

*American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy
Natural Resources Defense Council * Safe Climate Campaign
Sierra Club * Union of Concerned Scientists*

April 2, 2009

Support HR 520, the Accelerated Retirement of Inefficient Vehicles Act of 2009

Dear Representative:

We are writing in support of HR 520, Accelerated Retirement of Inefficient Vehicles Act of 2009 (ARIVA), introduced by Reps. Israel and Inslee. We support efforts to help the domestic manufacturers emerge from the current crisis as leaders of the industry and we firmly believe we can best achieve this goal through policies that also reduce global warming pollution and our dependence on oil. HR 520 will accomplish these goals.

Providing a cash incentive to retire inefficient vehicles and replace them with efficient ones will accelerate the transition to fuel-efficient vehicles, giving owners of high-consuming vehicles an opportunity to reduce their fuel costs by trading up the efficiency scale and boosting the market for highly efficient vehicles.

Fuel economy standards unlike standards for emissions of criteria air pollutants, have not followed a positive trajectory over the past twenty years; so the ARIVA bill targets vehicles based on their low fuel economies, not their advanced ages. At the same time, the accelerated retirement program will reduce emissions of criteria pollutants by virtue of the increasing stringency in tailpipe emissions standards; this is reinforced in the bill by the requirement that any vehicle purchased must meet a standard of Tier II bin 5, or cleaner.

An essential feature of the bill is that vehicles of a given model year purchased under the retirement program must exceed CAFE standards for that model year by at least 25% to ensure the program represents a real investment in fuel economy improvement. The ARIVA bill allows the purchase of efficient used vehicles as well, since many households cannot and will not purchase new vehicles but can nonetheless contribute to increasing the efficiency of the vehicle stock. Finally, ARIVA allows participants to apply a voucher obtained by retiring a vehicle toward the purchase of transit fare, rather than toward a replacement vehicle.

We urge that you cosponsor HR 520 – a bill that offers the opportunity for increasing vehicle sales while delivering important national benefits of reducing our dependence on oil and curbing global warming pollution..

Sincerely,

Therese Langer
Transportation Program Director
American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy

Brian Siu
Natural Resources Defense Council

Dan Becker, Director
Safe Climate Campaign

Ann Mesnikoff, Director
Green Transportation Campaign
Sierra Club

Michelle Robinson, Director
Clean Vehicles Program
Union of Concerned Scientists