

be exempt, the effective period, and all terms and conditions of the exemption (49 CFR 381.315(c)(1)). If the exemption is denied, the notice will explain the reason for the denial (49 CFR 381.315(c)(2)). The exemption may be renewed (49 CFR 381.300(b)). FMCSA grants medical exemptions from the FMCSRs for a 2-year period to align with the maximum duration of a driver's medical certification.

### III. Background

The physical qualification standard for drivers regarding hearing, found in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11), states that a person is physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person first perceives a forced whispered voice in the better ear at not less than 5 feet with or without the use of a hearing aid or, if tested by use of an audiometric device, does not have an average hearing loss in the better ear greater than 40 decibels at 500 Hz, 1,000 Hz, and 2,000 Hz with or without a hearing aid when the audiometric device is calibrated to American National Standard (formerly ASA Standard) Z24.5—1951.

This standard was adopted in 1970 and was revised in 1971 to allow drivers to be qualified under this standard while wearing a hearing aid (35 FR 6458, 6463 (Apr. 22, 1970) and 36 FR 12857 (July 8, 1971)).

The 12 individuals listed in this notice have requested renewal of their exemptions from the hearing standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11), in accordance with FMCSA procedures. Accordingly, FMCSA has evaluated these applications for renewal on their merits and decided to extend each exemption for a renewable 2-year period.

### IV. Request for Comments

Interested parties or organizations possessing information that would show that any, or all, of these drivers are not currently achieving the statutory level of safety should immediately notify FMCSA. The Agency will evaluate any adverse evidence submitted and, if the person has failed to comply with the terms and conditions of the exemption, or if safety is being compromised or if continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of Title 49 chapter 313 or section 31136, FMCSA will take immediate steps to revoke the exemption of a driver.

### V. Basis for Renewing Exemptions

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), each of the 12 applicants have satisfied the renewal conditions for obtaining an exemption from the hearing requirement. The 12 drivers in

this notice remain in good standing with the Agency. In addition, the Agency has reviewed each applicant's certified driving record from their State Driver's Licensing Agency (SDLA). The information obtained from each applicant's driving record provides the Agency with details regarding any moving violations or reported crash data, which demonstrates whether the driver has a safe driving history and is an indicator of future driving performance. If the driving record revealed a crash, FMCSA requested and reviewed the related police reports and other relevant documents, such as the citation and conviction information. These factors provide an adequate basis for predicting each driver's ability to continue to safely operate a CMV in interstate commerce. Accordingly, FMCSA concludes that extending the exemption for each of these drivers for a period of 2 years is likely to achieve a level of safety equivalent to the level that would be achieved without the exemption.

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), the following 12 individuals have satisfied the renewal conditions for obtaining an exemption from the hearing requirement in the FMCSRs for interstate CMV drivers:

Baldemar Barba (TX)  
Antonio Brown (LA)  
William Darnell (AZ)  
Lucius Fowler (IL)  
Alexander Lindsay (OH)  
Adrian Lopez (TX)  
Rage Muse (MN)  
Jodyann Nipper (IA)  
Michael Paul (IL)  
William Rivas (CA)  
Lakeisha Rosbia (AK)  
Robert Troeller (WI)

The drivers were included in docket numbers FMCSA–2017–0057, FMCSA–2017–0058, FMCSA–2019–0111, FMCSA–2021–0017, FMCSA–2023–0021, FMCSA–2023–0024, or FMCSA–2023–0025. Their exemptions were applicable as of March 4, 2026, and will expire on March 4, 2028.

### VI. Terms and Conditions

The exemptions are extended subject to the following conditions: each driver (1) must report to FMCSA any crashes, as defined in 49 CFR 390.5T, within 7 days of the crash; (2) must report to FMCSA any citations and convictions for disqualifying offenses under 49 CFR parts 383 and 391, within 7 days of the citation and conviction; (3) must submit to FMCSA annual certified driving records from their SDLA; and (4) is prohibited from operating a motorcoach or bus with passengers in interstate

commerce. The driver must also have a copy of the exemption when driving, for presentation to a duly authorized Federal, State, or local law enforcement official. In addition, the driver must meet all the applicable commercial driver's license testing requirements. Each exemption will be valid for 2 years unless rescinded earlier by FMCSA. The exemption will be rescinded if: (1) the person fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the exemption as set forth above; (2) the exemption has resulted in a lower level of safety than was maintained before it was granted; or (3) continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of Title 49 chapter 313 or section 31136.

