

CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, Inc.

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

PLUS WHAT'S UP HERE AND THERE

By Larry Becker



Some experts say that despite investing billions in fuel-saving technologies and introducing a raft of lower-mileage vehicles and electric vehicles, auto makers will be hard pressed to meet its target of 54.5 mpg in 2025. Automakers are expected to seek adjustments to the government's formula for increasing gas mileage and cutting greenhouse gas emissions. One of the proposed changes would be to extend the time frame on mileage targets and expanding emissions credits to include enhancements for safety and autonomous driving.

The Institute for Highway Safety released figures from a test on 30 different vehicle headlights and the results were not good. They state that most headlights are not powerful enough for safe nighttime driving. It is recommended that the headlights light up an area approx. 387 feet ahead of the vehicle, but some tested models only lit up about 130 feet. Government regulations require how much light that the blubs put out, but not how far it must reach. The Institute suggests that drivers use their high-beams on dark roads, but dim them for oncoming traffic.

Tesla has introduced a new model (Model 3) with a base cost of \$35,000. On the first day, buyers lined up at Tesla dealers to put down a \$10,000 deposit on the vehicles. The new model was introduced on March 30th and had 325,000 preorders by April 7th.

Farmers Insurance Company reports that claims related to falling asleep behind the wheel increased 37 percent from 2014 to 2015.

The four states without a blanket ban on texting have a 17 percent higher average rate of texting among drivers than do other states. The four states that do not have the ban are Arizona, Missouri, Montana and Texas. This is based on AT&T analysis of Android-based SMS data during U.S. metro commutes from June to August.

Beepi, a car buying company, with 16 markets across 9 states, began offering leases on used cars on April 20th. It initially will offer three-year leases on qualifying 2013 model-year cars, and three and four-year lease options on 2014 and 2015 models.

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.

ARIZONA

Ready for you!! The North Rim of the Grand Canyon will open May 15th, offering services again at the end of the area's annual winter closing.

CALIFORNIA

SB 1239 by Sen. Gaines which would exempt 1981 model year vehicles from yearly emission inspections will be discussed by the Appropriations Committee on May 2nd.

The California Energy Commission has approved nearly \$9 million in grants to four companies for the installation of fast chargers for electric-powered vehicles between San Diego and the California Oregon border. The firms will install 61 DC fast chargers at 41 sites along Interstate 5 and Highways 99 and 101. Fast chargers can power a vehicle's battery from 80% to full capacity within 30 minutes.

Californians are buying a near-record two-plus million new cars and trucks a year. Vehicular traffic has more than doubled to 330 billion vehicles-miles a year with very little expansion of roadway capacity, congestion has reached epic proportions. Earlier Gov. Brown's administration newly published California Transportation Plan 2040 indicated that one strategy for moving California out of their cars is to let congestion worsen. Criticism from highway advocates, including the California Transportation Committee were erased from last month's final draft, but the plan's intent is implicit.

There are several proposals to change the laws regarding parking for handicapped drivers being debated in the legislature. ABC News reports that 1 in 9 Californian's have and use a handicapped placard for parking.

SB 2322 would require the DMV to distribute removable student driver decals when issuing learner's permits.

Drugged driving is increasing on California's highways. About 1 in 7 drivers involved in fatal wrecks in California during 2014 tested positive for at least one potentially impairing drug other than alcohol according to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Most drivers aren't tested for drugs, particularly if they survive a crash or were not at fault. Among California drivers who died and were tested in 2013 and 2014 more than one third had drugs in their systems, state and federal data shows. The drug impaired driving problem is not confined to illegal drugs as people often have prescriptions for drugs they take before getting behind the wheel.

CalTrans have raised the height of seven freeway overcrossings in Placer County, in some cases as much as two feet. This allows the state to comply with federal standards requiring a 16 foot-6 inch height for modern supersized trucks and military vehicles.

