



OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS



PLUS WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

According to an analysis by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, the average American commuter spends 42 hrs per year stuck in rush hour traffic. In the Los Angeles area, the figure is nearly twice that, equivalent to more than 3 days. A 2015 LA Times poll found that among residents in the city, traffic concerns exceed those pertaining to personal safety, finances or housing costs. The total cost of traffic associated with lost time and wasted fuel exceeds \$100 billion per year. A recent study of Los Angeles traffic documented a link between congestion and domestic violence.

The Feds are proposing emission and MPG standards should be the same in every state, but states like California which has the highest requirement, are against the proposal and California plans to sue the Feds to stop the proposal. California has filed several suites against the Feds and intends to file more.

Even though driving and talking on the phone use is down, distracted driver use is up. A recent study found many drivers eat, smoke, do grooming, use vehicle systems like GPS, map quests, radio changes, texting and some still talk on their hand held cell phones while driving and this leads to distracted driving. In 2017, an estimated 800 or more people were killed in auto crashes caused by distracted driving. The number of deaths related to distracted driving varies by each survey.

Google's Waymo autonomous division is investing \$13.6 million to refit a factory in the Detroit area to refit Chrysler Pacifica's and Jaguar I-Pace with self-driving technology. They also plan to build autonomous vehicles at the factory. They have a small test facility in Michigan that tests vehicle use in snow.

Harley-Davidson has recalled 43,908 of its Street motorcycles (750 and 500 models) for a brake issue that could cause a crash. Their sales in the U.S. also continue to decline.

Forty countries led by Japan and the European Union (not including China and the U.S.) have agreed to require new cars and light commercial vehicles to be equipped with automated braking systems starting next year. The resolution would affect 20 million cars in the EU, Japan and elsewhere each year.

Tesla has started selling a cheaper model of its Model # 3 in China. On February 6th, Tesla announced that it was cutting the U.S. Model 3 sedan cost by \$1,100, with a base cost starting at \$42,900, a long way from its goal of having a base cost of \$35,000.

According to a report by CBS news, there are over one million past due auto loans in the U.S. The report says most of the loans are for people under 30 with a low credit score and purchasing a vehicle with a small down payment.

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

ALABAMA

Tolls will help finance a new bridge that will cross the Mobile River and Mobile Bay and officials say that tolls from \$3 to \$6 per vehicle, will be needed to pay the cost of the bridge.

ARIZONA

State residents who purchased license plates displaying the words “In God We Trust” have found that the money supports the Alliance Defending Freedom program, designated as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. A state lawmaker is proposing to get rid of the specialty plate.

ARKANSAS

Gov Hutchinson has unveiled a \$300 million highway-funding plan that calls for increasing taxes and tapping into expected casino revenue.

CALIFORNIA

A bill (AB 216) introduced in the Legislature would exempt motor vehicles, manufactured prior to 1983 from emission inspections. The current law exempts 1976 and prior.

On Feb. 25th, CalTrans started replacing 61 deck joints on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge and the project will take several months to complete. This is in addition to their work to replace a joint that failed Feb.7th, sending chunks of concrete falling on cars on the lower deck, forcing officials to briefly closing the span. They will do the upper span first, then the lower span. There are 856 deck joints on the bridge.

The California State Transportation Agency has signed on to the Transport Decarbonization Alliance, which is focused on minimizing transportation's impact on our environment, and dramatically reducing those greenhouse gas emissions caused by traditional vehicles on the roads daily.

The Good Old DMV acknowledged on Feb 11, that 150,000 Californians who paid for driver's license renewals on line between September 2018 and early February 2019 and had an expiration date between Jan. 20th and May 31st have not received them yet due to a "computer problem". The DMV is now working overtime to issue the licenses. It means that some drivers are driving with expired licenses.

A new proposal would increase fines for distracted driving that would also add a point to their driver's license, which could increase their insurance costs.

The city of San Francisco is considering a fee to use Lombard Street, the Worlds most crooked street. The fee would be \$5 for weekdays and \$10 for weekends with a time of 15 minutes. Residents living on the street would be exempt via some type of decal.

The use of electric scooters is soaring and injuries from accidents in their use have increased. One report says that 50% of the accidents are due to drinking and using the scooters. Would this be SUI or DUI?

Due to long lines at DMV offices, some enterprising people will stand in line for you for a fee. Now the state is considering making that illegal with a fine.

A new California Office of Traffic Safety and CSU Fresno cell phone survey has found the following: cell phone use is higher on local roads than on freeways. It was higher among drivers with no passengers, the most common phone use by a driver was to perform a function on the phone (texting, using GPS, emailing, using an app or social media). Less than 2% of drivers were observed using a cell phone with a child passenger. The first cell phone laws went into effect 10 years ago.

