

June 10, 2003

Mr. Rae Tyson
Chief, Media Relations Division
Office of Communications and Consumer Information
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Room 5236
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Tyson:

I am taking this opportunity to introduce you to the Center for Regulatory Effectiveness (CRE) and our cyber-coalition of light truck stakeholders, the Grassroots Network. A cyber-coalition is an *ad hoc* group of stakeholders organized through the internet around a common interest, in this case the regulation of SUVs, pickup trucks, and other light trucks. Our website, www.FuelEconomyIn.US, was established by CRE to serve not only as a focal point for the cyber-coalition but also as a regularly updated e-media publication for all interested persons. [FuelEconomyIn.US](http://www.FuelEconomyIn.US) features commentary from our Grassroots Network members as well as CRE's analyses of key SUV-related regulatory issues and other materials.

The CRE was established in 1996 by former senior career officials from the White House Office of Management and Budget to support improving the effectiveness of the regulatory process. Our anchor site, TheCRE.com, is the internet's most widely read regulatory website. For more information about the CRE, please see, CRE In The News, www.TheCRE.com/news.html.

The Grassroots Network

CRE's Grassroots Network members hold diverse views on CAFE and other light truck issues. What unites the cyber-coalition is their interest in participating in the public policy process. The Grassroots Network is a communications channel that allows our members a means of making their views known to policy officials, inside and outside of specific rulemakings. Of particular importance to NHTSA, the Grassroots Network provides the agency with a ready means of engaging in a dialog with light truck grassroots stakeholders across the country. CRE's role is to facilitate the dialog between NHTSA and the stakeholders as well as to provide an internet-based communications channel on light truck issues to all interested persons.

FuelEconomyIn.US: Committed to Substantive Dialog

FuelEconomyIn.US is guided by two primary principles; engaging in substantive dialog, and representing diverse viewpoints. As an example of our principles in action, please see the attached letters from two members of our Grassroots Network. These letters also illustrate the quality of debate and diversity of views supported by our website. Additional comments and analyses may be found on www.FuelEconomyIn.US.

CRE will be providing NHTSA with the questions, comments, and concerns of raised by members of the cyber-coalition. We will be publishing these comments, and NHTSA's response, on FuelEconomyIn.US for the benefit of both Grassroots Network members and our wider readership.

The Grassroots Network Can Help NHTSA Achieve Goals in DOT's Performance Plan

DOT's FY 2004 Performance Plan contains a number of important goals relevant to our members. For example, the Plan goes into significant detail discussing the Department's commitment to Data Quality. The Performance Plan lists one of the Secretary's "Key 2004 Initiatives" as being "Ensure that DOT organizations maintain a basic standard of quality on all publicly disseminated information by reducing the number of legitimate correction requests from the FY 2003 baseline." DOT has already established Data Quality guidelines which provide detailed procedures and standards for NHTSA and other DOT organizations to use in achieving data quality goals.

The pre-dissemination review process discussed DOT's Data Quality guidelines is essential for ensuring that quality of information disseminated by DOT. The first step in the process includes, "Consult with others, e.g., ... the public... that have a substantial interest in the proposed dissemination of the information." The Grassroots Network are members of the public with a substantial interest in regulatory issues affecting SUVs and other light trucks. By engaging in dialog on with the Grassroots Network, NHTSA will help fulfill its consultation commitment.

FuelEconomyIn.US is also well positioned to assist NHTSA in achieving other performance goals, including those directly linked to increasing highway safety. The FY '04 Performance Plan, in explaining education and outreach activities, discusses a number of issues that NHTSA will focus on to improve public safety ranging from publicizing the dangers of drunk and impaired driving to the benefits of using safety belts to educational programs and materials for older drivers. Therefore, as a service to our readers, FuelEconomyIn.US will make available space on our website for NHTSA's use in publicizing various safety messages and materials. We look forward to working with NHTSA in additional ways to enhance the safety of our nation's highways.

Next Steps

FuelEconomyIn.US looks forward to working with NHTSA in ventilating the various public policy issues related to the current and future regulation of light trucks and to helping the agency publicize important safety messages. We are currently in the process of polling our membership on the key issues in which they are interested. When this process is complete, we will forward this

list to you so that we can obtain NHTSA's views and provide them to our members. In the mean time, I would appreciate your sending us web-ready materials on a safety issue of your choice. We will post the initial materials on our website will add additional NHTSA materials on a regular basis.

Sincerely,

Bruce Levinson
Director, Fuel Economy Program

Attachments