



December 3, 2019

Docket Management Facility
M-30, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 111 – Rear Visibility [Docket No. NHTSA-2018-0021]

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on permitting camera-based rear visibility systems as an alternative to inside and outside rearview mirrors.

While ultimate determination on equivalency of safety is a NHTSA prerogative, AAMVA members do ask for clarification with respect to whether the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) is contemplating a blanket exemption to the current standard. Of specific concern to AAMVA members is how modification of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 11 might be applied without compromising safety enforcement. While AAMVA defers to technical experts on the potential for Camera Monitor Systems (CMS) to augment visibility under a spectrum of driving conditions (low-light, backup, etc.), our members do raise the question of whether the cameras will be obvious to an external observer, including law enforcement. States rely on vehicle adherence to the FMVSS in order to properly enforce departures from acceptable federal vehicle safety standards. The question from our law enforcement community is how they will be able to differentiate whether a vehicle is operating under an exemption of the FMVSS, or simply lacks the appropriate directional visibility to incur probable cause for a traffic stop.

AAMVA members have requested clarification on whether the FMVSS modification will eliminate the mirror requirement *carte blanche*, or just in cases when the vehicle is camera equipped. While we assume the standard would require mirrors or CMS, our members still anticipate a long period of fleets with co-mingled technologies. The relatively low-visibility of CMS places an additional burden on law enforcement to establish probable cause against nonconforming vehicles.

AAMVA members have also expressed sensitivity on how modification of the standard could impact the administration of driving tests. Currently, individuals performing driver aptitude tests are required to check mirrors before conducting certain vehicle maneuvers during the test. AAMVA requests NHTSA take into consideration how changes to the standard may impact state ability to gauge and evaluate a driver's operational and situational awareness of the vehicle. Should changes to the standard be made, educational efforts to modify driver evaluation should accompany those changes and will require a direct federal-state discussion on how to accommodate those changes.

AAMVA also notes that modifications to the federal standard could impact inspection procedures in the states related to pre-trip, safety and roadside inspections. Each of these functions ensure a vehicle is maintained and operated as intended and ensure appropriate visibility for a human driver. But the existence of a CMS may not be visibly apparent to vehicle inspectors and evaluating the functionality of the system may be much more difficult to assess without direct, first-hand knowledge of CMS systems that may be widely disparate in application.

Finally, AAMVA notes that a change to the standard may also require additional consideration of how CMS placement may be affected by combination vehicle arrangements.

AAMVA is fully aware of the potential safety advantages of emerging technologies. AAMVA thanks NHTSA for its consideration, and offers these comments in the hopes that they will ensure continued close collaboration between our federal safety partners, those developing safety technologies, and those responsible for enforcing and preserving vehicle safety.

Cian Cashin
AAMVA Director of Government Affairs
ccashin@aamva.org