

Comment from Wood Brian

I support general motors request for a Temporary Exemption from Motor Vehicle Safety and Bumper Standards. The number of serious injury and fatality motor vehicle crashes should be considered an epidemic in this country. Given that our transportation system will rely on high volumes of automobile transport for the foreseeable future, it is imperative that we look for solutions to address human caused crashes that are imposing enormous economic burdens and incalculable social costs on our citizens. Education and enforcement, while important tools, are grossly insufficient at reducing the poor public safety outcomes we see from the current incarnation of our motor vehicle based transportation system. The recognition that roadway infrastructure changes are needed, to address the fact that humans are incapable of maintaining behavioral restraint with respect to motor vehicle operation, underscores the need for developing solutions that constrain or eliminate human behavior from much of the transportation equation. We should continue to pursue infrastructure changes that reduce the probability of motor vehicle crashes and/or promote other safer modes of transportation. Unfortunately, infrastructure changes are slow and expensive. Zero Emission Autonomous Vehicle technology has the potential to significantly reduce crashes in the near term as well as having additional benefits in terms of reducing harmful emissions and potentially reducing the need for excessive vehicle ownership (given that such vehicles could serve several users throughout the day). Such technology could provide the bridge needed for more effective transit in rural locations where we are increasingly seeing non-drivers and former drivers being stranded who are not on transit lines.