



**October 21, 2009**

**The Global Warming Task Force:  
A Special Series of Hot Air Reports – Part 5  
*Curb Your Transportation***

In last week's report we discussed the E85 recommendations included in Governor Doyle's Global Warming Task Force Report. In addition to more E85, the Task Force has several other outrageous transportation proposals, and this week I will cover three more of them.

**Speed Reductions**

The Task Force wants a "strict enforcement" of the 65 mph speed limit. They estimate the average highway speed in Wisconsin is 69.4 mph. The Task Force also recommends studying future speed limit reductions. In fact, they estimate a strict enforcement of 55 mph would reduce CO2 emissions by 570,000 metric tons annually.

The proposal also recommends "support and recognition" for voluntary measures towards reducing speeds, but gives few details. Does "support" include tax dollars? Could "recognition" be a taxpayer-funded endorsement or advertisement on behalf of a company?

What could slow this proposal down? The Task Force states: "*Public resistance to lower speeds on interstate and divided lane highways. Time delays and inconvenience are anticipated to be significant complaints.*" (p. 140) This could be one of the Task Force's most insightful statements! Unfortunately they forgot to mention anger over thousands of new fines for traveling 1 - 4 mph over the speed limit.

**Adopt California Vehicle Emission Standards**

The federal government already has fuel economy regulations for vehicles sold in the United States. The Task Force believes these are not enough and wants Wisconsin to adopt California's costly vehicle emission standards. The proposal also would have Wisconsin adopt any future changes that California makes to its emission standards.

The Task Force estimates adopting the California standards would increase vehicle prices \$790 by 2016. The auto industry disagrees. The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers estimates vehicle prices would actually increase \$3,000 by 2016. Which do you believe?

And what could the benefit be for our state to adopt California's current standards? As you turn up your car heater extra early this fall, ask yourself if you want to pay \$3,000 more for your next vehicle, just to try to make Wisconsin even colder.

### **Low Carbon Fuel Standard**

*"The net cost is difficult to determine. It will depend on the future cost of petroleum, improvements in refining technology..." "Any increase in fuel costs would be paid by all consumers." (p. 145)* So the costs of the Task Force recommendations keep adding up. Additional tickets for the speed reduction recommendations, higher prices for automobiles and higher gas prices to fuel your car.

So what does this proposal do? Fuel providers would be required to sell fuels that release less carbon emissions. The goal is to get fuel markets to develop low carbon fuels, or "*decarbonized fuels.*" The Task Force doesn't give an exact level for the low carbon fuel standard, but recommends a 10% - 20% emission reduction in our transportation fuels.

How will this goal be achieved? The Task Force says fuel providers should blend more ethanol and biodiesel into their products, and improve their exploration, processing and distribution efficiency. Also, fuel providers should use "*strategies yet to be developed.*" I think that means they don't know.

The second part of this recommendation is a cap and trade compliance program for fuel providers. Fuel providers would have to prove they meet the low carbon fuel standard each year. Failure to meet the mandate would result in fines or a requirement to purchase credits from other fuel providers or electric utilities.

Will these transportation proposals be included in the Democrat's upcoming global warming bill? It's too early to tell. However, a lobby organization that had a representative on the Task Force released their fall newsletter last week. The newsletter stated that Senators Miller and Plale and Representatives Black and Soletski are currently drafting legislation based on the Task Force recommendations. They expect the legislation will be introduced sometime this fall.

Access all my reports online, at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm23/news/media.htm>.

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