

## Comment from Phillip Wilcox

Posted by the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** on Sep 2, 2022

Following an accident in 2012 I am now legally blind and unable to drive a vehicle. Before my accident, I never realized how important having a stable, reliable and cheap transportation option was to me. I live 10 minutes away from a metro station and need to get someone to drop me off or pay for a ride-hailing service like Uber to drop me at the metro station. Therefore, just getting into DC, the nearest city to me, costs me \$30 each time including the ride-hailing fee and metro fair. During the pandemic I did not even get to see my dad for six months even though he lives less than 20 miles away from me because I was nervous about riding the metro at that time. I would also need to use this method of transportation to buy groceries and commute to work. This is an unsustainable situation.

In December 2020 I published a book called *The Future is Autonomous* through New Degree Press. Among other subjects, the book details the potential benefits of autonomous vehicles (AVs) to make transportation more accessible for people in the blind, disabled, and elderly communities.

I think that AVs, specifically the Origin, could have a potentially transformative impact on the lives of people in the disabled and elderly communities by significantly increasing people's freedom of mobility by providing affordable travel options for going to a grocery stores, schools, or a places of employment.

Accessibility using AVs, specifically the Origin by Cruise/GM, is very important. Right now, people with a disability and at least a high school diploma make significantly less money than people without a disability for the same work. The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) does a great job making buildings and public lands accessible to people with a disability. However, services such as Origin and eventually Origin for Mobility WAV are necessary for providing transportation to these buildings and public lands.

I think that providing the exemption to the FMVSS for Cruise/GM for the Origin and eventually Origin for Mobility WAV would be a great step in the right direction towards providing everyone with an opportunity to improve their lives and reduce to disability income gap. Therefore, I think it is definitely in the interest of NHTSA to provide this exemption request to Cruise/GM.