

## **Testimony for August 25, 2021 Public Hearing**

### **EPA's Proposed Rule to Revise Existing National GHG Emissions Standards for Passenger Cars and Light Trucks Through Model Year 2026**

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Hello. I'm Laura Kate Bender, National Assistant Vice President for Healthy Air at the American Lung Association. Our mission is to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. Thank you for your time today.

The Lung Association puts a high priority on pushing for policies that drive a nationwide transition to zero-emission vehicles. EPA's proposal is a critical step on the road to that zero-emission future. As you've heard from my colleagues, we urge EPA to make this proposed rule as strong as possible and to maximize its health benefits. This means keeping out loopholes or credit schemes so that the rule doesn't lead to health harms that could have been avoided. It also means finalizing the rule this year, and then moving to set stronger standards for future light-duty vehicles as well as stronger standards for heavy-duty vehicles.

Today I'd like to highlight the breadth of the support of the health community for cleaning up greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles. Climate change is a health emergency, and I imagine many of you on the line today are personally experiencing some of those impacts right now, just like millions of Americans across the country. We know that these impacts will get dramatically worse without strong federal action.

In fact, we hear often from physicians and nurses that they are seeing the impacts of climate change on their patients. We hear about direct lung health concerns, like student athletes who are exposed too often to dangerous wildfire smoke, or parents who simply have to keep their kids from playing outside due to hazardous air. And we hear about a whole array of other impacts affecting everything from cardiovascular health to mental health.

That's why health and medical organizations have been spending years rallying support for cleaner cars. In 2017, the Lung Association led a letter to EPA and NHTSA signed by more than 700 medical and health professionals from across the nation urging both agencies to implement strong state and federal advanced clean car regulations to protect public health.

In 2018, we joined more than 90 national, state and local health and medical organizations in commenting against the SAFE rule rollback.

Earlier this year, the Lung Association and 13 other national health and medical organizations, including the American Public Health Association, the National Association of County and City Health Officials, the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health and the American Psychological Association, sent a letter to President Biden calling on him to set the strongest possible emissions standards to protect public health. We called on the administration to act urgently to ensure the same or better greenhouse gas emissions reductions scheduled to be

achieved under the Obama-era standards, and then set stronger standards through at least model year 2030.

And just last month, a robust contingent of the health community submitted comments to EPA in support of state authority to set stronger cleaner cars standards, including 28 national, state and local health and medical organizations and dozens of health professionals. In fact, some of the organizations represented are testifying today and tomorrow.

Climate change is a health emergency, but also a health opportunity. That's why the health community supports cleaning up our nation's vehicles – because it not only addresses climate change, but also provides immediate benefits to health by eliminating tailpipe pollution. The nation urgently needs to reduce greenhouse gases from transportation to avoid the worst health impacts of climate change. A nationwide transition to zero-emission vehicles has the potential to provide immediate benefits to health and equity. We call on you to drive that transition with this rulemaking and future ones.