



TO: Pew Campaign For Fuel Efficiency
FROM: The Mellman Group, Inc. & Public Opinion Strategies
RE: Public Support For Stricter Fuel Efficiency Standards In Michigan's 15th CD
DATE: July 23, 2007

This analysis represents the findings of a survey of 400 likely voters in Michigan's 15th Congressional District interviewed by telephone July 13-16, 2007. Registration-based-sampling was used to insure an accurate sample of the likely 2008 electorate. The margin of error for this survey is +/-4.9% at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error is higher for subgroups.

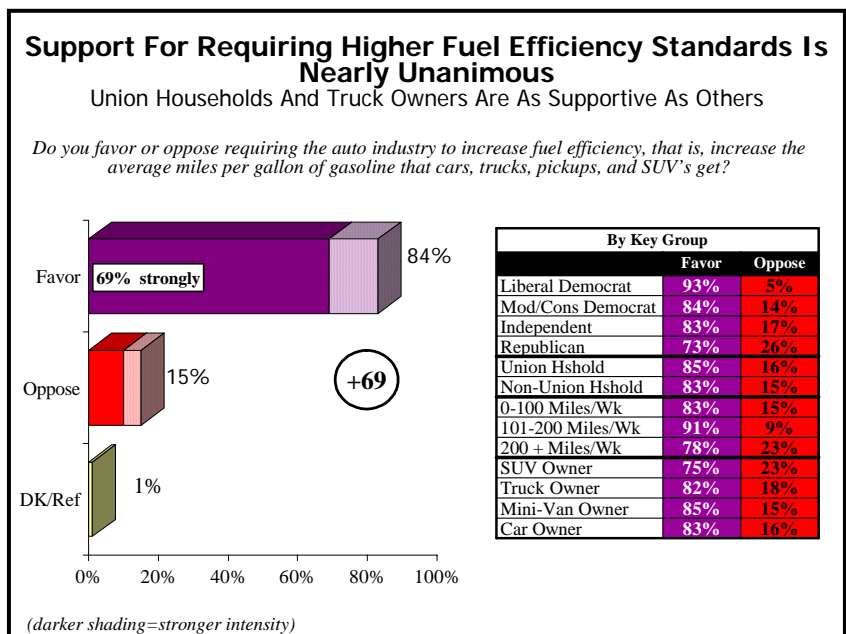
Because Michigan's 15th Congressional District is home to much of the auto industry, and because it is represented by Chairman John Dingell, many regard it as "ground zero" in the debate about fuel efficiency or CAFE standards. Nevertheless, voters in this District voice overwhelming and unwavering support for increased fuel efficiency standards. Large majorities demand higher standards, even after being presented with the best arguments the opposition has to offer. In fact, voters reject opponents' key arguments. The people of Michigan's 15th Congressional District are clear: they want standards that are higher, binding, come into force sooner and are not capped. Voters will think more highly of a Member of Congress who reflects their views on this issue.

Voters In Michigan's 15th Congressional District Demand Higher Fuel Efficiency Standards

Our just completed survey shows that over four in five (84%) voters in Michigan's 15th CD favor requiring the auto industry to increase fuel efficiency for cars, trucks pickups and SUVs while only 15% oppose increases. Moreover, three quarters (69%) *strongly* favor requiring increases in fuel efficiency, while only 10% are *strongly* opposed.

Support is not only deep, but also wide. Support for stricter fuel efficiency standards cuts across partisan lines as 89% of Democrats (78% strongly), 83% of independents (69% strongly), and 73% of Republicans (53% strongly) all favor tougher CAFE standards. Voters of all ages (90% of those 18-39; 85% 40-59; 80% 60+), genders (80% of men, 87% of women), and ethnicities (83% of white voters, 85% of non-white voters) support higher standards.

Support is also strong among demographic segments which opponents charge would be adversely affected by the policy. Eighty-five percent (85%) of union members support higher standards (71% strongly), as do 75% of SUV owners (59% strongly) and 82% of pick-up truck owners (66% strongly).



In fact, there is no segment of the electorate in this District among whom support for higher fuel efficiency standards is less than 69%.

Voters Prefer CAFE Standards That Are Higher, Binding, Come Into Force Sooner And Are Not Capped

When offered the choice, 55% prefer a proposal designed to achieve an average fuel economy standard of 35 miles per gallon, while 39% prefer an approach that would achieve an average of 32 miles per gallon. A majority (50%) *strongly* favor the higher mileage requirement.

