(h) If the vehicle is incapable of attaining 100 km/h, it is tested at the same speed used for the GVWR cold effectiveness test.

(i) Immediately after completion of the first recovery performance stop accelerate as rapidly as possible to the specified test speed and conduct the second recovery performance stop.

S7.16.4. *Performance requirements.*

The stopping distance, S, for at least one of the two stops must be within the following limits:

$$\frac{0.0386V^2}{1.50d_c} \leq S - 0.10V \leq \frac{0.0386V^2}{0.70d_c}$$

where d_c and V are defined in S7.14.4(a).

S7.17. *Final inspection.* Inspect:

(a) The service brake system for detachment or fracture of any components, such as brake springs and brake shoes or disc pad facings.

(b) The friction surface of the brake, the master cylinder or brake power unit reservoir cover, and seal and filler openings, for leakage of brake fluid or lubricant.

(c) The master cylinder or brake power unit reservoir for compliance with the volume and labeling requirements of S5.4.2 and S5.4.3. In determining the fully applied worn condition, assume that the lining is worn to

(1) rivet or bolt heads on riveted or bolted linings or

(2) within 0.8 mm (1/32 inch) of shoe or pad mounting surface on bonded linings or

(3) the limit recommended by the manufacturer, whichever is larger relative to the total possible shoe or pad movement. Drums or rotors are assumed to be at nominal design drum diameter or rotor thickness. Linings are assumed adjusted for normal operating clearance in the released position.

(d) The brake system telltales, for compliance with operation in various key positions, lens color, labeling, and location, in accordance with S5.5.

Issued in Washington, DC, under authority delegated in 49 CFR 1.95 and 501.7.

Jonathan Morrison,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2026–12981 Filed 6–25–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 571

[Docket No. NHTSA–2025–0048]

RIN 2127–AM77

Response to Petition for Reconsideration, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages

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

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM); response to petition for reconsideration.

SUMMARY: NHTSA published a final rule on September 17, 2024 that amended the regulation on seat belt assembly anchorages. The final rule updated the test procedure for existing test devices and added an alternative test device as a compliance option. In response to the 2024 final rule, the agency received a petition for reconsideration from the Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association. After considering the petition, NHTSA is proposing to delay the compliance date from September 1, 2027 to September 1, 2030 for vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of greater than 4,536 kg.

DATES: Comments must be received by July 27, 2026.

Proposed Compliance Date: For vehicles weighing less than or equal to 4,536 kg (10,000 pounds), the compliance date would remain September 1, 2027. For vehicles weighing greater than 4,536 kg (10,000 pounds), the new compliance date would be September 1, 2030. The compliance date for multi-stage manufacturers and alterers of vehicles less than or equal to 4,536 kg (10,000 pounds) would remain September 1, 2028. The proposal would permit voluntary early compliance.

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

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *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.
- *Fax:* 202–493–2251.

Regardless of how you submit your comments, please mention the docket number of this document.

Instructions: For detailed instructions on submitting comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the Public Participation heading of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to *http://www.regulations.gov,* including any personal information provided.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to *www.regulations.gov,* or the street address listed above. Follow the online instructions for accessing the dockets.

Confidential Business Information: If you claim that any of the information in your comment (including any additional documents or attachments) constitutes confidential business information within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4) or is protected from disclosure pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 1905, please see the detailed instructions given under the Public Participation heading of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

Privacy Act: Please see the Privacy Act heading under the Regulatory Analyses section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For technical issues, you may contact Joshua McNeil, Office of Crashworthiness Standards (*joshua.mcneil@dot.gov*). For legal issues, you may contact John Piazza, Office of the Chief Counsel (*john.piazza@dot.gov*). You can reach these officials by phone at 202–366–1810. *Address:* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary

In this notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM), NHTSA responds to a petition for reconsideration of a final rule published September 17, 2024 that amended Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 210, ''Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages.'' [1] The 2024 final rule amended the procedures for testing the strength of seat belt anchorages in FMVSS No. 210 by clarifying the positioning of the test device currently specified in the standard and added an optional test device as a certification alternative. These amendments responded to an earlier court decision [2] in which the court found that the regulatory test procedures did not provide manufacturers adequate notice of how NHTSA would conduct the test in FMVSS No. 210.

