



Statement of Senator Tom A. Coburn, MD

Statement for the Record

March 2013

With a \$16.5 trillion dollar national debt, the federal government needs to spend taxpayer dollars more efficiently and reduce costs during these tough fiscal times.

In 2011 the federal government owned nearly 660,000 vehicles. Although the size of the fleet decreased slightly from the previous year, it had still increased significantly over the past several years. Between 2006 and 2011, the federal government fleet has grown by more than 29,000 vehicles.<sup>1</sup>

A 2012 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report examined the increase in the number of federal vehicles, excluding postal and non-tactical military vehicles. According to the study, "Since fiscal year 2005, the number of federal non-postal civilian and non-tactical military vehicles has increased about 7 percent, from about 420,000 to 449,000 vehicles."<sup>2</sup>

On February 28, 2013, I introduced bipartisan legislation that would save millions in taxpayer dollars by reducing the amount the federal government can spend on buying and leasing non-essential vehicles. In its recommendations, the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform strongly endorsed trimming the federal vehicle fleet, and estimated it would save approximately \$500 million.<sup>3</sup>

This bill would reduce by 20 percent the federal funding available for the acquisition and leasing of new federal vehicles. It would also require agencies to maintain this funding level through 2017. Like the Fiscal Commission, however, this bill exempts the U.S. Postal Service from the reduction. It also provides an exception for vehicle purchases critical for national security reasons. Similar legislation passed by voice vote in the House Representatives in September 2012.

This legislation would simply do what most American families are doing on a day to day basis. The federal government has to learn more with less.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this commonsense legislation. I want to thank my colleagues for the opportunity to speak on the Senate floor today in support of this bill and would ask my statement be submitted for the permanent record.

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<sup>1</sup> "2011 Federal Fleet Report," U.S. General Services Administration, <http://gsa.gov/portal/category/102859>

<sup>2</sup> "Overall Increase in Number of Vehicles Masks That Some Agencies Decreased Their Fleets," GAO-12-780, Aug 2, 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-780>

<sup>3</sup> "The Moment of Truth," Fiscal Commission, December 1, 2010, [http://www.fiscalcommission.gov/sites/fiscalcommission.gov/files/documents/TheMomentofTruth12\\_1\\_2010.pdf](http://www.fiscalcommission.gov/sites/fiscalcommission.gov/files/documents/TheMomentofTruth12_1_2010.pdf)