### VII. Preemption

During the period the exemption is in effect, no State shall enforce any law or regulation that conflicts with this exemption with respect to a person operating under the exemption.

### VIII. Conclusion

Based upon its evaluation of the 12 exemption renewal applications, FMCSA renews the exemptions of the above-named drivers from the hearing requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11). In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), and FMCSA's policy of issuing medical exemptions for a 2-year period to correspond with the medical certificate, each exemption will be valid for 2 years unless revoked earlier by FMCSA.

**Larry W. Minor,**

*Associate Administrator for Policy.*

[FR Doc. 2026–04760 Filed 3–10–26; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–EX–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–2025–0523]

#### Zoox—Receipt of Application for Temporary Exemption From Various Requirements of the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards for an Automated Driving System-Equipped Vehicle; Request for Comment

**AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:** Request for public comment.

**SUMMARY:** Zoox, Inc. (“Zoox”) has petitioned NHTSA for a temporary exemption from certain requirements in eight Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) applicable to its

passenger car equipped with an automated driving system (ADS). Specifically, Zoox seeks exemption from portions of FMVSS No. 103, Windshield defrosting and defogging systems; FMVSS No. 104, Windshield wiping and washing systems; FMVSS No. 108, Lamps, reflective devices, and associated equipment; FMVSS No. 111, Rear visibility; FMVSS No. 135, Light vehicle brake systems; FMVSS No. 201, Occupant protection in interior impact; FMVSS No. 205, Glazing materials; and FMVSS No. 208, Occupant crash protection. NHTSA is publishing this document in accordance with statutory and administrative provisions and seeks comment on the merits of Zoox's exemption application and on potential terms and conditions that should be applied to a temporary exemption if granted. After receiving and considering public comments, NHTSA will make a decision on the merits of the application and will publish a notice in the **Federal Register** setting forth NHTSA's reasoning for either granting or denying the petition.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before April 10, 2026.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments to the docket number identified in the heading of this document by any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submissions:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202-493-2251.
- *Mail or Hand Delivery:* Docket Management, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building, Suite W58-213, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 366-9826 or (202) 366-9317 before coming.

*Instructions:* All submissions must include the agency name and docket number. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act discussion below. NHTSA will consider all comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above. To the extent possible, NHTSA will also consider comments filed after the closing date.

*Docket:* For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/NHTSA-2025-0523> at any time or to 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building

Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays. Telephone: 202-366-9826.

*Privacy Act:* In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), as described in the system of records notice, DOT/ALL-14 FDMS, accessible through [www.dot.gov/privacy](http://www.dot.gov/privacy). In order to facilitate comment tracking and response, we encourage commenters to provide their name, or the name of their organization; however, submission of names is completely optional. Whether or not commenters identify themselves, all timely comments will be fully considered. If you wish to provide comments containing proprietary or confidential information, please contact the agency for alternate submission instructions.

*Confidential Business Information:* If you wish to submit any information under a claim of confidentiality, you must submit your request directly to NHTSA's Office of the Chief Counsel. Requests for confidentiality are governed by 49 CFR part 512. If you claim that any of the information or documents provided to the Agency constitute confidential business information within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4), or are protected from disclosure pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 1905, you must submit supporting information together with the materials that are the subject of the confidentiality request, in accordance with part 512, to the Office of the Chief Counsel. Your request must include a cover letter setting forth the information specified in our confidential business information regulation (49 CFR 512.8) and a certificate, pursuant to § 512.4(b) and part 512, appendix A. NHTSA is currently treating electronic submission as an acceptable method for submitting confidential business information to the Agency under part 512. Please do not send a hardcopy of a request for confidential treatment to NHTSA's headquarters. The request should be sent to Dan Rabinovitz in the Office of the Chief Counsel at [Daniel.Rabinovitz@dot.gov](mailto:Daniel.Rabinovitz@dot.gov) or you may contact him for a secure file transfer link. Manufacturers or any companies that already have a Confidential Business Information (CBI) Portal account or an Enterprise Account with NHTSA should use the CBI Portal for their submission. If you submit a CBI request, please also email a courtesy copy of the request to Callie Roach, Office of the Chief Counsel at [callie.roach@dot.gov](mailto:callie.roach@dot.gov). In addition, you

