



Consumer Federation of America



More Miles per Gallon

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Florida's Stake in the Fuel Economy Battle

With high gas prices, dependency on foreign oil affecting national security, and greenhouse gases causing global warming, Representatives need to vote for increased fuel economy standards with no loopholes.

Florida – In just days the U.S. House of Representatives will begin debate on fuel economy standards (CAFE). Florida Consumer Action Network and Consumer Federation of America have released a report on the impacts of Florida's fuel consumption and a comparison of legislative proposals currently in the House. The Senate has already approved a standard of 35 miles per gallon (mpg) by 2020. Representatives Markey (D-MA) and Platts (R-PA) have introduced H.R. 1506, which sets a standard of 35 mpg by 2018, with no loopholes. As Governor Crist sets ambitious vehicle emission reduction targets, Florida Members of Congress must take action.

In a telephone conference held by Florida Consumer Action Network, Consumer Federation of America, and the National Environmental Trust, Mark Cooper, Director of Research for CFA, said, "Florida, the fourth most populous state in the nation but third highest in gas consumption, which has increased at twice the national average over the past five years, has much at stake in seeing the Markey-Platts proposal enacted."

There are three areas of concern when setting gas mileage standards: economic impact, reliance on foreign oil, and the environment. Under Markey-Platts, the monthly cost of owning a more fuel efficient vehicle is paid for by gasoline savings. According to the FCAN and CFA study, “Florida’s stake in the fuel economy battle,” savings are substantial at \$1,000-\$1,500 over the life of the vehicle. At \$3 per gallon, Florida will save \$18 billion. The auto industry fuel efficiency standard (32 mpg by 2022) would probably achieve only a quarter and no more than half of these gas savings.

The Markey-Platts standard also decreases Florida’s gasoline consumption by 6 billion gallons, significantly cutting our dependency on foreign oil from unstable sources. Additionally, greenhouse gas emissions will be lowered by 84 million tons. The FCAN and CFA report cites the Union of Concerned Scientists in estimating that Markey-Platts will create more than 14,000 jobs in the state.

Former Congressman Thomas Evans said, “The Markey-Platts bill improves our national security, and it reduces the pressure to drill in pristine wilderness areas like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It is important to note that the Markey-Platts bill allows Florida to pass tougher emissions standards, where the Hill-Terry bill will preempt Florida’s authority. That is an important distinction between the Markey-Platts bill and the Hill-Terry bill, supported by the auto-industry.”

Congress must ACT NOW to make these standards happen. Citizens must take action by contacting their representatives and urging them to support H.R. 1506. Visit www.consumerfed.org, www.net.org, or www.fcan.org for more information. FCAN and NET have action alerts online, with a quick message and easy contact information for citizens to contact their politicians. The full FCAN and CFA report can be viewed online.