NHTSA received a petition for reconsideration from the Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA). NHTSA is proposing to grant the petition from EMA to extend the lead time from September 1, 2027 to September 1, 2030 for heavy vehicles (vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 10,000 pounds) to apply the updated test procedures. NHTSA would continue to allow early compliance if the manufacturer chooses to certify to the updated test procedures.

II. Background

FMVSS No. 210, ''Seat belt assembly anchorages,'' establishes requirements for seat belt anchorages, which are the part of the vehicle that transfers seat belt loads to the vehicle structure. The standard sets out requirements for seat belt anchorages, including performance requirements that ensure the anchorages are strong enough to remain attached to the vehicle structure in a crash. The standard applies to passenger cars, multipurpose passenger vehicles, trucks, and buses, irrespective of weight. The standard requires seat belt anchorages to withstand specified forces when tested according to the test procedures in S5. Prior to the 2024 final rule, the standard specified only that the test forces be applied to the seat belts by test devices referred to as ''body blocks,'' which essentially take the place of an occupant. The body blocks are placed on the seat, secured with the seat belt, and attached to a force actuator that applies the specified test forces. The standard has included the anchorage strength requirements and body blocks since its inception in 1967.

On September 17, 2024, NHTSA published a final rule that amended FMVSS No. 210 by modifying the test procedures for evaluating seat belt anchorage strength in passenger cars, multipurpose passenger vehicles, trucks, buses, and school buses. The changes added an optional Force Application Device (FAD), which simulates the human form, and refined the existing ''body block'' test method.[3] The FAD offers manufacturers an alternative certification tool by applying human-like loads, but was tested primarily in light vehicles during the rulemaking process. NHTSA retained the use of body blocks in the test procedure but established ''positioning zones'' to standardize their placement to improve the test repeatability.

The 2024 final rule set a compliance date of September 1, 2027, at which time manufacturers would be required to certify to either the updated test procedure for the body blocks or the test procedure for the FAD(s), with optional early compliance permitted. NHTSA previously issued an NPRM,[4] a Supplemental Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (SNPRM),[5] and a Notice of Availability [6] detailing the research used to develop the zones. A report titled, ''Development of Positioning Zones for FMVSS No. 210 Body Blocks,'' which will herein be referred to as the ''zone development report,'' was used as the basis for the zones in the final rule.[7] Consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act,[8] NHTSA regulations at 49 CFR 553.35 allow interested parties to petition for reconsideration within 45 days of the final rule's publication in the **Federal Register**. As required by 49 CFR 553.35(a), such petitions must state briefly the complaint and explain why rule compliance is impractical, unreasonable, or not in the public interest.

In response to the 2024 final rule, the Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA) submitted a petition for reconsideration on November 1, 2024.[9] EMA's petition notes that the changes to FMVSS No. 210 could pose significant challenges for heavy-duty vehicle [10] manufacturers due to the unique designs, long lifecycles, and diverse configurations of their vehicles, which EMA states differ greatly from light passenger vehicles.

III. Summary of EMA's Petition

EMA is a trade association representing manufacturers of commercial motor vehicles that design and manufacture vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 4,536 kg (10,000 pounds). EMA states that these heavy-duty vehicles are highly customized to perform a wide variety of commercial functions such as interstate trucking, regional freight shipping and intracity pickup and delivery.

EMA requested that NHTSA exclude vehicles with a GVWR over 4,536 kg (10,000 pounds) from the rule pending further research to ensure the rule is practicable for those vehicles. Alternatively, EMA requested that

[1] 89 FR 76236 (Sept. 17, 2024).