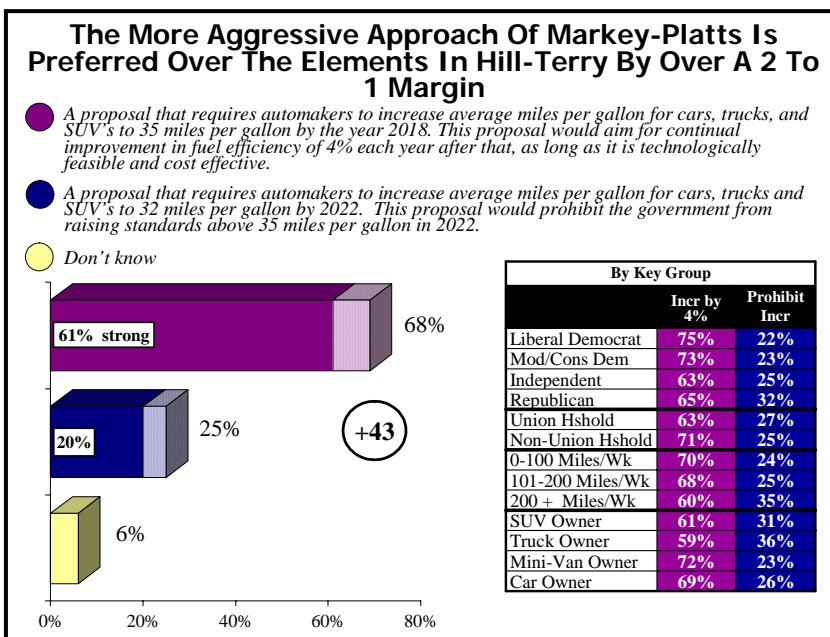
The higher standards were favored by Democrats (61%) and independents (55%) while Republicans were split on the issue (46% favor 35 mpg standards, 49% 32mpg). Higher standards enjoyed majority support even among union households (52%).

The Senate has set a standard that voters expect the House to meet or exceed. Eight-in-ten voters in the 15th District (81%) want the House of Representatives to pass legislation at least as strong as that passed by the U.S. Senate, while only 12% profess a desire for the House to pass weaker standards. This sentiment is universal across key demographic groups, with support for nothing less than the Senate bill above 80% even among pick-up truck owners (83%) and union households (84%).

Voters not only want higher fuel economy standards, they strongly oppose a cap on CAFE standards and want the flexibility to increase those standards in the future. Fifty-eight percent (58%) want a proposal that allows the government to raise fuel efficiency standards above 35 miles per gallon. Only 35% would prohibit the government from raising fuel efficiency standards above 35 miles per gallon after 2022. Majorities across party oppose a cap (62% of Democrats, 56% of independents, 51% of Republicans). A cap on fuel economy standards is also opposed by majorities of pick-up truck owners (54%) and those who drive more than 200 miles per week (58%).

Finally, voters want increased standards to be binding. A clear majority (57%) favors mandatory gas mileage standards for automakers over setting “non-binding gas mileage goals” (36%). Nearly twice as many voters *strongly* preferred mandatory standards (47%) than *strongly* preferred non-binding goals (26%).

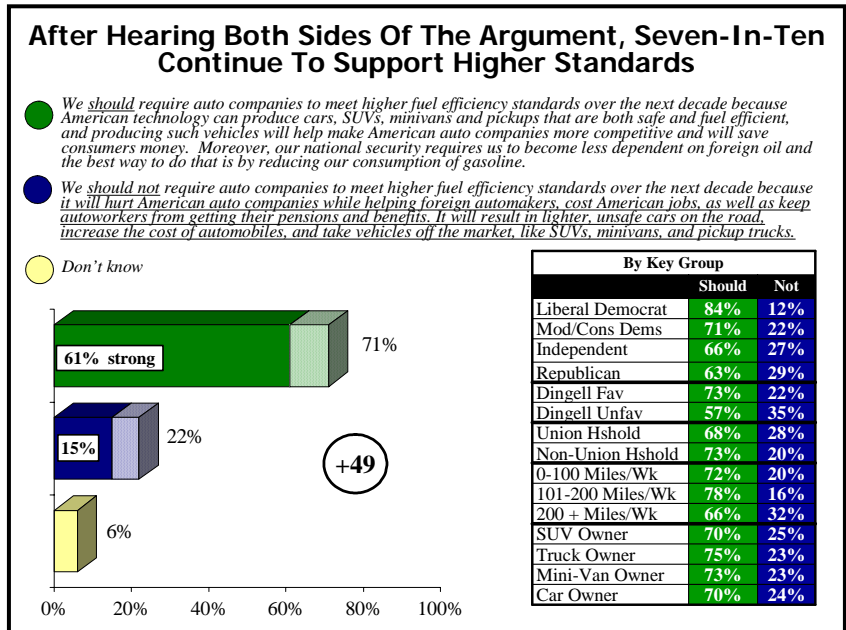
When given the choice between a bill with weaker fuel efficiency standards, a slower timeline and restrictions on future increases in standards, like the proposed Hill-Terry Bill, and a bill with stronger fuel efficiency standards, a quicker timeline and a goal for future increases in standards, like the Markey-Platts Bill, voters prefer the combined elements contained in Markey-Platts over those in Hill-Terry by nearly a 3 to 1 margin. Sixty-eight percent (68%) favor the stronger, quicker proposal, while only one-quarter (25%) favor the weaker, slower proposal. In fact,



