

# Nancy Johnson



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## Johnson Introduces Bipartisan “Fuel Efficiency Truth-in-Advertising Act”

*Requires EPA to Update 30-year-old Gas Mileage Tests*

**AAA, Union of Concerned Scientists, Sierra Club Endorsed**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – With government and auto industry experts saying the gas mileage rates on car window stickers are overblown by as much as 30 percent, Congresswoman Nancy Johnson today introduced bipartisan legislation requiring the government to update its 30-year-old gas mileage tests.

Johnson’s “Fuel Efficiency Truth-in-Advertising Act” requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to update its fuel economy testing procedures to reflect today’s “real life” circumstances.

The bill has received the strong backing of AAA (the American Automobile Association) and its 47 million members nationwide, as well as other scientific, consumer and environmental groups including the Union of Concerned Scientists and the Sierra Club.

The bill does not require any action on the part of auto manufacturers or dealers. Nor does it alter or change Corporate Average Fuel Economy requirements. The bill is aimed exclusively at providing consumers and motorists with accurate information about their car’s gas mileage, Johnson said.

**“America’s car buyers deserve truth-in-advertising when they buy a new car,”** said Johnson, who introduced the bill with Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ) and over two dozen bipartisan co-sponsors. **“The current EPA tests clearly mislead car buyers. Car buyers think they’re getting better mileage on the road and a better deal at the pump than they really are. This common-sense bill requires the EPA to update its 30-year-old tests to reflect today’s driving conditions.”**

The tests used by the EPA to measure fuel economy - the city/highway gas mileage figures that appear on a new car’s sticker - are 30-years-old and are based on car technology from the late 1970s and 1980s. According to government and auto industry experts, the tests produce

gas mileage rates that are inflated from anywhere between 10% and 30%. The inflated rates mislead consumers into thinking they are getting better mileage on the road, and a better deal at the gas pump, than they really are.

**“Consumers who want to be ‘greener’ drivers should expect accurate miles per-gallon for their investment,”** said Chris Plaushin, AAA’s Manager of Regulatory Affairs.  
**“Congresswoman Johnson’s leadership on this important legislation is a strong step in that direction.”**

AAA’s own data show the EPA figures consistently underestimate gas mileage figures. For example, the 2003 Dodge Neon gets 31 miles-per-gallon in combined city-highway driving according to the EPA; AAA’s figures say it really gets 24 miles-per-gallon – a 23 percent difference.

The government itself admits its gas mileage figures are overblown. The Energy Department’s Energy Information Administration attributes the “difference between EPA fuel economy ratings and actual on-road fuel economy” to “increased urbanization, higher speed limits in non-urban areas, and increased traffic congestion in recent years.”

For example, the EPA tests ignore higher speed limits today. The current highway test is based on an average speed of 48 mph and a maximum speed of 60 mph. Since the test was created 30 years ago, highway speed limits have risen from 55 mph to 65 mph, and in some cases even higher. Higher speed increases wind resistance and reduces fuel efficiency.

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The bill has received strong, broad-based support from advocates for auto owners, consumers and the environment.

**“Today’s 30-year-old tests are outdated and inaccurate. It is just common sense to update the tests to reflect today’s driving patterns, conditions and technology,”** said David Friedman, Research Director for the Union of Concerned Scientists Clean Vehicles Program.  
**“We want to congratulate Representatives Johnson, Holt and their co-sponsors on putting forward a simple solution to ensure that consumers are provided with the best information for making informed, environmentally responsible vehicle purchase decisions.”**

**“From the food we eat, to the medicine we take, Americans expect that the products we buy are labeled correctly. We expect the same when buying a car, but sadly, that’s not the case,”** said Brendan Bell, Associate Washington Representative in the Sierra Club’s Global Warming Program. **“We applaud Rep. Johnson for introducing legislation to fix this problem because it is important for car buyers to have accurate information so they can choose a vehicle that goes farther on a gallon of gas to protect the environment and save money at the gas pump.”**

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