

congestion in the U.S. 50 corridor. Possible adverse environmental effects of these alternatives include localized traffic congestion or delay, property acquisition/ displacement, visual, noise/ vibration, wetlands/natural resources, hazardous materials, and temporary construction-phase impacts. Mitigating measures will be explored for identified adverse effects.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS/EIR should be directed to RT at the address provided above.

Issued on: March 11, 1998.

**Leslie Rogers,**

*Region IX Administrator.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[U.S. DOT Docket No. NHTSA-98-3337]

### Reports, Forms, and Record Keeping Requirements

**AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Request for public comment on proposed collection of information.

**SUMMARY:** Before a Federal agency can collect certain information from the public, it must receive approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Under new procedures established by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, before seeking OMB approval, Federal agencies must solicit public comment on proposed collections of information, including extensions and reinstatements of previously approved collections.

This document describes one collection of information for which NHTSA intends to seek OMB approval.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before May 15, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to U.S. Department of Transportation Dockets, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Plaza 401, Washington, D.C. 20590. Docket No. NHTSA-98-3337.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Alan Block, Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Office of Research and Traffic Records (NTS-31), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street,

S.W., Room 6240, Washington, D.C. 20590.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, before an agency submits a proposed collection of information to OMB for approval, it must publish a document in the **Federal Register** providing a 60-day comment period and otherwise consult with members of the public and affected agencies concerning each proposed collection of information. The OMB has promulgated regulations describing what must be included in such a document. Under OMB's regulations (at 5 CFR 1320.8(d)), an agency must ask for public comment on the following:

(i) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(ii) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(iii) how to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(iv) how to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

In compliance with these requirements, NHTSA asks public comment on the following proposed collection of information:

### 1998 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey

*Type of Request*—New information collection requirement.

*OMB Clearance Number*—None.

*Form Number*—This collection of information uses no standard forms.

*Requested Expiration Date of Approval*—December 31, 1999.

*Summary of the Collection of Information*—NHTSA proposes to conduct a 1998 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey by telephone among a national probability sample of 8,000 adults (age 16 and older). Participation by respondents would be voluntary. NHTSA's information needs require seat belt and child safety seat sections too large to merge into a single survey instrument without producing an inordinate burden on respondents. Rather than reduce these sections, the proposed survey instrument would be divided into two series of modules. Each module would be administered to one-half the total number of subjects to

be interviewed. Module Series #1 of the questionnaire would focus on seat belts and include smaller sections on air bags, motorcyclist safety, and general driving (including speed). Module Series #2 would focus on child safety seats, accompanied by smaller sections on bicyclist safety and Emergency Medical Services. Both series would contain sections on crash injury experience, and on drinking and driving because of the extensive impact of alcohol on the highway safety problem. Some basic seat belt questions contained in Module Series #1 would be duplicated on Module Series #2.

In conducting the proposed survey, the interviewers would use computer-assisted telephone interviewing to reduce interview length and minimize recording errors. A Spanish-language translation and bilingual interviewers would be used to minimize language barriers to participation. The proposed survey would be anonymous and confidential.

*Description of the Need for the Information and Proposed Use of the Information*—The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) was established to reduce the mounting number of deaths, injuries and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes on the Nation's highways. As part of this statutory mandate, NHTSA is authorized to conduct research as a foundation for the development of motor vehicle standards and traffic safety programs.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, more than 50,000 persons were killed each year in motor vehicle crashes in the United States. Diverse approaches were taken to address the problem. Vehicle safety designs and features were improved; restraint devices were improved; safety behaviors were mandated in state legislation (including seat belt use, child safety seat use, and motorcycle helmet use); alcohol-related legislation was enacted; this legislation was enforced; public information and education activities were widely implemented; and roadways were improved.

As a result of these interventions and improvements, crash fatalities dropped significantly. By 1996, total fatalities had fallen to 41,907, representing an 18% decline from 1966. In addition, the resident population and the number of vehicle miles traveled increased greatly over the past 30 years. When fatality rates are computed per 100,000 population, the rate for 1996 (15.80) was about 40 percent lower than the 1966 rate (26.02). In sum, heightened highway safety activity conducted over the past three decades corresponds with

major strides in reducing traffic fatalities.

Remaining barriers to safety will be more resistant to programmatic influences now that the easy gains have already been accomplished. Moreover, crash fatalities have been edging higher since dropping to slightly under 40,000 in 1992, indicating that significant effort will be needed just to preserve the gains that already have been made. Up-to-date information is essential to plot the direction of future activity that will achieve reductions in crash injuries and fatalities in the coming years.