[2] In the 1990s, NHTSA brought an enforcement action against a manufacturer for an apparent noncompliance with FMVSS No. 210. NHTSA positioned the pelvic body block away from the rear seat back, believing that positioning the body block in this manner was within the test parameters of the standard. The manufacturer argued that its vehicle met FMVSS No. 210 when tested with the body block placed against the seat back, and that NHTSA's placement of the pelvic body block forward of the seat back was not required by FMVSS No. 210. Ultimately, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit determined that NHTSA failed to provide adequate notice about the correct placement of the pelvic body block, *i.e.,* that it could be placed forward of the seat back. *United States* v. *Chrysler Corporation,* 158 F.3rd 1350 (D.C. Cir. 1998).

[3] There are two body blocks specified in FMVSS No. 210. A pelvic body block that loads the lap belt and an upper torso body block that loads the shoulder belt.

[4] 77 FR 19155 (March 30, 2012).

[5] 80 FR 11148 (March 2, 2015).

[6] 83 FR 16280 (April 16, 2018).

[7] NHTSA–2012–0036–0041.

[8] 5 U.S.C. 553(e) requires that each agency provide interested persons the right to petition for the issuance, amendment, or repeal of a rule.

[9] Docket No. NHTSA–2024–0025–0003.

[10] EMA uses the term ''heavy-duty'' in its petitions to refer to vehicles from Class 3 (GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds) to Class 8 (GVWR greater than 33,000 pounds). However, heavy-duty typically refers to vehicles in Class 7 (GVWR greater than 26,000 pounds) and Class 8 and medium-duty refer to vehicles in Classes 3 to 6 (GVWR 10,000 pounds to 26,000 pounds).

NHTSA delay the compliance date for those vehicles until at least September 1, 2030. The main reasons for EMA's requests were the practicability of the zones for a wide variety of heavy-duty vehicle configurations and resource burdens. EMA also argued that there was not adequate notice and opportunity to comment on the body block zones, and that NHTSA had insufficient test data from heavy vehicles in the development and validation of the body block zones.

EMA stated that the modified FMVSS No. 210 test procedures impose a significant compliance burden, which could require thousands of person-hours for engineering analyses, simulations, and physical re-certification across long-lifecycle heavy-duty platforms. Despite NHTSA's assertion that the updated zones will not affect test outcomes, EMA maintained that manufacturers must proactively validate designs against new potential loading scenarios at the zone perimeters. EMA noted that if performance issues emerge under the refined procedure, heavy vehicle manufacturers would be forced into costly redevelopment, as positioning body blocks at the zone perimeters may subject anchorages to unrealistic loads for which they were not originally designed.

EMA also raised concerns about the feasibility of the body block zones for heavy vehicles. EMA stated that deriving the zones from light-duty passenger vehicle data fails to account for the distinct seat, belt, and cab geometries unique to heavy vehicles. EMA argued that NHTSA's validation of the zones relied on light-duty passenger vehicles and that the school bus and motorcoach seats used by NHTSA in the validation are not sufficiently representative of the broad heavy vehicle category.

IV. NHTSA's Responses to EMA's Requests and Proposal To Extend Compliance Dates for Heavy Vehicles

For the reasons explained below, NHTSA is proposing to grant EMA's alternative request that the compliance date for heavy-duty vehicles be extended to September 1, 2030.

Upon consideration of EMA's petition for reconsideration, NHTSA recognizes the potential for unforeseen challenges and re-evaluation costs for heavy-duty vehicle manufacturers. The heavy vehicles covered by FMVSS No. 210 rely on longer-lived platforms and smaller, more variable production runs than light passenger vehicles. Accordingly, to allow for validation across the wide variety of configurations of heavy vehicles, NHTSA is proposing to grant EMA's petition request to extend the lead time for heavy vehicles (those with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds) by three years to September 1, 2030, with optional early compliance permitted. A five-year lead time would better align with production cycles and allow manufacturers of heavy vehicles to plan the use of resources strategically such that serviceable heavy vehicles can remain in use.

NHTSA does not grant EMA's petition or propose to exclude vehicles with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds from the updated test procedures in FMVSS No. 210. FMVSS No. 210 has been effective in addressing a critical failure point. Even the best seat belt design would be useless if the anchorage points fail during a crash. By requiring the anchorages to withstand forces of 3,000 pounds at the torso and pelvic body block for Type 2 seat belts and 5,000 pounds for Type 1 seat belts, the standard ensures that seat belts remain attached. Strong anchorage requirements have enabled the development of more advanced restraint systems, including pretensioners and load limiters. Excluding heavy vehicles could result in a decrease in safety.

