

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CT EV COALITION DECRIES PRUITT'S REVERSAL OF FEDERAL CLEAN CAR STANDARDS: "No one voted for more pollution"

(New Haven, Connecticut) – Today, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt deemed America's Clean Car standards "inappropriate," reversing the agency's previous determination that they should continue as planned.

The Obama administration approved the current federal Clean Car standards in 2012, with the support of automakers. In January 2017, the EPA concluded that these standards are working, achievable, and should not be rolled back. Yet Pruitt is reversing that decision, ignoring the thousands of pages of research and analysis that support keeping the standards in place.

Members of the Connecticut Electric Vehicle Coalition responded:

Connecticut Fund for the Environment Climate and Energy Attorney Claire Coleman: "In his zeal to roll back Clean Car standards, Scott Pruitt has yet again defied his agency's own experts. Pruitt is pandering to auto executives and their Washington lobbyists, who want to see the standards unraveled so they can dump dirtier, less efficient vehicles on American drivers. The Clean Car standards are already working here in Connecticut and across the nation, saving consumers money at the gas pump and saving lives by cleaning up the air we breathe. Pruitt should use sound science to do what's best for the American people instead of making decisions to benefit corporations and big polluters at the expense of our health and pocketbooks. No one voted for more pollution, and no one wants to spend more money on gasoline. But that's exactly what we'll get if Trump and Pruitt succeed in rolling back the Clean Car standards."

Sierra Club, Executive Director Michael Brune: "These roll-backs from Scott Pruitt mean Americans will pay more at the pump while our air gets dirtier, just so Pruitt can help the corporate lobbyists and polluters who give him favors and marching orders. Pruitt cannot deny the fact that these widely-supported clean car standards will drive down pollution and cut costs for Americans at the pump, which is why he's taken the facts about the standards off EPA's website. Pruitt's decision to side with Ford and the Auto Alliance rather than the overwhelming majority of Americans who want these clean car standards should come as no surprise as this is an administrator who focuses solely on what's best for corporate polluters, not the public. But make no mistake, we will continue fighting back to protect these standards and the health of our communities. Scott Pruitt can try and hide from the public in first class, in his soundproof office, or in the homes of corporate lobbyists, but we will be loud and clear in calling for our families and our communities to be protected."

ACADIA Center, Policy Analyst Emily Lewis: "Today's announcement does nothing but hurt consumers by allowing more air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and by keeping transportation costs high. While Connecticut has chosen to protect its residents by adopting California's clean vehicle standards, air pollution doesn't follow state boundaries and the state's air quality will be negatively impacted by this change."

Clean Water Action, Connecticut State Director Anne Hulick: "As a nurse, I am deeply disturbed to learn of the rollbacks to vehicle emission standards. In addition to being a large source of greenhouse gas emissions that contributes to climate change, emissions from cars and trucks are a leading cause of respiratory ailments including exacerbations of asthma and chronic pulmonary conditions. Chemicals in vehicle exhaust diminish lung function, impair immunity to pneumonia and other respiratory diseases and are linked to cancer. Rolling back these effective and technically-achievable standards will result in increased respiratory disease, medical costs and deaths from air pollution in the U.S."

Cleaner transportation options are critical to improving Connecticut's air quality. Transportation makes up 41 percent of nitrous oxide (NOx) emissions in the state*. NOx emissions react with other pollutants to form ground level ozone, which impairs lung function and produces many respiratory illness symptoms. Connecticut's eight counties *all* received failing grades for high ozone days from the American Lung Association in 2016**. These trends have continued in 2017, with the ALA finding that Hartford-West Hartford was the 21st-worst city for ozone and that the Connecticut-New York-New Jersey-Pennsylvania region was among the worst in the country for ozone and particulate pollution.

Helping Connecticut residents choose cleaner car options like electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles, biodiesel, and fuel-efficient traditional cars is critical to stopping further damage to the climate and creating healthier communities.

Connecticut's own Clean Car standards will not be rolled back by Pruitt's decision. In the absence of federal leadership, it's more important than ever that the nation's coalition of clean cars states, including Connecticut, representing 113 million Americans and more than one-third of the auto market, do what is needed to safeguard the health of their residents. While these states are protected from the EPA's failure to prioritize clean air, millions of Americans in neighboring states will be saddled with more polluting, less efficient vehicles. And because pollution knows no borders, clean cars states will need to commit to working even harder to protect their air quality and that of their neighbors, by bringing cleaner, more efficient vehicles to market.

* Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, *Proposed State of Connecticut Mitigation Plan under the Volkswagen 2.0L Partial Consent Decree, Appendix D*, page 6, available at http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/air/mobile/vw/CT_VW_Proposed_State_Mitigation_Plan_-_PREPROPOSAL.pdf.

** American Lung Association, *State of the Air 2017*, <http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/sota/city-rankings/most-polluted-cities.html>.

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