



OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

PLUS WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

A recent report on NBC News states that over 50,000 U.S. bridges are crumbling. Pieces of bridges on Interstate Hwys in Florida, Georgia and Michigan have fallen on the roads below and even on passing vehicles. The report says that one in twelve bridges in Illinois are crumbling. The American Association of Road and Transportation Builders say that 54,259 U.S. bridges are structurally deficient. One expert says that at the present rate of repairs or replacement by the Transportation Dept., it will take 37 years to repair all of the bridges.

Auto makers hope to put tens of thousands electric vehicles on American roads this year, so the nation's charging system needs to grow up fast. For drivers who cherish the American dream of a spontaneous cross country road trip, charging their vehicles will be a challenge. Options to replenish EV batteries on trips are few and far between for millions of Americans. Auto makers have sold 727,000 plug-in vehicle hybrids or battery powered cars in the U.S. since 2010. There are about 16,300 publicly accessible, standard charging stations with an average of 3 outlets each according to the U.S. Dept. of Energy. According to the Director of the Dept. of Energy, Michael Berube, the U.S. will need 100,000 to 200,000 charging stations to meet the increasing demand. Some states only have a few charging stations and they are in the large city areas.

Every driver who decides to purchase an electric vehicle face the anxieties about being able to recharge their vehicle, especially since outside the home garage, charging stations may not be close by.

In a survey by AAA, 63% of American drivers report feeling afraid to ride in a fully self-driving vehicle, a significant decrease from 78% in early 2017. Officials say that by 2030, at least a quarter or more of the miles driven on U.S. roads will be by autonomous vehicles.

The top ten most congested urban areas in the U.S. by number of peak hours in auto traffic in 2017 were #1-Los Angeles-102 hours, #2- New York – 91 hours, #3-

San Francisco -79 hours , #4 -Atlanta - 70 hours, #5- Miami- 64 hours, #6- Washington D.C. - 63 hours, #7- Boston - 60 hours, #8- Chicago - 57 hours, #9 - Seattle - 55 hours. - and #10 - Dallas - 54 hours. (Info from article by Kevin McCoy of USA Today).

In Las Vegas, in November, the AAA Self-Driving Shuttle is the first vehicle of its kind to embark on a long term pilot program on a public road in the U.S. The shuttle navigates a three block circuit in the city's downtown hotel neighborhood. Ridership has increased each month according to AAA.

The Federal Highway Administration has requested the public to help identify roadway infrastructures, which will need to be modified or enhanced to eliminate barriers to motor vehicles with automated driving systems.

In late November, Tesla announced that it was able to solve problems with the production of the Model 3 which will increase production each week. But as of the second week of February, they were only producing 1025 vehicles per week. This is far short of the promised amount.

New data from the California DMV says that self-driving cars cannot yet drive themselves. A DMV report shows that robot cars can not go more than 5,600 miles on California roads, even in the best-case scenario, without the test driver having to take control. In most cases, the vehicle can not travel more than a few hundred miles without needing human intervention due to quicker-than-average yellow lights, rapid changes in traffic, sudden lane blockage, cars parked incorrectly, or GPS signal and other software failure. More and more automakers are rushing to get their self-driving vehicles on the roads in California and other states. The big problem is that federal law and legislation has not created any meaningful regulations and gives automakers the full authority to decide whether their vehicles are prepared to roam the streets and highways without human supervision. Information by James Court in a special report to the Sacramento Bee.

Not all of the following state bills are laws at this time. They have recently been introduced and are currently under consideration by the respective legislatures.

ALABAMA

Auto insurer Infinity Property and Casualty of Birmingham has been acquired by Kemper Corp for \$1.4 billion.

ARIZONA

Waymo has announced plans to launch autonomous ride sharing services in the Phoenix area later this year.

CALIFORNIA

A new bill, SB 1132 which would reduce the fine for not fully stopping before making a right turn at a corner, from \$100 to \$35 was introduced in late February.

At the end of January, national gas price tracker, GasBuddy.com, said average gas prices across most of California were at their highest level in more than 850 days. At that time the price of gas in California ranged from \$3.09 to \$3.43, but the national was about \$2.60 per gallon. GasBuddy.com says we can expect gas prices to increase due to high oil prices and may be back in the \$4 range in California later in the year.

State officials are investigating whether microscopic organisms are attacking key welds on submerged tower foundations of the new San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

Faced with a five year old cellphone law, more California drivers are putting their devices aside entirely when behind the wheel, a new study shows. The study by the State Office of traffic safety has found that fewer than 4% of drivers appear to be picking up and using their cellphones compared to 8% last year.

Two DMV employees have been arrested and one is charged with issuing phoney driver's licenses and the other is charged with alleging using her access to DMV computers to steal individual's identities and open phoney credit cards and bank accounts. Investigators also have found that several clerks allegedly altered records for commercial truck driving licenses that went to applicants who had not passed the required test or even taken the test.

According to the Sacramento based New Car Dealers Association, almost half of the used vehicles registered in California last year were more than 10 years old. The 2017 report said 49.6 percent of 3.73 million used car registrations recorded last year were for decades old plus vehicles, up from 48.6 % in 2016.

CONNECTICUT

Gov. Malloy has proposed reinstating highway tolls and increasing the gas tax by 7 cents per gallon to help fix roads and bridges.