In order to collect the critical information needed by NHTSA to develop and implement effective countermeasures that meet the Agency's mandate to improve highway traffic safety, NHTSA conducted its first Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey in 1994. The survey included questions related to seat belts, child safety seats, air bags, bicyclist safety, motorcyclist safety, and Emergency Medical Services. It also contained small segments on alcohol use and on speeding. The survey was repeated in 1996, with the survey instrument updated to incorporate emergent issues and items of increased interest.

The proposed survey is the third Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey. The survey would collect data on topics included in the preceding surveys and would monitor changes over time in the use of occupant protection devices and in attitudes related to vehicle occupant safety. It is important that NHTSA monitor these changes so that the Agency can determine the effects of its efforts to promote the use of safety devices and to identify areas where its efforts should be targeted and where new strategies may be needed. As in 1996, NHTSA proposes to make a small number of revisions to the survey instrument to address new information needs.

If approved, the proposed survey would assist NHTSA in addressing the problem of motor vehicle occupant safety and in formulating programs and recommendations to Congress. The results of the proposed survey would be used to: (a) identify areas to target current programs and activities to achieve the greatest benefit; (b) develop new programs and initiatives aimed at increasing the use of occupant safety devices by the general public; and (c) provide informational support to States and localities in their traffic safety efforts. The findings would also be used directly by State and local highway safety and law enforcement agencies in the development and implementation of effective countermeasures to prevent

injuries and fatalities to vehicle occupants.

*Description of the Likely Respondents (Including Estimated Number, and Proposed Frequency of Response to the Collection of Information)*—Under this proposed effort, a telephone interview averaging approximately 20 minutes in length would be administered to each of 8,000 randomly selected members of the general public age 16 and older in telephone households. The respondent sample would be selected from all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. Interviews would be conducted with persons at residential phone numbers selected through random digit dialing. Businesses are ineligible for the sample and would not be interviewed. No more than one respondent would be selected per household. Each member of the sample would complete one interview.

*Estimate of the Total Annual Reporting and Record Keeping Burden Resulting from the Collection of Information*—NHTSA estimates that each respondent in the sample would require an average of 20 minutes to complete the telephone interview. Thus, the number of estimated reporting burden hours a year on the general public (8,000 respondents multiplied by 1 interview multiplied by 20 minutes) would be 2667 for the proposed survey. The respondents would not incur any reporting cost from the information collection. The respondents also would not incur any record keeping cost from the information collection.

**James Nichols,**

*Acting Associate Administrator for Traffic Safety Programs.*

[FR Doc. 98-6630 Filed 3-13-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

#### Research and Development Programs Meeting Agenda

**AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice provides the agenda for a public meeting at which the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will describe and discuss specific research and development projects.

**DATES AND TIMES:** As previously announced, NHTSA will hold a public meeting devoted primarily to presentations of specific research and

development projects on March 17, 1998, beginning at 1:30 p.m. and ending at approximately 5:00 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Clarion Inn, Detroit Metro Airport, 9191 Wickham Road, Romulus, Michigan.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice provides the agenda for the twentieth in a series of public meetings to provide detailed information about NHTSA's research and development programs. This meeting will be held on March 17, 1998. The meeting was announced on February 20, 1998 (63 FR 8734). For additional information about the meeting, consult that announcement.

Starting at 1:30 p.m. and concluding by 5:00 p.m., NHTSA's Office of Research and Development will discuss the following topics:

Research and Development Overview; Test Procedures to Measure Rollover Propensity; Automated Collision Notification System—Update on Testing; Pedestrian Research; and 30 MPH Unbelted Barrier Tests with Depowered Air Bags.

NHTSA has based its decisions about the agenda, in part, on the suggestions it received in response to the announcement published February 20, 1998.

As announced on February 20, 1998, in the time remaining at the conclusion of the presentations, NHTSA will provide answers to questions on its research and development programs, where those questions have been submitted in writing to Raymond P. Owings, Ph.D., Associate Administrator for Research and Development, NRD-01, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Washington, DC 20590. Fax number: 202-366-5930.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Rita I. Gibbons, Staff Assistant, Office of Research and Development, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone: 202-366-4862. Fax number: 202-366-5930.

Issued: March 11, 1998.

**Raymond P. Owings,**

*Associate Administrator for Research and Development.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

March 6, 1998.

The Department of Treasury has submitted the following public