SB 319, a bill by a Southern California Senator, would add specialty lanes on I-5 and Hwy 99 in each direction with no speed limits. No cost or timeline announced and the bill would need approval of the legislature and Gov.

CONNECTICUT

Gov. Lamont, who said in his campaign that he would only support highway tolls on tractor-trailers, said he is now considering a wider toll option.

D.C. – WASHINGTON

Crews have begun installing “No Right Turn on Red” signs. The city is banning right turns at red lights for about 100 intersections in hopes of curbing fatal traffic accidents.

DELAWARE

The St George Bridge, which was closed four months, has now reopened.

FLORIDA

The Legislature is considering 5 new specialty license plate options for motorists, one promoting honeybees and the gopher tortoise, another would pay for mental health counseling for shooting survivors of the Pulse nightclub in Orlando in which 49 people were killed.

GEORGIA

The state Supreme Court has overturned a law that allowed a driver’s refusal to submit to a breath test, to be used as evidence against them in a criminal DUI case.

ILLINOIS

In Chicago, Wells Drive is now a major downtown thoroughfare, the first in the area to carry an African American woman’s name.

LOUISIANA

The state ranks near the top as the most dangerous area for pedestrians in a new national poll.

License plates are part of an effort to preserve a historic lighthouse. The American Press reports purchases of Louisiana Sabine Pass Lighthouse plates will raise money to restore the Gulf Coast structure.

MARYLAND

A measure to allow residents to select an unspecified gender on their driver's licenses has received preliminary approval by the state Senate.

MINNESOTA

Gov. Walz's budget proposal includes a 20 cent per gallon tax increase on gas to pay for bridge and road improvements.

MISSISSIPPI

State legislatures are considering tightening regulations of tinted windows so that police can see inside vehicles that they stop.

MISSOURI

State lawmakers have introduced at least six separate proposals since last month to restrict the use of cellphones while driving.

A state utility is planning to spend more than \$4 million over five years to help encourage the construction of charging stations for electric cars.

MONTANA

A bill under consideration would raise to \$9 the \$6 fee used to help fund state parks and trails.

NEBRASKA

State officials say the online Plow Tracker interactive map can now provide drivers with info about state roads from the perspective of snowplow drivers.

The Lincoln City Council has approved changing two street names so that the Nebraska Cattlemen's Assoc. new headquarters will be on Cattle Drive Street.

There are many requests for special license plates to support veterans, prostate cancer exams and many other causes with the money for the plates going to the causes.

NEVADA

A state board has approved \$84,000 for the DMV to begin implementing a new program intended to boost the states voter registration.

NEW YORK

Gov. Cuomo says he will ask the legislature to approve tolls for drivers entering the busiest parts of Manhattan or raise the tab for using subways, tunnels and bridges up to 30% to fund the city's ailing transit system.

NORTH DAKOTA

The State Senate has endorsed legislation that would charge owners of electric and hybrid vehicles an annual fee. The House has passed a measure that outlaws sobriety checkpoints in the state.

TENNESSEE

The state's annual estimated cost for its needed public infrastructure improvements is now nearly \$50 billion.

VERMONT

A bill introduced in the Legislature, would increase fines for texting while driving and other distracted driving offences.

The American Society of Civil Engineers has given the state a "C" grade on the condition of its infrastructure.

The state DMV is updating driver's licenses and non-driver information cards with advanced security features.

VIRGINIA

The General Assembly has given preliminary approval to legislation that will raise the price of car inspections from \$16 to \$20.

WEST VIRGINIA

A state lawmaker says the state has been paying insurance on thousands of vehicles that it does not actually own.

WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

A new report states that most new cars are, basically, a connected, mobile computer on wheels, with the latest technological innovations, a prime target for hackers. They can use that connectivity to access your private information or even steal your car. They can completely take over and control anything in your car, from brakes to the steering wheel. There are several companies who

sell security systems that help prevent hacking and insurance companies like AAA and local police depts. also can supply info to help with prevention.

A survey by DriversEd.com of 1,043 adults found that 67% of Americans falsely believe warming up cars in cold weather is good for the engine. Experts say that only older cars with carburetors need to warm up.

RV dealers are hoping that campers fitted with solar panels, USB ports and Wi-Fi signal boosters, will entice younger buyers and stop slowing sales.

Colorado state officials say that nearly 4.6 million people visited the Rocky Mountain National Park in 2018, breaking the park's attendance record.

Dozens of cars in the Wilmington Delaware area whose drivers left them idling to warm them up have had them stolen in the past few weeks.

Larry Becker

24 February 2019