61% *strongly* favor the proposal with stronger standards and a quicker timeline. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of Republicans, 63% of union households and 61% of SUV owners support the stronger, quicker proposal over the weaker, slower one.

Even After Hearing Arguments From Both Sides, Voters Still Overwhelmingly Support Strict CAFE Standards

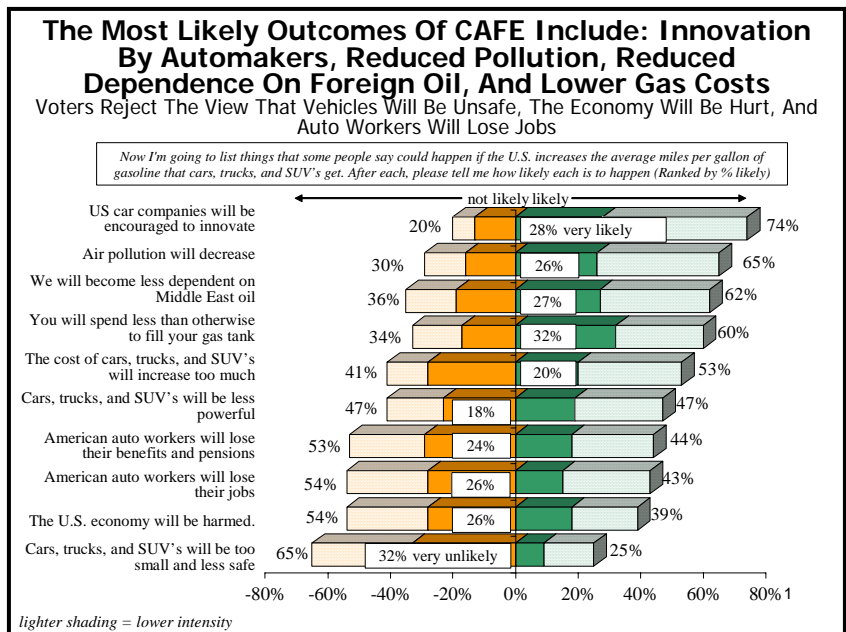
We presented voters with the core arguments on both sides of the issue and still found more than seven-in-ten supporting higher fuel economy standards. Respondents heard a message from opponents arguing that higher standards would help foreign automakers at the expense of American companies, cost America jobs, deprive autoworkers of retirement benefits, result in unsafe cars, increase costs, and take needed vehicles off the market. Even in the face of this reputedly strong argument, 71% still support requiring automakers to meet higher CAFE standards.



As the chart above reveals, 70% of SUV owners and three-quarters (75%) of pick-up truck owners support increased standards. They are joined by 68% of the union households in Michigan’s 15th Congressional District in continuing to support increasing fuel efficiency standards.

Voters Do Not Believe, Or Are Not Persuaded By, Industry Arguments Against CAFE, But Do See Substantial Benefits

We carefully probed voters’ expectations as to the impact of higher fuel economy standards. They believe stricter standards would result in less pollution (65% “likely”), reduced dependence on foreign oil (62% “likely”), and less spending on gasoline (60% “likely”). At the same time they reject opponents’ arguments suggesting that increased standards will harm the U.S. auto industry. In fact quite the opposite—in the auto industry’s home CD, 74% believe that higher fuel efficiency standards will encourage U.S. car companies to innovate, increasing their sales and



protecting the jobs of American auto workers – making it the single most likely outcome of stricter CAFE standards in the mind of local voters.

