



**TO:** Ceres  
**FROM:** The Mellman Group, Inc.  
**RE:** Michigan Voters Overwhelmingly Support Higher Fuel Efficiency Standards  
**DATE:** May 17, 2011

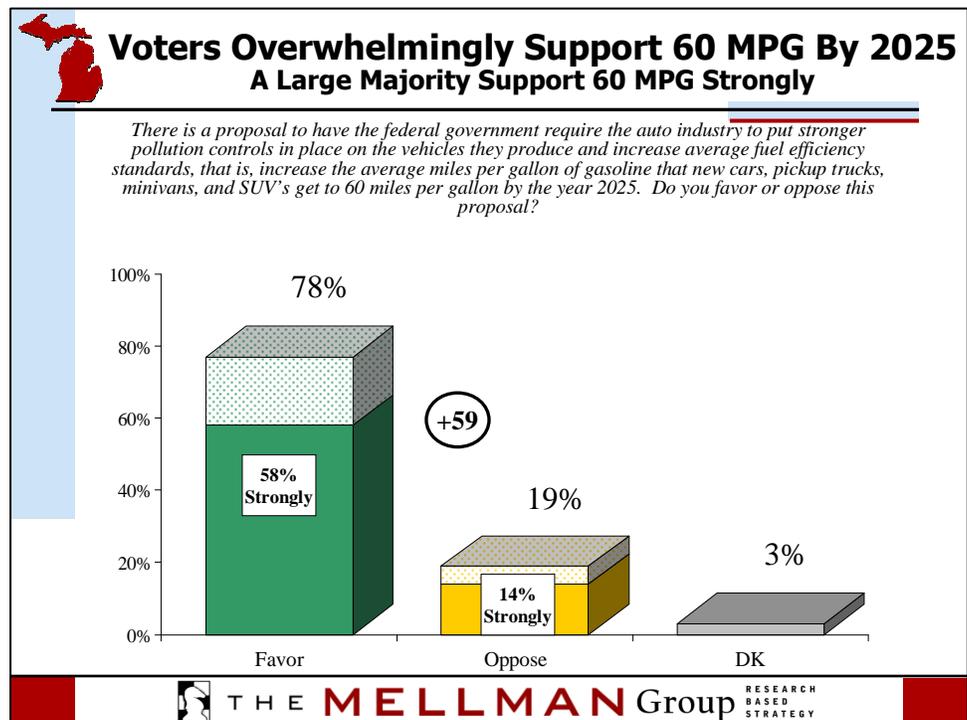
*This analysis represents the findings of a statewide survey of 800 likely 2012 Michigan general election voters. Interviews were conducted April 10-12, 2011 by telephone using a registration-based sample. The margin of error for this survey is +/-3.5% at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error is higher for subgroups.*

Michigan voters strongly support requiring the auto industry to both increase the average fuel efficiency standard to 60 miles per gallon and reduce carbon dioxide emissions from cars, pickup trucks, minivans, and SUVs. Support for increased fuel efficiency is robust because voters believe achieving this standard is possible without undue cost and because they see increased efficiency as bringing along with it a variety of valuable benefits, including more jobs, less pollution, lower fuel costs, and reduced dependence on Middle East oil. At the same time, voters reject the view that higher fuel efficiency standards will hurt auto companies and cost jobs, believing just the opposite—that stricter standards would spur innovation on the part of American automakers and create jobs in the U.S.

### MICHIGAN VOTERS OVERWHELMINGLY SUPPORT A PROPOSAL TO REQUIRE A 60 MPG FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARD BY 2025 AND REQUIRE TOUGHER POLLUTION CONTROLS

Voters expressed overwhelming support for a specific proposal with two elements: stronger pollution controls on automobiles and a 60 MPG fuel economy standard by 2025 for new cars, pickup trucks, minivans, and SUVs. Over three-quarters (78%) favor this proposal and fewer than 1-in-5 (19%) oppose it.

Support is widespread, and bipartisan, extending to those in affected industries. Ninety-seven percent (91%) of Democrats join 72% of independents and



65% of Republicans in supporting this proposal. Those who live in households dependent on manufacturing generally, and the automobile industry specifically, respond much like everyone else, with 72% of voters in manufacturing households favoring the 60 MPG standard (27% opposed) along with 68% of those whose income is dependent on the auto industry (29% opposed) and 74% of voters in UAW households (26% opposed).

**FEW ARE DISSUADED BY SUGGESTIONS OF HIGHER COST**

Support for higher fuel standards is quite robust, with a majority continuing to support the proposal even when told it would add \$3,200 to the price of a new car. We asked voters which of the following two statements comes closer to their own point of view:

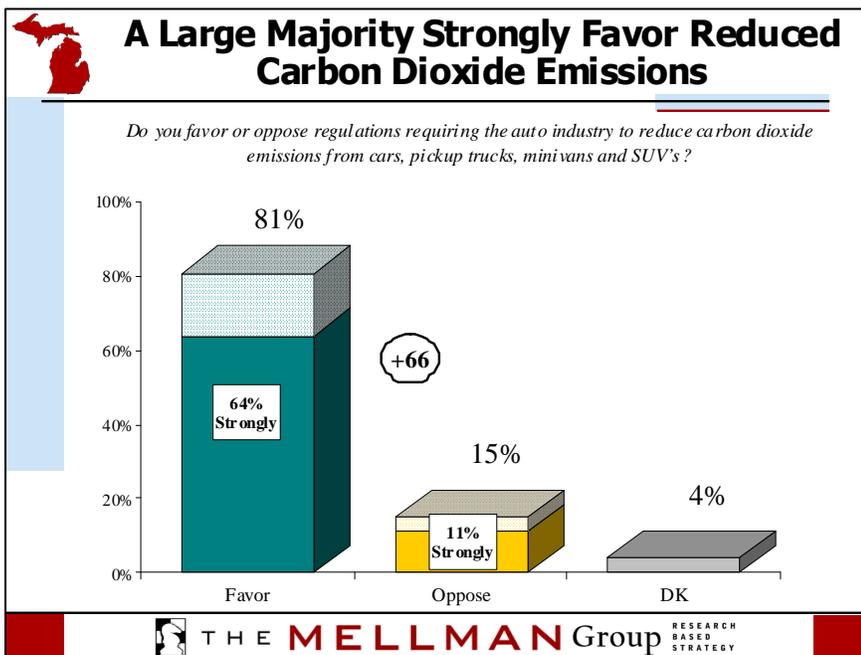
*Increasing average fuel efficiency standards to 60 miles per gallon will add \$3,200 to the price of a new car. That is simply too expensive for hard pressed working people.*

OR

*Increasing average fuel efficiency standards to 60 miles per gallon will increase the price of a new car at first, but as with most new technologies like computers and DVD players, the price will then fall significantly and the greater fuel efficiency will save enough money on gas to pay for the increase within four years.*

A 56% majority side with the second statement above, which says prices will fall and the increase in the price of a new car pay will for itself in fuel expense savings, while only 37% say the higher price will be too expensive (7% don't know).

**MICHIGANIANS STRONGLY SUPPORT MANDATING REDUCED CARBON EMISSIONS**



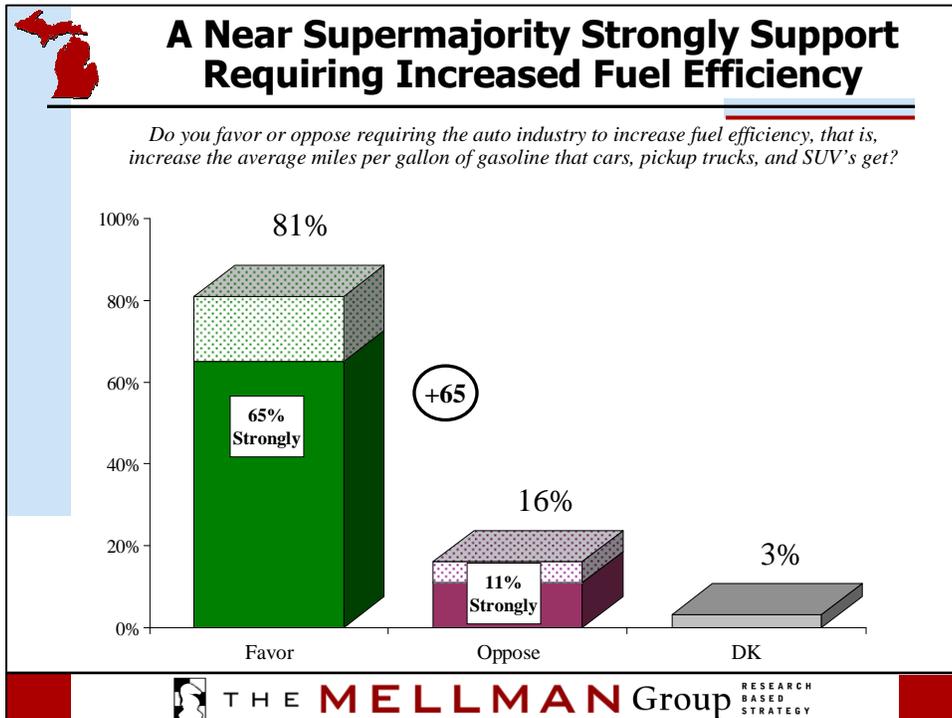
Looking at the elements of the proposal separately reveals that each enjoys vast support. An 81% majority favor requiring the auto industry to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from cars, pickup trucks, minivans, and SUV's (64% strongly favor), compared to just 15% who are opposed<sup>1</sup>. Support for requiring emission reductions cuts across demographic lines. Ninety-four percent (94%) of Democrats favor requiring reduced carbon emissions, along with more than three-quarters (76%) of independents, and over two-thirds (70%) of Republicans. Support for reduced carbon emissions from vehicles extends to

<sup>1</sup> "Do you favor or oppose regulations requiring the auto industry to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from cars, pickup trucks, minivans, and SUV's?"

every region of the state as well, with 82% in the Detroit area, 81% in the Grand Rapids region, 77% in the Flint/Saginaw region, and 82% in the rest of the state, all favoring requiring the emissions reductions.

Those dependent on manufacturing and the automobile industry join in supporting reduced emissions in overwhelming numbers, with 77% of manufacturing household voters favoring reduced emissions (21% oppose), 76% of auto industry household voters (21% oppose), and 74% of UAW household voters (24% oppose) in favor as well.

**VOTERS OVERWHELMINGLY DEMAND TOUGHER FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS**



A similarly vast majority (81%) favor requiring the auto industry to increase fuel efficiency for cars, pickups, and SUVs, while only 16% are opposed. There is a clear intensity to these views as well, with nearly two-thirds (65%) *strongly* favoring required increases in fuel efficiency, while only 11% are strongly opposed.

Strong support is both deep and wide. Overwhelming majorities of every demographic subgroup strongly support tougher fuel efficiency standards.

Support for stricter fuel efficiency standards is bipartisan, with 92% of Democrats, 77% of independents, and 71% of Republicans all in agreement on tougher fuel efficiency standards. Similarly, voters in every region of the state concur, with 82% in the Detroit area, 82% in the Grand Rapids region, 73% in the Flint/Saginaw region, and 83% in the rest of the state all supporting stricter standards. Once again, overwhelming numbers of voters in households dependent on affected industries join in supporting reduced emissions, with 80% of manufacturing household voters favoring a requirement for lower emissions (18% oppose), 78% of auto industry household voters (20% oppose), and 79% of UAW household voters (18% oppose) in favor as well.

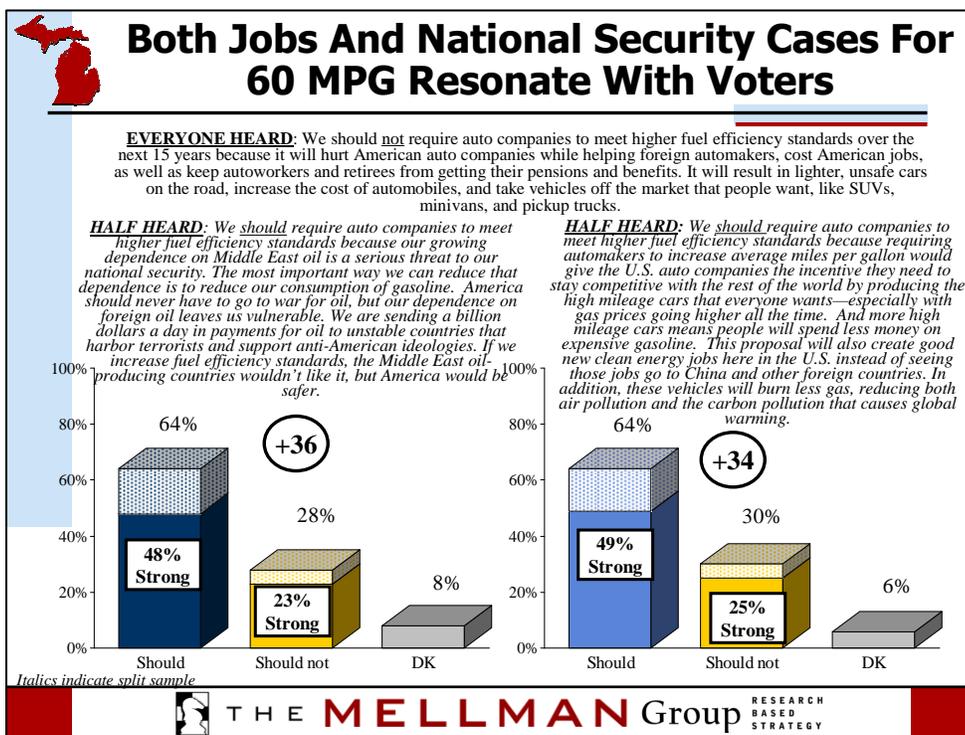
What's more, voters see this as a critical issue. A huge 87% majority believe that it is "important to take action now" to increase fuel efficiency, including nearly two-thirds (62%) who say it is "very important" to take action now.

**MICHIGANIANS BELIEVE TOUGHER FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS WILL LEAD TO A VARIETY OF POSITIVE OUTCOMES, INCLUDING INCREASED INNOVATION, LOWER FUEL COSTS, MORE JOBS, AND LESS POLLUTION**

Voters believe tougher fuel efficiency standards will be good for their pocketbooks, their country, the environment, and the economy as a whole. They judge the most likely outcomes of increased fuel efficiency standards to be that "American car companies will be encouraged to innovate, increasing their sales and protecting the jobs of American auto workers" (76% likely), followed by "You will use less gasoline and spend less money on gas" (75% likely), "Air pollution will decrease" (74% likely), and "The U.S. will become less dependent on Middle East oil" (74% likely).

Nearly half the electorate (46%) believes "Efforts to increase average miles per gallon for new cars, pickup trucks, minivans, and SUV's will create new American jobs." Fewer than 1-in-4 (22%) say it will cost jobs, and 23% say it will not affect American jobs.

**WHETHER ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR ARE FRAMED IN TERMS OF NATIONAL SECURITY OR JOBS, LARGE MAJORITIES SUPPORT HIGHER FUEL EFFICIENCY EVEN AFTER A STRONGLY WORDED STATEMENT OPPOSING THEM**



Every respondent heard a strongly worded message from opponents arguing that higher fuel efficiency standards would hurt American businesses, cost jobs, and reduce vehicle safety, while constraining consumers' choices. We randomly split survey respondents in half, and exposed each half to a different counter-argument, one of which was couched in terms of benefits to national security and the other in terms of jobs. Large majorities side with the pro-fuel efficiency position in either

formulation. Sixty-four percent (64%) said the jobs version of the pro-efficiency argument was closer to their own view, compared to just 30% who sided with opponents. Similarly, by 64% to 28%, voters chose the national security version of the pro-efficiency argument over a counterargument.

In short, support for a 60 mile per gallon fuel economy standard is overwhelming, strong, robust, and extends across the political spectrum, as voters see economic and national security rationales for such a policy. Because they believe this policy will create jobs, reduce pollution, and increase national security, that support remains strong even when the costs are noted.