

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

**BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND THE
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION**

ON

**PROPOSED FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS AND SMALL BUSINESS
GROWTH**

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SMALL BUSINESS MAJORITY

Good afternoon, my name is Celia Canfield and I am the Clean Energy Business Adviser for Small Business Majority and a Board member. Small Business Majority is a nonpartisan small business advocacy organization founded and run by small business owners. We represent the 28 million Americans who are self-employed or own businesses of up to 100 employees. Our organization uses scientific opinion and economic research to understand and represent the interests of all small businesses. We are not an organization that only hears what our members tell us, we go out and research the broad spectrum of small business owners, entrepreneurs, freelancers and the self-employed in order to understand their opinions and what they need to stay viable and competitive.

I am also a small business person myself. I started and grew a successful internet agency business in the late 90's and created another consultancy business in 2007 to support entrepreneurs who are creating clean energy economy solutions and businesses.

Solutions to the country's economic malaise can be found within America's small businesses. But the government must support them if we are to harness their power as job creators. Small businesses have

the potential to stimulate the economy to greater recovery, but they need smart policies to help them do so—such as stronger fuel efficiency standards. By concentrating their efforts on raising the requirements automakers must meet, legislators can help entrepreneurs save money and give them the boost they need to rebuild America. We know this from our research.

How stronger fuel efficiency standards help small businesses stimulate the economy

The rising cost of fuel is a key area where the government can help small businesses. Small Business Majority released a national opinion poll in September 2011 and we found that 87% of small business owners believe it's important for the U.S. to take action *now* to increase fuel efficiency in cars and light trucks. 59% of those surveyed described this as *very* important. Moreover, small business owners in the influential automotive states of Michigan, Ohio and California demonstrated equally strong support for more stringent standards.

Our survey also found that 71% of small business owners believe American car companies do not innovate enough and 73% believe the federal government should do more to help them become leaders in the industry for innovation and produce the appropriate vehicles for the economic times we live in. Therefore, it's not surprising that 80% of business owners polled support requiring the auto industry to increase fuel efficiency to 60 miles per gallon by 2025—an even higher standard than the 54.5 miles per gallon the Obama Administration proposed in November.

Small business owners know they'll benefit from strengthened fuel economy standards. The proposed rules are right on par with what entrepreneurs have told us they want—improved fuel standards that have the power to cut long-term business costs. Stronger standards are a surefire way to help small business owners save money on fuel, which will allow them to invest in their companies and hire more employees.

Of the employers we polled, the rising cost of doing business came in as their top concern—including rising fuel costs. This helps explain why so many small business owners believe stronger fuel economy standards have the potential to boost their bottom lines. In fact, 87% of small business owners agree that improving innovation and energy efficiency are good ways to increase prosperity for small businesses. If lawmakers are going to meet these entrepreneurs' needs, raising fuel economy standards is a great way to start.

Through higher standards, the money small business owners don't have to spend on high fuel costs can be reinvested in their businesses. Small business customers who can spend less on buying fuel are much more likely to spend more money patronizing the businesses in their communities. We support raising fuel economy standards because they'll be a boon to our small businesses and our economy.

Thank you.