



[23 States Sue the Trump Administration Over Auto Emissions Rules](#)

California and 22 other states are suing the Trump administration to block them from undoing the state's authority to set its own vehicle emissions standards. The full list of states joining California in the lawsuit are: Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. The cities of New York, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C. have also joined the lawsuit as well. California adopted a new set of emissions standards back in 2012 that state officials say will cut down on 25.2 million metric tons of pollution per year by 2030. However, under Trump, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set out to roll back several of the environmental rules put in place under the previous administration in areas like fuel economy standards, methane emissions, and air pollution.

While federal law sets standards for how much pollution can come from cars and trucks, California and 13 other states (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington) have been given permission, since the 1970s, to set their own rules because of a higher volume of automobiles on the road and struggles to meet air quality standards. The federal government has never before revoked one of these exemptions but last Thursday, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) withdrew this waiver. Despite the fact that this action does not technically go into effect for 60 days, state leaders in California and the other aforementioned states did not wait to delay the filing of a lawsuit. In it, they argue that the Trump administration unlawfully removed the waiver granted under the Clean Air Act and that their decision to do so exceeds the NHTSA's authority. The official wording from the lawsuit states that the waiver's withdrawal "exceeds NHTSA's authority, contravenes Congressional intent, and is arbitrary and capricious." California Governor Gavin Newsom, who has clashed with Trump's administration before, released a statement last week as well which vowed that the state "will hold the line in court to defend our children's health, save consumers money at the pump, and protect our environment."

This is not the first instance of a fight over climate policy between the Trump administration and the state of California. Earlier this month, the Department of Justice launched an antitrust investigation into a July deal between California and the four major automakers of Ford, Honda, Volkswagen, and BMW. Under that agreement, the car companies stated that they'd produce passenger vehicles which average 51 miles per gallon by model year 2026 – a timeline which conforms with regulations that were set by the Obama administration. Additionally, last year, California led 17 states and Washington D.C. in suing the EPA over the rollback of emissions standards. At that time, California's waiver was still in place but the EPA did indicate that it planned to withdraw it.

The current lawsuit marks the latest chapter in this ongoing battle regarding environmental policy, and it surely will not be the last one related to this critical contemporary issue.