V. Technical Corrections

In the 2024 final rule, Figures 7 and 8 contained incorrect shoulder-to-shoulder and pelvis width dimensions for the FADs, despite being for illustration only. For FAD1 (Figure 7), NHTSA is proposing to correct the shoulder width to 457.22 mm (from 440.29 mm) and the pelvis width to 386.70 mm (from 369.70 mm). For FAD2 (Figure 8), NHTSA is proposing to correct the shoulder width to 299.34 mm (from 209.34 mm), while the pelvis width remains 249.35 mm. These corrections align the figures with the drawing packages incorporated by reference (IBR) in the 2024 final rule. This issue was brought to NHTSA's attention by a vehicle manufacturer, who sought to verify the dimensional accuracy of the FAD illustrations. These proposed amendments ensure the visual representations of FAD1 and FAD2 in FMVSS No. 210 match the dimensions in the referenced engineering drawings, clarifying the intended FAD dimensions.

VI. Regulatory Notices and Analyses

Executive Orders 12866 and 14192

NHTSA has considered the impact of this proposal under Executive Order (E.O.) 12866 and E.O. 14192. This NPRM is not considered to be significant under E.O. 12866 and was not reviewed by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs within the Office of Management and Budget. The proposed amendment to the compliance dates is an E.O. 14192 deregulatory action.

The proposed changes in compliance dates for heavy-duty vehicles would not result in additional costs; any additional costs associated with compliance would simply be delayed. In addition, there may be a cost savings associated with the proposed delay in compliance dates any costs associated with re-certification can be deferred. There is not enough information available to quantify any effects on the cost or benefits due to the delayed compliance dates, but NHTSA would expect any effects to be minimal, because the 2024 final rule simply clarified the existing test procedures and introduced an optional new test device; it was not intended to make any substantive changes to the standard.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) (5 U.S.C. 601–612) (as amended by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA) of 1996; 5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*), agencies must prepare and make available for public comment a regulatory flexibility analysis that describes the effect of the rule on small entities (*i.e.,* small businesses, small organizations, and small government jurisdictions). No regulatory flexibility analysis is required, however, if the head of an agency or an appropriate designee certifies that the rule does not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

The proposed delay in the compliance date would reduce the burden on small entities by providing more time to comply with the new requirements. Manufacturers producing vehicles that weigh greater than 10,000 pounds would have until September 1, 2030 to prepare their vehicles for testing with the updated procedures. For these reasons, I certify that this rulemaking action would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

Executive Order 13132 (Federalism)

NHTSA has examined this rule pursuant to E.O. 13132 (64 FR 43255, Aug. 10, 1999) and concluded that no additional consultation with States, local governments, or their representatives is mandated beyond the rulemaking process. The agency has concluded that this rule, does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant consultation with State and local officials or the preparation of a federalism summary impact statement.

The rule does not have ''substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.''

NHTSA rules can have a preemptive effect in two ways. First, the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act contains an express preemption provision: When a motor vehicle safety standard is in effect under this chapter, a State or a political subdivision of a State may prescribe or continue in effect a standard applicable to the same aspect of performance of a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment only if the standard is identical to the standard prescribed under this chapter. 49 U.S.C. 30103(b)(1). It is this statutory command by Congress that preempts any non-identical State legislative and administrative law addressing the same aspect of performance. The express preemption provision described above is subject to a savings clause under which compliance with a motor vehicle safety standard prescribed under this chapter does not exempt a person from liability at common law. 49 U.S.C. 30103(e). Pursuant to this provision, State common law tort causes of action against motor vehicle manufacturers that might otherwise be preempted by the express preemption provision are generally preserved.

NHTSA rules can also preempt State law if complying with the FMVSS would render the motor vehicle manufacturers liable under State tort law. Because most NHTSA standards established by an FMVSS are minimum standards, a State common law tort cause of action that seeks to impose a higher standard on motor vehicle manufacturers will generally not be preempted. If and when such a conflict does exist—for example, when the standard at issue is both a minimum and a maximum standard—the State common law tort cause of action is impliedly preempted. *See Geier* v. *American Honda Motor Co.,* 529 U.S. 861 (2000).

Pursuant to E.O. 13132 and E.O. 12988, NHTSA has considered whether this rule preempts State common law causes of action. The agency's ability to announce its conclusion regarding the preemptive effect of one of its rules reduces the likelihood that preemption will be an issue in any subsequent tort litigation. To this end, the agency has examined the nature (*e.g.,* the language and structure of the regulatory text) and objectives of this rule and does not foresee any State requirements that conflict with it. NHTSA does not intend that this rule preempts State tort law that would effectively impose a higher standard on motor vehicle manufacturers than that established by this rule. Establishment of a higher standard by means of State tort law would not conflict with the standards in this rule. Without any conflict, there could not be any implied preemption of a State common law tort cause of action.

Executive Order 12988 (Civil Justice Reform)

With respect to the review of the promulgation of a new regulation, section 3(b) of E.O. 12988, ''Civil Justice Reform'' (61 FR 4729, Feb. 7, 1996), requires that Executive agencies make every reasonable effort to ensure that the regulation: (1) clearly specifies the preemptive effect; (2) clearly specifies the effect on existing Federal law or regulation; (3) provides a clear legal standard for affected conduct, while promoting simplification and burden reduction; (4) clearly specifies the retroactive effect, if any; (5) specifies whether administrative proceedings are to be required before parties file suit in court; (6) adequately defines key terms; and (7) addresses other important issues affecting clarity and general draftsmanship under any guidelines issued by the Attorney General. This document is consistent with that requirement.

NHTSA has reviewed this rulemaking action and determined that it conforms to the applicable standards in section 3(b)(2) of E.O. 12988, Civil Justice Reform. The issue of preemption is discussed above in connection with E.O. 13132 (Federalism). NHTSA believes that this proposed rule specifies clearly the changes to FMVSS No. 210, defines any necessary key terms, and provides a clear legal standard for manufacturers to follow. The amendments do not take effect retroactively. NHTSA notes further that there is no requirement that an individual submit a petition for reconsideration or pursue other administrative proceedings before they may file suit in court.

Executive Order 13609 (Promoting International Regulatory Cooperation)

The policy statement in section 1 of E.O. 13609, ''Promoting International Regulatory Cooperation,'' provides that the regulatory approaches taken by foreign governments may differ from those taken by the United States to address similar issues, and that in some cases the differences between them might not be necessary and might impair the ability of American businesses to export and compete internationally. It further recognizes that in meeting shared challenges involving health, safety, and other issues, international regulatory cooperation can identify approaches that are at least as protective as those that are or would be adopted in the absence of such cooperation and can reduce, eliminate, or prevent unnecessary differences in regulatory requirements.

The September 2024 final rule differs from comparable foreign regulations for the reasons described in the preamble to the September 2024 final rule. Specifically, these differences are necessary to ensure the standard is enforceable in the U.S. and to give manufacturers additional compliance options. Because the changes in this final rule are extending the compliance date for some vehicles and not changing the requirements for seat belt assembly anchorages, they do not implicate any issues regarding international regulatory cooperation.

National Environmental Policy Act

The Department has analyzed the environmental impacts of this notice of proposed rulemaking pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). Pursuant to 49 CFR 1.81, the Secretary has delegated the ''functions'' under NEPA to the Administrators ''as they relate to the matters within the primary responsibility of each Operating Administration.'' NHTSA has determined that this proposed rule is categorically excluded pursuant to 23 CFR 771.118(c)(4). Categorical exclusions are actions identified in an agency's NEPA procedures that do not normally have a significant impact on the environment and therefore do not require either an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS). *See* DOT Order 5610.1D, section 9. In analyzing the applicability of a categorical exclusion, the agency must also consider whether extraordinary circumstances are present that would warrant the preparation of an EA or EIS. *Id.* at section 9(b). An Operating Administration (OA) of the Department may apply CEs established in another OA's procedures. *Id.* at section 9(f). To do so, the Operating Administration ''must evaluate the action for extraordinary circumstances identified in the OA procedures in which the CE is established to determine if a normally excluded action may have a significant impact and coordinate with the originating OA to ensure that the CE is being applied correctly.'' *Id.* This rulemaking, which proposes to amend FMVSS No. 210 to extend the lead time for some vehicles, is categorically excluded pursuant to 23

