GM abandons Trump’s war against California’s pollution powers



General Motors announced today that it is abandoning Donald Trump’s effort to take away California’s ability to set fuel efficiency standards. The company, along with Fiat Chrysler and Toyota, previously backed Trump’s efforts to roll back fuel efficiency standards.

Under the Clean Air Act, California has historically been allowed to set its own emissions standards, which are tougher than federal guidelines and typically set the bar for the entire auto industry in the US. California is the largest auto market in the US and the 10th largest in the world.

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GM is now aligning itself with President-elect Joe Biden’s plans to hasten a transition to electric vehicles in an effort to combat climate change.

“We are confident that the Biden Administration, California, and the U.S. auto industry, which supports 10.3 million jobs, can collaboratively find the pathway that will deliver an all-electric future,” GM CEO Mary Barra wrote in a letter to environmental groups today that was shared with *The Verge*. “To better foster the necessary dialogue, we are immediately withdrawing from the pre-emption litigation and inviting other automakers to join us.”

Last week, GM pledged to boost spending on the development of its electric vehicles. The company said that it would launch 30 new electric vehicles by 2025.

In March 2020, Trump rolled back an Obama-era plan to put more fuel-efficient vehicles on the roads. Nearly two dozen states sued the Trump administration in response. Even other car companies balked at the administration’s attempt to roll back the fuel efficiency mandate. While GM and a few others supported Trump, Ford, Volkswagen, Honda, and BMW all sided with California.

Andrew Hawkins contributed to this report.

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