

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS PUS WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE



With the Pandemic, most legislatures have not held sessions to discuss items other than the virus, so very few new auto related bills have been introduced.

ALASKA

Drivers will be able to drive through Denali National Park and Preserve on its only access road this summer after measures intended to prevent the spread of COVID-19 reduced anticipated bus traffic in the park.

ARIZONA

On June 24, the state DMV said that it was having difficulty keeping up with routine business during the pandemic and asked the public for their patience.

CALIFORNIA

Great news! The California gas tax increased by 3.1 cents per gallon on July 1st under a Senate Bill which was passed in 2017.

State regulators have decided to approve new rules that would force automakers to sell more electric work trucks and delivery vans, a first-of-its-kind rule that is aimed at helping the state clean up its worst in the nation air quality. The rule would require a certain percentage of work trucks and delivery van sales each year to be zero emission vehicles. By the time the rules are fully implemented in 2035, the Air Resources Board estimates that at least 20% of the 1.2 million trucks on the road would run on electricity.

The CHP reported that they arrested 580 drivers for DUI and there were 19 traffic deaths over July 4th. This is down from previous years due to less traffic on the roads.

HAWAII

A state plan to reopen a Maui highway to the general public use has raised concerns among residents who want to protect the area from the coronavirus. The state Dept. of Transportation announced it would reopen the Hana Highway to all motorists beginning June 1.

MONTANA

The Blackfeet Tribal Business Council has voted to close the eastern boundary of Glacier National Park for the rest of the tourist season after a recent spike of COVID-19 cases in the state.

NEW YORK

The state teamed with New Jersey and Connecticut to require travelers from state's with high COVID-19 transmission rates to isolate for 14 days upon their arrival in the state. Other states may join the isolation requirement. In the first week of July, New York added 3 additional states to the quarantine of 14 days.

OHIO

States once hard-hit by the coronavirus have not ordered a quarantine mandate for visitors from Ohio as the number of reported daily cases in the state rise. The quarantine mandate in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut was issued for states whose rate of possible virus tests reached a high point.

PENNSYLVANIA

A proposal to construct plastic barriers around school bus drivers as a COVID-19 mitigation tactic was vetoed by the State Dept. of Transportation.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Gov. Kristi Noem has suspended a teen driving law that was set to take effect June 1. Noem said the bill was suspended due to concerns about the pandemic and the impact of the new law on licensing.

WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

It is no secret that truck owners love their trucks. Ford commissioned an online survey of 2,000 truck owners to find out just how much they love their trucks. The survey revealed that instead of giving up trucks for a year, 79% would give up alcohol for a year, 71% would give up drinking coffee for a year, and 38% said they would give up sex.

Ford has a special plan to assist new Ford vehicle owners who have lost their jobs and are unable to make their monthly payments. They may return their vehicles under certain conditions and their credit rating may not be affected. Few details are available. The vehicle must have been purchased just before or during the pandemic, was financed through Ford financing, be in excellent conditions, low mileage and proof of job loss is required. For more details, contact Ford Corp, not the local dealer.

A company in Israel has designed a new type of highway that will greatly benefit electric vehicles. The highways have electric charges built in that help to recharge electric vehicles as they travel on the highway. Short test roads have been built in Israel, but a longer highway is scheduled to be built in Sweden soon.

Toyota announced that it is stopping the sales of the Yaris in the U.S. starting with the 2021 model.

Tesla is considering Austin, Texas for a new factory that will build the Cybertruck. Travis County (Austin) approved on July 14 a tax break worth about \$14.7 million and potentially more over a 10 year period. This is in addition to the 46.6 million in tax abatements that the Del Valle School Board approved in early July. In return, Tesla will invest \$1.1 billion in the new factory within the first 5 years. In exchange, Travis County will rebate 70% of the property taxes that Tesla will pay.

On July 22, Tesla announced that it has selected Austin Texas for its new plant to build Cybertrucks and Tesla Model Y vehicles.

The National Highway Traffic Safety administration is investigating complaints of fuel leaks in older Chevrolet Cobalt small cars and HHR wagons. The probe covers more than 614,000 Cobalt's from the 2008 to 2010 model years and HHR's from 2008 and 2009. The agency said it had received 208 complaints from owners about gasoline leaks.

Nissan has unveiled the Ariya, a \$40,000 SUV with up to 300 miles of battery charge and is expected to hit U.S. Nissan dealerships in the second half of 2021. Nissan says the Ariya goes from 0 kilometers per hour to 100 kpm, or about 62 mph in 5 seconds.

