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CARDIN PRAISES OBAMA PROPOSAL FOR HIGHER FUEL ECONOMY, CUTS TO HARMFUL EMISSIONS

Final target equal to standard Maryland was ready to adopt

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, today commended President Obama for proposing historic standards for cutting greenhouse gas emissions from cars and trucks. The new national standard would match the final goal of what has become known as the “California Waiver,” which would have allowed states like Maryland to adopt major pollution reduction measures that would reduce harmful emissions by 30% in all vehicles sold by 2016 as well as provide major reductions in summertime smog.

“President Obama rightly continues to follow a path that values science above politics to protect the health and welfare of all Americans and our environment,” **said Senator Cardin.** “The connection between global warming and greenhouse gas emissions is well documented so the announcement today of new national standards for car emissions is welcome news for Maryland and more than a dozen other states like California that had lobbied for such changes.

“Marylanders and all Americans have a right to clean air. Cars that will meet the new greenhouse gas standards will help clear our air of pollutants that contribute to smog. In Maryland, mobile sources are not only the leading cause of smog but are also one of the leading causes of greenhouse gas emissions. We have some of the worst smog in the nation, and during ‘Code Red’ days, more than 70 percent of the pollution comes from cars and light trucks.”

The Obama Administration is proposing tough new fuel economy standards and the first ever greenhouse gas pollution standards for cars. The program will begin in model year 2012. By 2016 the fleet average will be 35.5 miles per gallon, which is four years earlier than the CAFE law requires. The current CAFE law required a 35 miles per gallon in model year 2020.

Senator Cardin and a bipartisan group of senators sent a letter to President-Elect Obama in December urging him to move swiftly to fulfill his campaign promise allowing Maryland, California and other states to cut dangerous emissions from cars and trucks beyond federal levels in an effort to reduce global warming.

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