should submit a copy, from which you have deleted the claimed confidential business information, to the Docket at the address given above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For legal issues: Callie Roach, Office of the Chief Counsel at [callie.roach@dot.gov](mailto:callie.roach@dot.gov). For technical issues: Emily Shull, Rulemaking Office of Automation Safety at [Emily.Shull@dot.gov](mailto:Emily.Shull@dot.gov); Fax: (202) 366-7002. Mailing address: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

- I. Introduction
- II. Authority and Procedures for Temporary Exemption
- III. Zoox's Application
- IV. Agency's Review of Zoox's Application
- V. Terms
- VI. Public Participation

#### I. Introduction

NHTSA is responsible for promulgating and enforcing Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) designed to improve motor vehicle safety. Generally, a manufacturer may not manufacture for sale, sell, offer for sale, or introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce a vehicle that does not comply with all applicable FMVSS.<sup>1</sup> There are limited exceptions to this general prohibition.<sup>2</sup> One path permits manufacturers to petition NHTSA for an exemption for noncompliant vehicles under a specified set of statutory bases.<sup>3</sup>

On August 22, 2025, Zoox submitted an application for exemption for its ADS-equipped vehicle, the "Zoox robotaxi." Specifically, Zoox petitioned NHTSA for a temporary exemption from portions of eight FMVSS. Zoox requests a two-year exemption for not more than 2,500 exempted vehicles for each 12-month period covered by the exemption. Granting the temporary exemption would allow Zoox to manufacture for sale, sell, or deploy into interstate commerce vehicles that do not comply fully with the FMVSS.

NHTSA is seeking comment on the merits of Zoox's exemption application, as supplemented by additional information provided to NHTSA. These documents are available in the docket for this petition, available at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/NHTSA-2025-0523>.

<sup>1</sup> 49 U.S.C. 30112(a)(1).

<sup>2</sup> 49 U.S.C. 30112(b); 49 U.S.C. 30113; 49 U.S.C. 30114.

<sup>3</sup> 49 U.S.C. 30113.

## II. Authority and Procedures for Temporary Exemption

The National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act (the "Safety Act") authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to exempt motor vehicles on a temporary basis, under specified circumstances and on terms that the Secretary considers appropriate, from an FMVSS or bumper standard. This authority is set forth at 49 U.S.C. 30113 and has been delegated to NHTSA.<sup>4</sup> Section 30113 authorizes the Secretary to grant, in whole or in part, a temporary exemption to a vehicle manufacturer if the Secretary finds that the exemption meets one of the four enumerated bases<sup>5</sup> and finds that the exemption is consistent with the public interest and with the objectives of the Safety Act.<sup>6</sup>

Zoox seeks a temporary exemption on the basis specified in 49 CFR 555.6(d) that compliance with the eight FMVSS would prevent it from selling a motor vehicle with an overall safety level at least equal to the overall safety level of nonexempt (*i.e.*, compliant) vehicles.<sup>7</sup>

NHTSA established 49 CFR part 555, *Temporary Exemption from Motor Vehicle Safety and Bumper Standards*, to implement the statutory provisions concerning temporary exemptions. The requirements in 49 CFR 555.5 state that the applicant must set forth the basis of the application and the information required under 49 CFR 555.6, and the reasons why the exemption would be in the public interest and consistent with the objectives of the Safety Act. An application submitted on the basis that the applicant is otherwise unable to sell a vehicle whose overall level of safety is at least equal to that of a nonexempt vehicle must include the information specified in 49 CFR 555.6(d).