Moreover, these benefits are quite important to voters. We asked respondents to indicate how good or bad possible outcomes of improved fuel efficiency standards would be, using a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 was “one of the worst things that could happen” and 10 was “one of the best things that could happen.” Reduced dependence on foreign oil (average rating 8.4 out of 10), lower gas costs (8.2), less pollution (8.1), and encouraging U.S. companies to innovate (7.8) are viewed as the most important outcomes.

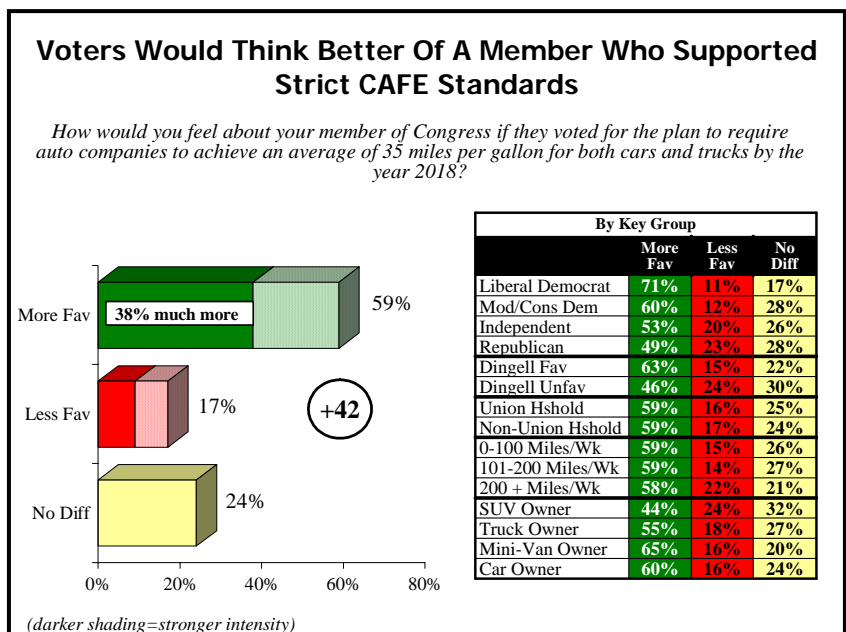
At the same time, opposition messages lack basic credibility. Few believe that “the U.S. economy will be harmed” (54% *unlikely*) if tougher standards are passed. Most also reject as not credible the arguments that automobiles will be “too small and less safe” (65% *unlikely*) or “American auto workers will lose their jobs” (54% *unlikely*) as a result of higher fuel economy standards. While a majority of voters do believe that cost will increase (53% *likely*), higher cost is not deemed a particularly bad outcome, garnering an average 3.6 rating on the 0 to 10 scale described above.

Adopting A Strict CAFE Standard Would Be An Important Accomplishment That Voters Say Would Improve Their View Of Congress And Of Their Member Of Congress

Passing energy legislation that increases fuel economy standards and invests in alternative energy would be an important accomplishment by Congress in the eyes of voters. Over three-quarters (76%) said that Congress will have accomplished something important if it were to pass this legislation, including 53% who said they felt that way *strongly*. Less than one-fifth (19%) said that Congress will not have accomplished something important. Voters of both parties (85% of Democrats and 66% of Republicans) and 71% of independents would give credit to Congress for this accomplishment.

Voters say they would hold both Congress and Members who vote for increased standards in higher regard. Sixty-four percent (64%) said that they would have a more favorable view of Congress should it pass increased fuel efficiency standards, while only 9% said they would hold a less favorable view.

Moreover, as the chart to the right illustrates, voters in the 15th CD say they would reward their member of Congress if he voted to require auto companies to achieve an average of 35 miles per gallon for both cars and trucks by the year 2018. Nearly six-in-ten (59%) said they would hold a more favorable opinion of their Congressman if he voted for the legislation. Over one-third (38%) said they would hold a *much more* favorable view of their Member as a result of an affirmative vote. There is little downside to voting for these provisions as less than one-fifth (17%) say they would hold a less favorable opinion of their Member if they supported this legislation.



Voters in Michigan's 15th Congressional District clearly understand the important impact of raising fuel economy standards. They look forward to spending less at the pump, decreasing our dependence on foreign oil, cleaner air, and innovation from American car companies as results of increased fuel efficiency standards. They want their member of Congress to vote for the increased standards and will look more favorably upon him if he does. Voters interpret a vote against stricter standards as a vote against America's national security, economic and environmental imperatives, not as an effort to protect their interests as workers or drivers.