CFR 771.118(c)(4): Planning and administrative activities that do not involve or lead directly to construction, such as: Training, technical assistance and research; promulgation of rules, regulations, directives, or program guidance; approval of project concepts; engineering; and operating assistance to transit authorities to continue existing service or increase service to meet routine demand. NHTSA has coordinated with the Federal Transit Administration to ensure that this CE is being applied correctly. NHTSA does not anticipate any environmental impacts, and there are no extraordinary circumstances present in connection with this rulemaking.

Paperwork Reduction Act

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, a person is not required to respond to a collection of information by a Federal agency unless the collection displays a valid control number from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The proposed rule does not have any requirements that are considered to be information collection requirements as defined by the OMB in 5 CFR part 1320.

National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act

Under the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (NTTAA), ''all Federal agencies and departments shall use technical standards that are developed or adopted by voluntary consensus standards bodies, using such technical standards as a means to carry out policy objectives or activities determined by the agencies and departments.'' However, if the use of such technical standards would be ''inconsistent with applicable law or otherwise impractical, a Federal agency or department may elect to use technical standards that are not developed or adopted by voluntary consensus standards bodies.'' Voluntary consensus standards are technical standards (*e.g.,* materials specifications, test methods, sampling procedures, and business practices) that are developed or adopted by voluntary consensus standards bodies such as Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE). The NTTAA directs the agency to provide Congress, through OMB, explanations when the agency decides not to use available and applicable voluntary consensus standards. Circular A–119 directs that evaluating whether to use a voluntary consensus standard should be done on a case-by-case basis. An agency should consider, where applicable, factors such as the nature of the agency's statutory mandate and the consistency of the standard with that mandate.

The agency identified an SAE standard (J384, Rev. 2014) that has testing recommendations for seat belt anchorages. The standard recommends the use of body blocks, similar to those currently specified in FMVSS No. 210, for applying the required test loads. SAE J384 specifies test procedures for seat belt anchorages. It is nearly identical to FMVSS No. 210, with similar body block specifications (the torso body block has the same dimensions, but also includes a pull arm), test loads, and the option to replace the seat belt webbing with other material. The standard specifies a preload of 10 percent. The body blocks are positioned at each DSP and the seat belts are positioned around the blocks ''to represent design intent routing.''

The SAE standard does not specify a zone for body block placement, nor does it permit the use of the FAD. The preamble to the 2024 final rule explained why NHTSA believes these deviations from consensus standards are justified. In short, the body block placement zones are necessary to ensure that the standard is enforceable. With respect to the FAD, manufacturers may continue to certify to the requirements as tested with the body blocks if they do not want to use this new test device, though NHTSA believes that the FAD does have advantages over the body blocks, including that the FADs require significantly less effort and time to install in a test vehicle.

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA) requires Federal agencies to prepare a written assessment of the costs, benefits, and other effects of proposed or final rules that include a Federal mandate likely to result in the expenditure by State, local, or tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, of $206 million (the value equivalent of $100 million in 1995, adjusted for inflation to 2025) or more in any one year. This proposed rule does not contain Federal mandates (under the regulatory provisions of Title II of the UMRA) for State, local and Tribal governments, or the private sector of $206 million or more in any one year. Thus, the analytical requirements of the UMRA do not apply to this action.

Executive Order 13175

E.O. 13175 requires Federal agencies to consult and coordinate with Tribes on a government-to-government basis on policies that have Tribal implications, including regulations, legislative comments or proposed legislation, and other policy statements or actions that have substantial direct effects on one or more Indian Tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes. NHTSA has assessed the impact of this rule on Indian Tribes and determined that this rule does not have tribal implications that require consultation under Executive Order 13175.

