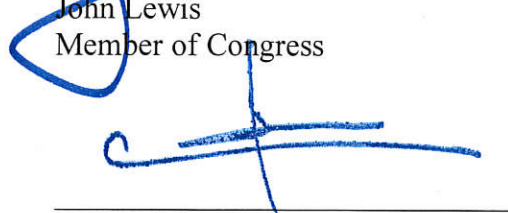
Luis V. Gutiérrez
Member of Congress
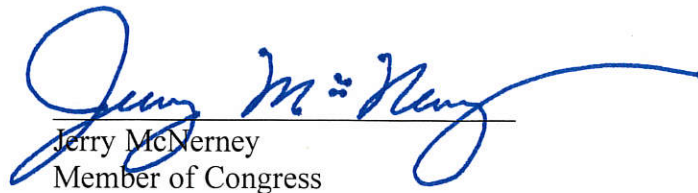
Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress

Keith M. Ellison
Member of Congress

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress

Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress
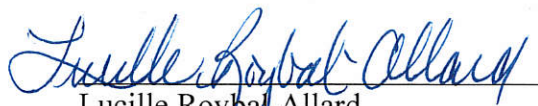
Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
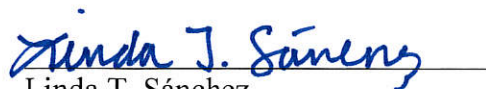Member of Congress

Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress

Ted Lieu
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard
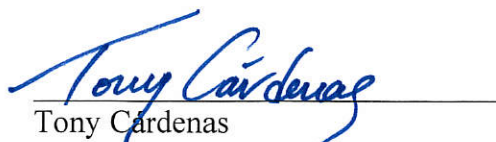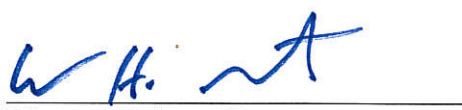Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

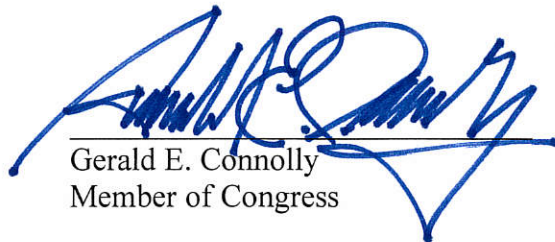Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Tony Cardenas
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

Val Butler Demings
Member of Congress

Ruben J. Kihuen
Member of Congress

Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress