September 20, 2017

Hon. Thad Cochran, Chairman
Hon. Patrick J. Leahy, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. John R. Thune, Chairman
Hon. Bill Nelson, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
512 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Hon. Susan M. Collins, Chairman
Hon. Jack F. Reed, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Chairman Thune, Chairman Collins, Ranking Member Leahy, Ranking Member Nelson, and Ranking Member Reed:

Consumers Union, the policy and mobilization division of Consumer Reports, writes to urge you to authorize and appropriate additional funds to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to make fuel economy, emissions, and fuel cost information publicly available for heavy-duty pickup trucks.

Based on new data from testing at Consumer Reports,¹ these heavy-duty diesel pickups cost about $35,000 to fuel over the first 15 years of the vehicles’ lives.² Further, they can cost $7,000 to $10,000 more to fuel than their light-duty gasoline counterparts over that same time.² Without information like this, consumers are powerless to make informed decisions when shopping for these vehicles for their businesses or family.

While new light-duty trucks and passenger vehicles carry window sticker labels that display important consumer information about the vehicle’s fuel economy, emissions, and expected average fuel costs, no such label is available for heavy-duty pickup trucks. Further, consumers can easily find light-duty vehicle fuel economy information online at fueleconomy.gov thanks to the public availability of the information. Easy access to information NHTSA and EPA already

² See Attachment A for details and methodology.
have for heavy-duty pickups would empower consumers to consider the cost of fueling their vehicles alongside other attributes. It would also encourage competition on fuel economy among automakers.

When I was the Deputy and Acting Administrator of NHTSA, I recognized the value of public fuel economy information and the benefits it would provide in the heavy-duty truck market, which covers annual sales of hundreds of thousands of vehicles. However, when we were looking to fulfill NHTSA and EPA’s intention to consider consumer information as we developed the next round of standards, there was insufficient funding at the agency to dedicate the staff and resources needed.

As NHTSA continues to work on fuel economy standards for light-duty vehicles for MY 2022-2025, which are very important to consumers, resources for expanding public availability of the data likely remain tight. We therefore encourage the authorizing and appropriating committees to dedicate sufficient new funding to NHTSA and EPA programs with the express purpose of making fuel economy information for heavy-duty pickup trucks publically available and more accurate, first through fueleconomy.gov and then through a label affixed to the window. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Friedman
Director of Cars and Product Policy and Analysis
Consumers Union
202-462-6262

cc:
Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transporation
Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works

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5 Consumer Reports’ June 2017 public survey show that 73% of the American public support the U.S. government setting strong fuel economy standards and enforcing them.
## Attachment A: Fuel Economy Results and Fuel Cost Estimates
Based on Consumer Reports’ Testing Data

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7 Assuming $2.50 per gallon of diesel and $2.40 per gallon of regular unleaded gasoline.

8 Assuming nearly 174,000 miles over the first 15 years of ownership, based on vehicle miles traveled data from Figure VI-6 in Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Fuel Efficiency Standards for Medium- and Heavy-Duty Engines and Vehicles—Phase 2, published in Federal Register Vol. 81, No. 206, Tuesday, October 25, 2016, Page 73764. Assumes a 3% real discount rate consistent with a 5% new car loan and 2% inflation. Diesel and gasoline prices based on EIA’s Annual Energy Outlook available at [https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/](https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/) as of 9/18/2017 (EIA forecasts that, over the next 15 years, diesel prices will vary from $2.90-$3.86 and gasoline prices will vary from $2.26-$3.11). Fuel expenses while towing or carrying a payload will likely be higher than indicated by CR’s tests, while the cost differential will vary depending on the vehicle.
Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Chairman Walden, Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member Lowey, Ranking Member Pallone, and Ranking Member DeFazio:

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