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ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL CHALLENGES NATIONAL CLEAN CAR STANDARDS ROLLBACK

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today joined a multistate coalition [to file a lawsuit](#) challenging the federal rollback of the national Clean Car Standards. The Clean Car Standards would have led to significant improvements in fuel economy and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from passenger cars and light trucks.

Since their introduction in 2010, the Clean Car Standards have saved consumers money, reduced harmful emissions, and helped protect the health of communities. The rollback rule obstructs this progress, hurting the economy and public health at a time when the country can least afford it. In the lawsuit, Raoul and the coalition argue that the rollback rule violates the Clean Air Act, the Energy Policy and Conservation Act and the Administrative Procedure Act.

“At a time when we are battling a nationwide respiratory pandemic, we need to do everything we can to enact policies that improve air quality. Rolling back the Clean Car Standards is a step in the wrong direction that will have negative consequences for public health and the environment,” Raoul said. “I joined this lawsuit because I will continue to oppose arbitrary policies that ignore science and put corporations before our residents.”

In 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), the California Air Resources Board and car manufacturers established a unified national program harmonizing greenhouse gas emission standards and fuel efficiency standards. Two years later, the agencies extended the national program to model years 2017-2025 vehicles. As part of the program, California and the federal agencies agreed to undertake a midterm evaluation to determine if the greenhouse gas emission standards for model years 2022-2025 vehicles should be maintained or revised. In January 2017, the EPA completed the midterm evaluation and issued a final determination affirming that the existing standards were appropriate and would not be changed.

The following year, the federal government took its first step toward dismantling the national Clean Car Standards by reversing the EPA’s final determination with a new midterm evaluation that alleged the standards were no longer appropriate or feasible. It later made its rollback proposal official, despite the fact that the auto industry was currently on track to meet or exceed the Clean Car Standards.

On March 31, the federal government announced its final rule rolling back the Clean Car Standards. The rule takes aim at the corporate average fuel efficiency standards, requiring automakers to make only minimal improvements to fuel economy – on the order of 1.5 percent annually instead of the previously anticipated annual increase of approximately 5 percent. The rule also guts the requirements to reduce vehicles’ greenhouse gas emissions, allowing hundreds of millions of metric tons of avoidable carbon emissions into the atmosphere over the next decade.

In the lawsuit, Raoul and the coalition argue that the federal government’s rollback of the national Clean Cars Standards is unlawful because, among other things:

- The EPA and NHTSA’s rollbacks violate the statutory text and congressional mandates by which they are bound.
- The EPA and NHTSA improperly and unlawfully relied on an analysis riddled with errors, omissions, and unfounded assumptions in an attempt to justify their desired result.

Joining Raoul in filing the lawsuit are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin; the California Air Resources Board; the cities of Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Denver; and the counties of San Francisco and Denver.