

## Mileage standards getting higher amidst strong oppositions

While Los Angeles is feasting on hydrogen powered Chevrolet, super fuel-efficient gasoline engine on a Lincoln or a Hybrid Dodge, carmakers in Washington is fighting hard against a new federal mileage standards.

"They're definitely saying one thing to Congress and one thing to consumers," says Phyllis Cuttino, director of the Pew Campaign for Fuel Efficiency, an environmental group lobbying for tougher fuel-efficiency rules. Last week, Toyota Motor Corp. the creator of the famous Prius was persecuted by environmentalist group in one full page ad in the USA Today as the automaker opposes the mileage proposal.

Along this circumstance, automakers are torn between the pressures of producing fuel efficient environment friendly vehicles and the idea that their gas guzzlers Sport Utility vehicles and trucks are among their really profitable items.

For a long time, the auto industry had been strongly fighting against increased fuel-efficiency rules known as the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE). According to Dave McCurdy, head of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, the Lobbying group of the Detroit's Big Three and Toyota, the new fuel efficiency standards are not totally opposed by the car companies but instead, they are asking for setting a different standard for cars and trucks as well as some time for them to prepare to the new law.

"The position that we're supporting in CAFE is a dramatic increase over any proposal that many in Congress -- even the advocates -- in their wildest dreams would've hoped for," he says. The bevy of fuel-efficient technologies on display in Los Angeles shows auto makers are "putting their money where their mouth is," he adds.

Last June, the Senate passed a bill requiring automakers to build cars with an average of 35 miles per gallon by 2020, which is 40% higher than the present standard. The two legislative houses of the country, the house and the senate are already meeting to draft a new fuel-economy measure to be included in a final energy bill. For the presidential battle, a higher fuel efficiency standard is considered a big issue. Last week, former first lady and Democratic hopeful Sen. Hillary Clinton called for a 40 mpg standard to be reached by 2020 and 55 mpg by 2030.

Top executives from automaker have voiced out that these new standards are not that feasible. According to General Motors (maker of [Saab steering rack](#)) Chief Rick Wagoner, the standards that the House is proposing "don't look achievable". On the other hand, Allan Mullaly, Chief Executive for Ford Motor Co. the new mileage law is the most "market-distorting" scheme he had ever known.

### About the Author

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