

February 28, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders Reid and McConnell:

We are writing to urge you to oppose an amendment to S. 1813, sponsored by Sens. Cantwell and Lugar (S.A. 1657, the "Open Fuels Standard"), which would effectively mandate that 80 percent of gasoline-powered light-duty vehicles be tri-fuel vehicles capable of running on any combination of ethanol, methanol, and gasoline beginning in model year 2018. This highly controversial and costly consumer mandate has not been the subject of a hearing nor a vote in Committee and is more appropriately considered in the context of an energy bill and not a bill focused on transportation infrastructure and safety.

The effectiveness of alternative fuels depends critically on their price, their availability and consumers' willingness to use the fuel. It is important to note that consumers who want vehicles capable of running on fuel blends of up to 85% ethanol mixed with gasoline already have the option to buy them. Currently, there are nearly 10 million FFVs on U.S. roads, yet on average they use *less than a single tankful of E85 per year*. However, there are no tri-fuel vehicles available for purchase today, because the only place methanol is being produced for use as transportation fuel in commercial quantities is China.

At a time when many policy makers are questioning the costs of ethanol to taxpayers, the environment and the food supply, effectively imposing a massive new tax on consumers for a car that can run on ethanol and methanol makes no sense. The tri-fuel vehicle mandate proposed in S.A. 1657 will cost consumers billions of dollars per year to buy vehicles that are not offered for sale today and for which there is no fuel currently being produced in the US.

The Open Fuels Standard is a misguided consumer mandate that will lead to unintended consequences on vehicle manufacturers, the supply chain and emerging technologies. Simply put, S.A. 1657 to S. 1813 should not become law.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers  
American Automotive Policy Council  
American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers  
American International Automobile Dealers Association  
American Meat Institute  
American Petroleum Institute  
Americans for Limited Government  
Association of Global Automakers  
Competitive Enterprise Institute  
Freedom Action  
Grocery Manufacturers Association  
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association

National Council of Chain Restaurants  
National Automobile Dealers Association  
National Black Chamber of Commerce  
National Chicken Council  
National Marine Manufacturers Association  
National Meat Association  
National Turkey Federation  
Outdoor Power Equipment Institute  
Specialty Equipment Market Association  
Truck & Engine Manufacturers Association  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce