

Presidential Documents

Memorandum of January 26, 2009

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation [and] the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

In 2007, the Congress passed the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA). This law mandates that, as part of the Nation's efforts to achieve energy independence, the Secretary of Transportation prescribe annual fuel economy increases for automobiles, beginning with model year 2011, resulting in a combined fuel economy fleet average of at least 35 miles per gallon by model year 2020. On May 2, 2008, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking entitled *Average Fuel Economy Standards, Passenger Cars and Light Trucks; Model Years 2011–2015*, 73 *Fed. Reg.* 24352. In the notice and comment period, the NHTSA received numerous comments, some of them contending that certain aspects of the proposed rule, including appendices providing for preemption of State laws, were inconsistent with provisions of EISA and the Supreme Court's decision in *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency*, 549 U.S. 497 (2007).

Federal law requires that the final rule regarding fuel economy standards be adopted at least 18 months before the beginning of the model year (49 U.S.C. 32902(g)(2)). In order for the model year 2011 standards to meet this requirement, the NHTSA must publish the final rule in the *Federal Register* by March 30, 2009. To date, the NHTSA has not published a final rule.

Therefore, I request that:

(a) in order to comply with the EISA requirement that fuel economy increases begin with model year 2011, you take all measures consistent with law, and in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, to publish in the *Federal Register* by March 30, 2009, a final rule prescribing increased fuel economy for model year 2011;

(b) before promulgating a final rule concerning model years after model year 2011, you consider the appropriate legal factors under the EISA, the comments filed in response to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the relevant technological and scientific considerations, and to the extent feasible, the forthcoming report by the National Academy of Sciences mandated under section 107 of EISA; and

(c) in adopting the final rules in paragraphs (a) and (b) above, you consider whether any provisions regarding preemption are consistent with the EISA, the Supreme Court's decision in *Massachusetts v. EPA* and other relevant provisions of law and the policies underlying them.

This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

The Secretary of Transportation is hereby authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack Obama", with a large, stylized "B" and a circular "O".

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, January 26, 2009