An estimated 199 Ford employees has asked Ford to reconsider building and selling police vehicles in light of controversy related to police brutality and social justice, the Free Press confirmed on July 9th. Another group wants Ford to somehow engage in constructive action that both supports the police and works to improve safety. GM and Fiat Chrysler also build police vehicles but Ford builds

two thirds of all vehicles. The all-new Bronco will be built in Wayne, Michigan, be available in the spring of 2021 and sells for \$29,995 for the two door base model and \$34,695 for the four-door model. The Bronco Sport will be built in the Hermosillo plant in Sonora, Mexico.

On July 22, Ford said that it is increasing production on the Broncos as presales are more than models manufactured even tho the vehicles have not arrived at dealer showrooms and are selling for much more than suggested dealer pricing. The Bronco may be ordered by reservation, but it may take up to 18 months for delivery.

Some Ford 2021 F 650 and F 750 trucks are being recalled due to problems with certain thermal protection component problems with the underbody heat shields that could cause the interior and seat attachments to get hot. The 2020 Ford Escape and Transit vehicles may have problems with airbags not inflating properly. The 2016-2020 Lincoln MKX and other Lincoln models may have faulty 6 way power seats may cause problems that do not deploy the air bags properly.

In 1987, the Postal Service began using Grumman vehicles built on a Chevy S-19 platform and powered by a Pontiac motor. The vehicles were developed Grumman and called LLF vehicles and were expected to last 27 years. The last ones were put into service in 1994. There are reports that since May of 2014, 407 vehicles have caught on fire and suffered major damages. There are about 141,000 0vehicles in the fleet. In 2919, the Postal Service tested replacement vehicles but with a shrirking budget and the Pandemic, everything is on hold.

Tesla plans to introduce a new car battery that can be driven one million miles before needing replacement. Tesla also announced a price reduction on their Model Y SUV from \$52,990 to \$49,990 due to slow sales and maybe even drop the base model. Tesla also said that autonomous vehicles will achieve Level 5 this year.

Amazon has ordered 2,200 new heavy-duty ultimate walk-in delivery trucks from Shyft, a Michigan based company producing walk-in delivery vehicles. Amazons new vehicles are bigger and wider than the ones used by UPS.

Startup automaker Fisker is poised to become a public company in a deal that it says will enable the company to begin production on its first electric vehicle, the Fisker Ocean in late 2022. The company says the vehicle is a SUV and prices will start at \$37,499 and the company would accept reservations for \$250.

GM has announced that it is ending manufacturing of the Chevy Sonic. Sales of subcompact cars have declined sharply in the past two years. The Sonic joins the

list of discontinued vehicles of the Toyota Yaris and last year, the Ford Fiesta. Sales of large and SUV vehicles are increasing, but sales of subcompacts dropped 50% in the first half of 2020. Honda says they will stop selling the Fit Hatchback in the U.S. with the 2021 model year.

When Italian-American automaker Fiat Chrysler merges with France's PSA Group earlier next year, the new company name will be Stellantis. The name will be used for the parent corporation, but consumer brands such as Jeep, Ram and Peugeot will not be changed.

GM has tested a new electric pickup that has a range of 400 miles per battery charge. GM says they will introduce electric Cadillac and Buick vehicles soon.

The Feds have started gathering driver's license data, from at least four states as it seeks to count how many undocumented persons live in the USA. The President says citizenship data is basic information that any country leaders should have access to. The four states are Iowa, Nebraska, South Carolina and South Dakota. The U.S. Census Bureau leads the effort to acquire the data, which could be cross-referenced with federal or privately run databases to build a more accurate picture of residents.

The percentage of late vehicle loan payments has increased during the pandemic according to loan companies, but most companies work with the consumers to allow them to skip payments or extended the monthly due date. Most major auto loan companies do not want the vehicles back as there are glut of unsold vehicles and are willing to work with the vehicle owners.

Fiat Chrysler plan to fit Ram Pro Master vans with Waymo Driver, the autonomous brains behind the hundreds of Chrysler Pacifica Hybrids minivans in Waymo's ride-hailing fleet. Developing self-driving technology for light commercial vehicles highlights the growing importance companies see in delivery service, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you plan on going to a state or federal park soon, you can expect fewer amenities, fewer parks open, limited services, and maybe the requirement to wear a mask.

A unconfirmed report says that Mercedes Benz plans to end production of 7 models in coming years. The models are the 2-door C class, 2-door E and S class and one member of the GT lineup. There has been no comment from Mercedes.

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