In August 2018, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announced new Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for mileage year 2021–2026 passenger vehicles and light trucks. The proposed rule would freeze fuel economy standards at 2020 levels rather than having the standards become more stringent as was defined under the original rule which would have worked to address climate change by significantly reducing vehicle emissions. The proposed rule would also revoke California's waiver that has allowed them to set more stringent standards than federal levels. This will also impact 13 other states who have followed California's lead. This rule proposal is yet another example of environmental deregulation from the Trump Administration that poses a threat to American citizens, and particularly mountain communities who experience the impacts from climate change at a higher level.

How Do Changes to CAFE Standards Impact Mountain Communities?

Mountain communities face challenges from climate change including increased temperatures, reduced snowpack, and longer, more severe fire seasons. Residents of mountain communities choose to live in these beautiful places because of access to the outdoors and mountain town culture. Visitors come from all over the world to experience the world class recreation opportunities in close proximity to many mountain communities. Detrimental impacts from less restrictive CAFE standards and thus climate change, will affect the cultural vitality and economic success of mountain communities that are inextricably linked to natural resources and outdoor recreation.

Yet, the Trump Administration refuses to see the impact that increased emissions have on communities such as these. The CAFE standards are intended to reduce energy consumption by increasing the fuel economy of cars and trucks. However, in keeping
with the Trump Administration’s ‘energy dominance’ agenda the new proposed rule would instead increase daily fuel consumption by 0.5 million barrels a day. This will ensure that CO2 emissions do not decrease. Additionally, an increased need for fuel may in turn increase the demand for drilling on public lands, another hit to our mountain town economies and way of life.

**What Can You Do?**
The window for public comment is coming to a close with the last day for submission being October 26, 2018. The 2012 CAFE standards have been a common sense solution as they seek to steadily decrease emissions. The health and culture of our mountain communities may be threatened if this proposed rule becomes final. Instead, we need a rule that will:

1. Decrease emissions by creating more stringent standards for passenger and light duty vehicles produced in 2021–2026, and keep the progression of increased standards as had been originally laid out under the 2012 CAFE standards.
2. Factor in the social cost of carbon when looking at consumer, manufacturer, and overall impacts.

**To tell the EPA that we need to stick with the CAFE standards decided in 2012 for the health of our mountain communities and all American citizens, click here.** For more information on what you can say in your comment please email us at info@themountainpact.org.

*The Mountain Pact strives to keep you informed on all policies relevant to your communities. Stay tuned for more information, and follow us on Facebook and Twitter for quick daily updates.*

*If you would like to help us continue to work on important conservation efforts like this one, please consider donating here.*