FLORIDA

Voyage, a Florida based startup company focused on robo-taxi services, will offer free rides to the elderly residents of the Villages, a large retirement community with about 125,000 residents and 750 miles of roads, with self-driving cars. It is a test program for the self driving vehicles and is free at this time, but there may be a fee for use at a later date.

GEORG

Construction plans are moving ahead to improve the interchange of Interstates 16 and 95. The \$319 million project is scheduled to begin next year.

State transportation officials are considering a 40-mile highway from Atlanta to Macon that would be for trucks only.

HAWAII

Honolulu is testing its first electric bus as part of a six week pilot program.

IOWA

A bill has been introduced to allow window tinting if it meets the minimum standards of 35% light transmittance.

KANSAS

The State House has approved a bill to toughen penalties for some drunken driving cases, but also approved allowing restaurants to begin serving alcohol at 6 am instead of 8 am.

MARYLAND

A bill has been introduced in the state Senate to require the issuance of only a single license plate for motor vehicles.

Legislation has been introduced in the state Senate to require new car dealers to provide purchasers with a written statement declaring it illegal for manufacturers or dealers to void a warranty or deny coverage simply because aftermarket parts or recycled parts had been installed by someone other than the dealer who has serviced the vehicle.

MICHIGAN

Officials in Brooklyn, Mi, plan to widen bike lanes along a 7.4 mile stretch of hwy 124 in Jackson County, following the death of two bicyclists.

MINNESOTA

State lawmakers returned to work the last week of February that included how to fix a balky computer driver's license system.

MISSOURI

A study will look at the value and cost of an ultra-high-speed hyperloop system across Missouri that could move people from St Louis to Kansas City in half of hour.

The State Highway Patrol will no longer hold field testing for illegal substances during raids and traffic stops after concerns about exposing troopers to fentanyl and other dangerous drugs.

NEBRASKA

Legislation has been introduced to ease the process by which replica, assembled kit and reconstructed cars are titled and registered in the state.

NEW JERSEY

Legislation has been reintroduced that would create a vehicle classification for street rods and replica custom vehicles and provide for special license plates.

NEW YORK

The hundreds of tourism signs the Cuomo administration installed along New York's highways, could cost the state \$14 million in federal funds.

NORTH CAROLINA

One of the last remaining drawbridges in the coastal area of the state has closed after 60 years. The Grayden Paul Bridge carried U.S. 70 traffic across the Intercostal Waterway and will be torn down this summer.

Currituck city officials are considering fees to visitors who park on off-road beaches.

NORTH DAKOTA

An \$11 million dollar project is planned to improve I-94 in the Bismark area.

OKLAHOMA

A bill has been introduced that allows for the titling of a military High-Mobility Multipurpose vehicle (HMMWV or HUMMER). Under current law, military Humvees are not allowed on the road. The bill would restrict these vehicles from traveling on interstate highways.

OREGON

The main route to Terwilliger Hot Springs will be closed another six months to clear a rockslide.

RHODE ISLAND

Work has started to install a system to collect tolls from trucks on Interstate 95.

Legislation has been introduced to provide a courtesy plate for vehicles 25 years old or older.

The state has launched a TV and online awareness campaign about the deadly consequences of driving drunk.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Two bills have been introduced in the State House to create a Pro-Hobby license plate. No other details available at this time.

Legislation to amend the the law for historic vehicles to allow for a single license plate has passed in the House and Senate and has been sent to the Gov for signing.

VERMONT

Experts say a 1928 bridge that links Winooski with Burlington is within a decade of needing repairs or replacement.

VIRGINIA

A bill to allow military surplus vehicles off-road vehicles to be registered as antiques has been introduced.

WASHINGTON

Seattle City Light has opened two fast charging stations for electric vehicles on Beacon Hill.

Environmentalists sued to force the state to end fossil fuel reliance by 2050.

WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

Who was that masked man?? On January 30th, 1933, The Lone Ranger debuted on Detroit's WXYZ radio station.

Drowsy driving plays a role in nearly eight times as many accidents as federal estimates suggested, according to a study released Feb. 7th. In about 9.5% of cases, drowsiness was a factor. It was also a key factor in 10.8% of crashes that caused serious property damage.

As millions of Americans press their own cars into service to ferry passengers, auto companies see a market for a class of vehicles better suited to the task. They are weighing whether to add more durable materials in the back seat and features especially directed at helping vehicles handle wear and tear from ride - hailing duty in ways no normal driver would expect. At least one auto maker (KIA) is consendering offering a special model tailored to the needs of ridehailing drivers.

A reportby by InsurancesQuotes.com says that married drivers pay \$9 per month less than single drivers for auto insurance.

A California motorcyclist has filed a lawsuit against GM accusing one of the manufacturer's robot-operated vehicles of "negligent driving." He was traveling down a street in San Francisco when a Chevy Cruise aborted a lane change and swerved into his lane. The car struck him, knocking him to the ground, in an accident that left him unable to work, according to the suit in U.S. District Court.

A study by a group in Maryland reports that speed cameras issued more than 1.5 million tickets worth more than \$62 million in fines across the U.S. last year.

Don't Miss out!! Missouri state officials may designate July 7th as "Missouri Sliced Bread Day". Save the date for your vacation trip.

Larry Becker

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