## III. Zoox's Application

Zoox's application provides a description of its vehicle and safety features. It discusses how specific aspects their vehicle's design precludes compliance certification with certain aspects of specific FMVSS (*e.g.*, the vehicle does not have a service brake pedal required by FMVSS No. 135, "Light vehicle brake systems" because the vehicle is designed never to be operated by a human driver). The application describes requested FMVSS

exemptions and explains why Zoox believes the vehicle provides an overall safety level equivalent to a nonexempt vehicle. The application also details the capabilities of the automated driving system, general operational procedures, and Zoox's public interest arguments. To support its safety justification, Zoox submitted nine appendices. Following the application, NHTSA requested further information regarding the vehicle's design, the ADS, and operations. Because Zoox sought confidential treatment of portions of its submitted materials, redacted versions of Zoox's application, appendices, and responses to NHTSA's questions can be found in the docket.<sup>8</sup>

Zoox has petitioned NHTSA for a temporary exemption from certain requirements in eight FMVSS for its ADS-equipped vehicle. Specifically, Zoox seeks exemption from portions of:

- FMVSS No. 103, "Windshield defrosting and defogging systems"
- FMVSS No. 104, "Windshield wiping and washing systems"
- FMVSS No. 108, "Lamps, reflective devices, and associated equipment"
- FMVSS No. 111, "Rear visibility"
- FMVSS No. 135, "Light vehicle brake systems"
- FMVSS No. 201, "Occupant protection in interior impact"
- FMVSS No. 205, "Glazing materials" and
- FMVSS No. 208, "Occupant crash protection"

## IV. Agency's Review of Zoox's Application

NHTSA has not yet made any decision on the merits of Zoox's application. NHTSA will make a decision on the merits of the application after receiving and considering public comments to this notice, as well as any additional information that the agency receives from Zoox.

## V. Terms

Section 30113 authorizes the Secretary, NHTSA by delegation, to condition the grant of a temporary exemption "on terms [NHTSA] considers appropriate."<sup>9</sup> The agency's authority to set terms includes the ability to set terms that would ensure that the exemption is in the public interest and allow NHTSA to oversee vehicle operation as appropriate. If

NHTSA decides to grant Zoox's application, it will carefully consider whether and what terms to establish. The terms may apply for specified lengths of time or may apply throughout the exempted vehicles' useful life. In addition, NHTSA may condition a grant on operational terms that may be changed pursuant to subsequent letters from NHTSA that will be made publicly available.

## VI. Public Participation

### A. Request for Comment and Comment Period

The agency seeks comment from the public on the merits of Zoox's petition for a temporary exemption. NHTSA is also seeking comment on the potential types of terms the agency should set if the agency decides to grant the petition. NHTSA is providing a 30-day comment period. After considering public comments and other available information, NHTSA will publish a notice of final action on the petition in the **Federal Register**.

### B. Instructions for Submitting Comments

How long do I have to submit comments?

Please see **DATES** section at the beginning of this document.

How do I prepare and submit comments?

- Your comments must be written in English.

- To ensure that your comments are correctly filed in the Docket, please include the Docket Number shown at the beginning of this document in your comments.

- If you are submitting comments electronically as a PDF (Adobe) File, NHTSA asks that the documents be submitted using the Optical Character Recognition (OCR) process, thus allowing NHTSA to search and copy certain portions of your submissions. Comments may be submitted to the docket electronically by logging onto the Docket Management System website at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- You may also submit two copies of your comments, including the attachments, to Docket Management at the address given above under **ADDRESSES**.

<sup>4</sup> 49 CFR 1.95.

<sup>5</sup> 49 U.S.C. 30113(b)(3).

<sup>6</sup> 49 U.S.C. 30113(b)(3)(A).

<sup>7</sup> 49 U.S.C. 30113(b)(3)(B)(iv).

<sup>8</sup> NHTSA-2025-0523.

<sup>9</sup> 49 U.S.C. 30113(b)(1) (delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.95).

