



Racing to Regulate: EPA's Latest Overreach on Amateur Drivers

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of the House Science Committee**

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Chairman Loudermilk, Ranking Member Beyer, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me here today to speak to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent proposal to prohibit the modification of street vehicles into race-use-only vehicles. Over the past 28 years, I have built a career around the exciting sport of auto racing. I am currently one of the owners and President of National Speed Sport News, a publication that dates back to 1934. I have also spent much of my career as a broadcaster of motorsports on national television for a wide variety of networks, including FOX, CBS, NBC and ESPN, and countless radio networks. On any given weekend, you can find me calling the action live on TV from racetracks across the country, so I am in a unique position to speak to the impact this regulatory proposal would have on the motorsports community.

For me it began at the age of five. My parents took me to my first race at the old fairgrounds mile in Sacramento, California. Legendary racers such as Mario Andretti, AJ Foyt and the famed Unser brothers were competing. I can still remember vividly to this day, my father walking me across the track at the end of the race and my shoes sticking to the dirt that they had raced on. Seeing the cars and the drivers up close, hearing the roar of the engines, and experiencing the unique smells are indelible memories. The blazing speeds and the incredible feats of bravery as these men risked it all for the glory that came with the checkered flag hooked me for life. These experiences aren't unique to me. They have been shared by millions of race fans, young and old, across our country for generations.

For years after that day, my family, like many American families, regularly attended motorsports events. It didn't matter if it was stock cars, sports cars, sprint cars or drag races. We saw it all. We enjoyed the competition and the time together at the races. My own family, my wife

Kimberly and my children Olivia and Lucas, have continued this tradition and have many wonderful memories of our time at the track with our racing family.

Nobody in my family ever became a competitor. However, I chose to make motorsports my career. For 28 years I have been a nationally recognized sportscaster broadcasting some of the biggest motorsports events in the world including the Indy 500, the Daytona 500 and the Monaco Grand Prix.

I have also dedicated a large part of my career to saving one of our sports true treasures, National Speed Sport News, which is America's oldest and most trusted brand name in motorsports journalism. Due to the passion I have for this sport and its history, Speed Sport News is now a full-fledged and thriving media company. With our wide variety of media layers that include a monthly magazine, website, social media and television shows, we cover motorsports from the very top levels all the way down to your local dirt track.

I have been blessed with an amazing career that began on that sunny autumn afternoon, when a little five year old boy passionately fell in love with a sport. At some point, every race car driver and motorsports fan had the same experience.

This proposed regulation from the EPA, however, would have kept my dream from ever becoming a reality. You see, those famous racers, Mario Andretti, AJ Foyt, Richard Petty, Dale Earnhardt and so many others like them, all began their careers in vehicles that would have been outlawed according to this regulation.

Most racers begin their careers competing in a division that utilizes a modified production vehicle. That's because it is the cheapest and most cost effective form of racing. The EPA regulation to prohibit any production vehicle from ever being converted or modified for racing use would be devastating to many types of racing, particularly racing at the amateur levels where the racers are not in a position to purchase the purpose-built race cars used in many professional series. There are over thirteen-hundred race tracks in this country, and the vast majority are not dedicated to running high-cost race cars like the well-known top divisions of NASCAR, IndyCar or the NHRA that you see on television. The famous drivers who compete in these very popular series may now drive for multi-million dollar teams in cars that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to build. However, most started their careers in converted street cars that they trailered to their local track every weekend.

For many years, the Great American Race, the Daytona 500, as well as the Greatest Spectacle in Racing, the Indy 500, utilized modified production vehicles as well. These incredible world-renowned events that are such an integral part of America's sporting landscape would have been outlawed by this proposed regulation from the EPA.

The racers who would be hit hardest by this proposal are the individuals who are just starting out in the sport and the communities that support them. Companies supplying the parts used in these amateur series, and the shops that perform the modifications, would also be out of business. These vehicles are frequently converted into track-use-only cars and rebuilt many times throughout their years spent in competition. To remove the ability to create, rebuild, improve or

service these vehicles is to take away the ability of most enthusiasts to engage in much of the racing that presently takes place in the U.S.

On Friday and Saturday nights across the country, you will encounter amateur racers and the communities that come out to support them. The impact of this regulation goes beyond the individual racers in the pits and their ability to build and service their cars, entire communities would suffer. Families, men, women and children, come out to the local racetrack on the weekend to cheer on and support their friends, neighbors and family members. Fathers, sons, mothers and daughters spend countless hours working together to get the family race car ready for the next weekend's event. Racing is a lifestyle, and in many towns across the country it is the highlight of the weekend.

Beyond this practical impact on daily lives, racing provides a significant boost to the economies of communities with motorsports businesses and racetracks. In Chairman Loudermilk's home state of Georgia, the owners of a successful high-performance parts business are enhancing the economy of southeast Georgia by creating a motorsports complex, the Georgia International Raceway Park, which is expected to bring in around \$75 million annually and more than 200 full-time and part-time jobs within a five-year span.¹ In Florida, the home state of Representative Posey and Representative Grayson, the Daytona International Speedway and the Homestead-Miami Speedway "generate an annual economic impact of over \$2.1 billion and over 35,000 permanent jobs."² In my home state of North Carolina, approximately 27,252 residents in 2005 were employed in motorsports-related jobs, including employees working for suppliers of the equipment used in racing.³ That number has almost certainly gone up in the ten-plus years since a full-scale economic impact study was completed by economists at the UNC-Charlotte.

Until this recent EPA proposal, no government entity has questioned the legality of using modified production vehicles exclusively for racing and an enormous industry has been created as a result. The EPA's proposed regulation has completely ignored the racers and the industry that supports this sport. Overnight, race car owners would no longer be able to continue to maintain their vehicles for racing use, and most of these vehicles cannot be converted back to their original configurations. It seems absurd that a federal agency could outlaw thousands of race cars and the businesses that supply products for these cars without legislative authority or justification.

On behalf of racing enthusiasts across the country and the industries that serve them, I ask for your support for H.R. 4715, the "Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act of 2016," to make clear that converting street vehicles to race cars used exclusively in competition does not violate the Clean Air Act.

¹ Tracy Renck, PSM Icon Bryce eyes new Motorsports Complex in Americus, Competition Plus (Feb. 10, 2011), available at <http://www.southgatech.edu/index.cfm?PageID=207&NewsID=199>.

² National Motorsports Coalition, Motorsports Economic Impact (October 2009), available at <http://www.internationalspeedwaycorporation.com/~media/23097C9EAF3F4423A213B8063362B400.ashx>.

³ John E. Connaughton & Ronald A. Madsen, The Economic Impacts and Occupational Analysis of the North Carolina Motorsports Industry for 2005 at 11-12 (2006), available at <http://northcarolinamotorsportsassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Economic-Impact-Study-Updated-2005.pdf>.