

Comment by:

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on the

**Phase 2 MDHD Fuel Efficiency Standards for Medium, Heavy Duty Engines and Vehicles:
Draft Environmental Impact**

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Agency: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

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Comment:

General Comment

We applaud the NHTSA for doing what most other federal agencies are not wont to do—that is, make a direct determination of the impact that this proposed regulation will have on the course of future climate change. As a result of your analysis, you conclude (pg. S-24):

The magnitude of the changes in climate effects that would be produced by the most stringent action alternative (Alternative 5) is roughly 1.2 ppm less CO₂, a few thousandths of a degree difference in temperature increase, a small percentage change in the rate of precipitation increase, and about 1 millimeter (0.03 inch) of sea-level rise.

Further, you go on to explain (page 5-75, footnote 37) that:

[T]he projected reductions in global climate effects for each of the alternatives are too small to incorporate into a regional/local-scale analysis, which would likely introduce uncertainties at the same magnitude or more than the projected change itself (i.e., the projected change would be within the noise of the model).

That the climate impact of the regulation does not rise above the noise in the model (which must include natural variability) is indisputable proof that the impacts are undetectable and therefore unverifiable.

These findings from the NHTSA are directly in line with the result of similar calculations that we ourselves have performed and reported for virtually all new federal proposed regulations and the conclusions that directly follow our investigations—that the impact of these and other federal actions on the future evolution of the earth’s climate at global, regional, or local scales, is, by any normative scientific evaluation measure, inconsequential and undetectable.

As a result, the entirety of the 187-page Chapter 5 “Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change” (including the use of the problematic social cost of carbon in Sections 5.3.2, 5.4.1.2, and 5.4.2.2) with the exception of those portions of Sections 5.3 and 5.4 (where the global climate impact calculations themselves are described) should be removed from this EIS as well as all references to these sections in the remainder of the report, for example, the Summary.

Minimally, it would suffice to remove all the extant text under Section 5.5 “Health, Societal, and Environmental Impacts of Climate Change” and, replace it with the word “None.”

Based directly upon the findings reported in this NHTSA draft Environmental Impact Statement, we recommend that “mitigating climate change” be henceforth removed from the justification included in this and all federal actions that may result in lower greenhouse gas emissions. If “mitigating climate change” is the primary impetus behind the action, then the action should be withdrawn.