San Francisco will require Lyft and Uber drivers, approx. 37,000, who work in the city seven or more days a year to obtain a business license. The license will cost \$91 a year. Drivers who earn \$100,000 or less in gross receipts annually will be liable for back fees for the license.

CONNECTICUT

A joint Connecticut Transportation committee has passed legislation to require the state, upon the owner's request, to issue titles for older vehicles not currently required to be titled under Connecticut law and are more than 20 model years old.

HAWAII

A 90-mile trail will open this fall to allow visitors from around the world a close-up view of Hawaii's rare birds. The Hawaii Island Coast to Coast Birding Trail will stretch from Kona to Hilo, starting from the west at Laloko Honookohau National Historical Park.

IDAHO

Since January, everyone taking the driver's license test has had to answer two questions about bicycle and pedestrian safety.

INDIANA

Gov. Mike Pence has signed into law legislation to allow the operator of a non-registered off-road vehicle or snowmobile from another state or country to purchase a trail-use tag to operate on designated trails and properties.

LOUISIANA

Tickets for vehicles parked in residential zones without permits have cropped up in high numbers on streets around the Fair Grounds about a month ago. After years of neglecting the parking permit program, City Hall has begun to roll out its stricter enforcement measures just in time for the Jazz Fest. (Nice of the city)

Advocates for more inclusion of bikes in the transportation system have rolled out their latest map of suggested routes through the Crescent City.

MAINE

State officials are reviewing dozens of bridges around Maine after a traffic accident in which a mother and child crashed through a guardrail. The Portland Press Herald reports the bridge guardrail had several missing or broken rail bolts.

Maine and New Hampshire will do a joint rehabilitation of the Piscataqua River Bridge. The project will cost between \$7 and \$9 million.

MASSACHUSETTS

Graffiti artists convicted of tagging buildings would no longer face a one-year suspension of their driver's licenses under a bill approved by the State senate.

State and local police have launched a crack-down on texting behind the wheel and other forms of distracted driving. Gov. Baker had proclaimed April as Distracted Driving Awareness month.

MISSOURI

Nearly two weeks after it was stolen on a federal highway near Jefferson City, Barrel Bob, a 10-foot-tall sculpture made from recycled orange and white construction barrels, turned up in a Boone County ditch. Barrel Bob is a statewide pitchman for work-zone safety.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The state Senate has amended and approved legislation to exempt rare or historically significant vehicles from emissions control requirements. Under current law, only vehicles 20 years old and older are exempt. The bill has been sent to the State House for consideration.

NEW JERSEY

Legislation has been reintroduced that would amend the state's current law governing historic motor vehicles to allow their use for pleasure driving one day per week. Current law allows historic vehicle use to only to exhibitions and education purposes by the owner.

NEW MEXICO

The city of Santa Fe is considering establishing a program that would allow impaired drivers to leave vehicles overnight without the threat of a parking ticket. Mayor Gonzales is pushing a proposal for a parking voucher program aimed at inebriated motorists.

NORTH CAROLINA

Wake county District Attorney Lorin Freeman dismissed more than 100 DWI cases after a sheriff deputy was found to have lied on the witness stand. (Some states call it DUI).

NORTH DAKOTA

Theodore Roosevelt National Park will offer electronic passes this year. There is no additional cost for the electronic pass. They can be printed out or left on a mobile device. (More and more parks are starting to use electronic passes)

OHIO

The Columbus Dispatch analysis has found that increasing the speed limit to 70 mph from 65 mph along stretches of rural Ohio Interstates starting in July 2013 has resulted in more accidents and fewer tickets.

OKLAHOMA

In mid-April, the public got its first look at the planned route for the new turnpike in northeast Oklahoma County during a recent meeting of the Turnpike Authority.

PENNSYLVANIA

Crews have begun replacing the deck of Pittsburg Liberty Bridge. Crews will replace one lane at a time in four phases over roughly 160 days.

