

Fact Sheet: Legal

Final Rule: Rescission of the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding and Motor Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emission Standards Under the Clean Air Act

Summary of Action

- On February 12, 2026, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lee Zeldin, alongside President Trump, finalized the single largest deregulatory action in U.S. history by rescinding the 2009 Obama-era Endangerment Finding and eliminating all subsequent federal greenhouse gas (GHG) emission standards for motor vehicles and engines.
- The Endangerment Finding was the basis for all EPA's GHG regulations for new motor vehicles and engines.
- As a result of today's action, engine and vehicle manufacturers will no longer have any future obligations for the measurement, control, and reporting of GHG emissions for any highway engine and vehicle, including model years manufactured prior to this final rule.
- This final action will save Americans over \$1.3 trillion in vehicle costs.
- This final action is only related to GHG emissions and does not affect regulations on any traditional air pollutants.

Legal Authority

- In 2009, the Obama EPA issued the Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act (Endangerment Finding), determining that emissions of GHGs from new motor vehicles and engines contribute to air pollution that may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health and welfare under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act (CAA).
- In the years following, the Endangerment Finding was the legal prerequisite for many GHG vehicle regulations for cars, trucks, and certain categories of engines, including the Biden Administration's push towards an electric vehicle mandate.
- As directed on day one in Executive Order 14154 by President Trump, Administrator Zeldin initiated a review of the legality and applicability of the Endangerment Finding. On February 19, 2025, the Administrator recommended EPA reconsider the Endangerment Finding to address developments that appear to undermine the bases for the Endangerment Finding and subsequent EPA regulations.
- In this rulemaking, EPA carefully considered and reevaluated the legal foundation of the 2009 Endangerment Finding, the text of the CAA, and the Endangerment Finding's legality in light of subsequent legal developments and court decisions.
- The agency concludes that Section 202(a) of the CAA does not provide EPA statutory authority to prescribe motor vehicle emission standards for the purpose of addressing global climate change concerns. In the absence of such authority, the Endangerment Finding is not valid, and EPA cannot retain the regulations that resulted from it.
- EPA also separately concludes that its regulations have not and cannot have any material impact on global climate change concerns, rendering them futile and providing another basis for today's action.
- EPA is bound by the laws established by Congress, including under the CAA. Congress never intended to give EPA authority to impose GHG regulations for cars and trucks.

Legal Background

- The Supreme Court never reviewed the 2009 Endangerment Finding made by EPA.
- The Supreme Court decided in *Massachusetts v. EPA* (2007) that GHGs are “air pollutants” under Section 302(g) of the Clean Air Act but did not require EPA to make an endangerment finding and did not address the logic or conclusions on which EPA would later base its 2009 Endangerment Finding.
- Since *Massachusetts v. EPA*, the Supreme Court overturned various GHG regulations issued by EPA under the Clean Air Act, as seen in *UARG v. EPA* and *West Virginia v. EPA*.
- Additionally, since *Massachusetts*, the Supreme Court made major changes in the doctrine of administrative law, including announcing the major questions doctrine in *West Virginia* and overruling the doctrine of *Chevron* deference in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*.