Please note that pursuant to the Data Quality Act, in order for substantive data to be relied upon and used by the agency, it must meet the information quality standards set forth in the OMB and DOT Data Quality Act guidelines. Accordingly, we encourage you to consult the guidelines in preparing your comments. OMB's guidelines may be accessed at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/reproducible.html>. DOT's guidelines may be accessed at [http://www.bts.gov/programs/statistical\\_policy\\_and\\_research/data\\_quality\\_guidelines](http://www.bts.gov/programs/statistical_policy_and_research/data_quality_guidelines).

Will the Agency consider late comments?

We will consider all comments that Docket Management receives before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above under **DATES**. To the extent possible, we will also consider comments that Docket Management receives after that date.

How can I read the comments submitted by other people?

You may see the comments on the internet. To read the comments on the internet, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for accessing the dockets.

Please note that, even after the comment closing date, we will continue to file relevant information in the Docket as it becomes available. Further, some people may submit late comments. Accordingly, we recommend that you periodically check the Docket for new material.

*Authority:* 49 U.S.C. 30113 and 30166; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.95.

**Jonathan Morrison,**  
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2026-04730 Filed 3-10-26; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-59-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Bureau of Transportation Statistics

[Docket No. DOT-OST-2026-0727]

#### Data Security Requirements for Accessing Confidential Data; Agency Information Collection Activities; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology (OST-R), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) within the Department of Transportation (DOT) invites the general public and other Federal

agencies to comment on an existing information collection. BTS collects information from the public to fulfill its data security requirements when providing access to restricted use microdata for the purpose of evidence building. BTS's data security agreements and other paperwork along with the corresponding security protocols allow BTS to maintain careful controls on confidentiality and privacy, as required by law. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment on the renewal of the data security information collection, prior to submission of the information collection request (ICR) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

**DATES:** Written comments on this notice must be received by May 11, 2026 to be assured of consideration. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable. Send comments to the address below.

**ADDRESSES:** 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Room E34-308, Washington, DC 20590.

*Comments:* Comments are invited on (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of BTS, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of BTS's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, use, and clarity of the information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Clara Reschovsky, BTS Confidentiality Officer, BTS, OST-R, Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Room E34-308, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 768-4994, Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 mandated that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) establish a Standard Application Process (SAP) for requesting access to certain confidential data assets. While the adoption of the SAP is required for statistical agencies and units designated under the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA), it is recognized that other agencies and

organizational units within the Executive branch may benefit from the adoption of the SAP to accept applications for access to confidential data assets. The SAP is to be a process through which agencies, the Congressional Budget Office, State, local, and Tribal governments, researchers, and other individuals, as appropriate, may apply to access confidential data assets held by a federal statistical agency or unit for the purposes of developing evidence. With the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP) as advisors, the entities upon whom this requirement is levied are working with the SAP Project Management Office (PMO) and with OMB to implement the SAP. The SAP Portal is to be a single web-based common application for the public to request access to confidential data assets from federal statistical agencies and units. The National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES), within the National Science Foundation (NSF), submitted a **Federal Register** Notice in June 2025 announcing the renewal plan to collect information through the SAP Portal (90 FR 25380).

Once an application for confidential data is approved through the SAP Portal, BTS will collect information to meet its data security requirements. This collection will occur outside of the SAP Portal.

*Title of Collection:* Data Security Requirements for Accessing Confidential Data.

*OMB Control Number:* 2138-0052.

*Expiration Date of Current Approval:* May 31, 2026.

*Type of Request:* Intent to seek approval to collect information from the public to fulfill BTS security requirements allowing individuals to access confidential data assets for the purposes of building evidence.

*Abstract:* Title III of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (hereafter referred to as the Evidence Act) mandates that OMB establish a Standard Application Process (SAP) for requesting access to certain confidential data assets. Specifically, the Evidence Act requires OMB to establish a common application process through which agencies, the Congressional Budget Office, State, local, and Tribal governments, researchers, and other individuals, as appropriate, may apply for access to confidential data assets collected, accessed, or acquired by a statistical agency or unit. This new process will be implemented while maintaining stringent controls to protect confidentiality and privacy, as required by law.