RHODE ISLAND

Officials of the State Dept. of Transportation are interested in bring back a daily ferry service that would link Providence to Newport. They are searching for a company to run the ferries on the proposed seven-days a week route.

SOUTH DAKOTA

The South Dakota Office of Highway Safety has created a new Web-based program designed to encourage young people. South Dakota drivers between 14 and 19 can watch videos and answer safety questions to be entered into a contest for cash prizes up to \$10,000 sponsored by the South Dakota Broadcasters Association.

TENNESSEE

The state House has passed a bill to increase penalties for texting while driving in Tennessee. The bill would make it a moving violation that could require a driver education course and four points issued against the driver's license.

WASHINGTON

Lynnwood city council's contract with a traffic-enforcement camera vendor expires in November and the city council will have to vote on whether to renew it. Lynnwood is the only city in Snohomish County to use cameras to catch traffic law violators. They brought in \$19.2 million since going live in 2007.

WYOMING

The city of Jackson has ended its annual overnight parking ban earlier this year due to the warm weather.

WHATSUUP HERE AND THERE

A proposal in New York state would allow police officers to ask drivers, who are involved in accidents, to let them look at their cell phone to see if distracted driving was involved.

No men allowed!! Chariot for Women is a new ride-sharing service that hires female drivers. Besides female drivers, the company will launch across the country starting April 19th, will pick up only female passengers or boys younger than 13. If a woman orders the service and is with a male older than 13, the male passenger would be denied a ride. So far, more than 1,000 women signed up for the service in Massachusetts.

Bad Days in Des Moines, Iowa! A flock of wild turkeys is making life hard for some residents – and their cars. KCCI TV has reported that the turkeys are damaging cars in the neighborhood near East 38th street and Douglas Ave.

Motorists drove nearly 3.15 trillion miles last year – 3.5% or 107 billion more than 2014. More drivers than ever have chosen roads, bridges and tunnels that charge tolls. According to the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association, the number of trips on toll facilities rose to 5 billion trips last year. There is 6,000 miles of toll facilities in the U.S. and more and more drivers are willing to pay the fees. Highway user groups tend to support tolls for creating new roads or lanes, along with bridges and tunnels. But advocacy groups often criticize adding tolls on existing roads.

Self-driving cars are more likely to be a threat than a boom to public safety because of unresolved technical issues, engineers and safety advocates told the government at a National Highway Traffic Administration meeting in Washington on April 8th. Many people at the meeting pointed to a host of situations that self-driving cars are unable to handle. The technology relies on clear lane markings, and the poor condition of more than half the nation's roadways may be beyond the abilities of self-driving cars, not to mention driveways and parking lots.

According to an article by Foon Rhee of the Sacramento Bee newspaper, fewer than 1.1 million Americans 16 and younger had driver's licenses in 2014, down from 1.7 million in 2009. The number is the lowest since the 1960s, when our population was smaller, says the Federal Highway Administration. In all, about 8.5 million teenagers had licenses, about 4% of all drivers.

SCAREY – A man in Dayton, Ohio says he went undetected in a crashed vehicle for about four hours after it was towed from a 2015 accident scene and is now suing employees at an Ohio Sheriff's office and the towing company.

Uber drivers in California and Massachusetts sued Uber saying that they were employees, not independent contractors. They won an award of \$84 million, but each driver will only receive about \$25 each. The amount is based on the amount of miles each driver drove for Uber.

Uber recently started a new service called HopSkipDrive, a ride hailing for children, that has been operating in Los Angeles for over a year, is now entering the San Francisco area. There is another company in Los Angeles, Zum, which is battling Uber for business. These ride service companies target children who are out of car-seats up through around age 15. Both companies say their drivers go through extensive background checks.

Larry Becker

26 April 2016

Note: A big special Thank You to my wife, Joyce, who is my proof reader who catches all of my goofs.