E-Government Act Compliance

NHTSA is committed to complying with the E-Government Act, 2002 to promote the use of the internet and other information technologies to provide increased opportunities for citizen access to Government information and services, and for other purposes. The E-Government Act of 2002 (Pub. L. 107–347, sec. 208, 116 Stat. 2899, 2921, Dec. 17, 2002) requires Federal agencies to conduct a privacy impact assessment for new or substantially changed technology that collects, maintains, or disseminates information in an identifiable form. No new or substantially changed technology would collect, maintain, or disseminate information as a result of this proposed rule. Accordingly, NHTSA has not conducted a privacy impact assessment.

Privacy Act

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its decision-making process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to *www.regulations.gov,* as described in the system of records notice (DOT/ALL–14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at *www.transportation.gov/privacy.* Anyone can search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). For information on DOT's compliance with the Privacy Act, see DOT's Privacy Program website.[11] To see the list of DOT's systems of records notices, please visit *https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/privacy/privacy-act-system-records-notices.*

[11] U.S. Department of Transp. Privacy Policy, *https://www.transportation.gov/*privacy (last updated Oct. 10, 2025).

Plain Language Requirement

E.O. 12866 and E.O. 13563 require each agency to write all rules in plain language. Application of the principles of plain language includes consideration of the following questions:

- Have we organized the material to suit the public's needs?
- Are the requirements in the rule clearly stated?
- Does the rule contain technical language or jargon that isn't clear?
- Would a different format (grouping and order of sections, use of headings, paragraphing) make the rule easier to understand?
- Would more (but shorter) sections be better?
- Could we improve clarity by adding tables, lists, or diagrams?
- What else could we do to make the rule easier to understand?

NHTSA has considered these questions and attempted to use plain language in writing this rule. If readers have suggestions on how we can improve our use of plain language, please write us.

Regulation Identifier Number (RIN)

DOT assigns a regulation identifier number (RIN) to each regulatory action listed in the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulations. The Regulatory Information Service Center publishes the Unified Agenda in April and October of each year. You may use the RIN contained in the heading at the beginning of this document to find this action in the Unified Agenda.

VII. Public Participation

How do I prepare and submit comments?

Your comments must be written and in English. To ensure that your comments are filed correctly in the Docket, please include the docket number indicated in this document in your comments.

Your comments must not be more than 15 pages long. (49 CFR 553.21). We established this limit to encourage you to write your primary comments in a concise fashion. However, you may attach necessary additional documents to your comments. There is no limit on the length of the attachments.

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. Please note that pursuant to the Data Quality Act, 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 *https://www.transportation.gov/regulations/dot-information-dissemination-quality-guidelines.*

How can I be sure that my comments were received?

If you wish the Docket to notify you upon its receipt of your comments, enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard in the envelope containing your comments. Upon receiving your comments, the Docket will return the postcard by mail.

How do I submit confidential business information?

You should submit a redacted ''public version'' of your comment (including redacted versions of any additional documents or attachments) to the docket using any of the methods identified under **ADDRESSES**. This ''public version'' of your comment should contain only the portions for which no claim of confidential treatment is made and from which those portions for which confidential treatment is claimed has been redacted. See below for further instructions on how to do this.

You also need to submit a request for confidential treatment directly to the Office of Chief Counsel. Requests for confidential treatment are governed by 49 CFR part 512. Your request must set forth the information specified in part 512. This includes the materials for which confidentiality is being requested (as explained in more detail below); supporting information, pursuant to section 512.8; and a certificate, pursuant to section 512.4(b) and part 512, appendix A.

You are required to submit to the Office of Chief Counsel one unredacted ''confidential version'' of the information for which you are seeking confidential treatment. Pursuant to section 512.6, the words ''ENTIRE PAGE CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION'' or ''CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION CONTAINED WITHIN BRACKETS'' (as applicable) must appear at the top of each page containing information claimed to be confidential. In the latter situation, where not all information on the page is claimed to be confidential, identify each item of information for which confidentiality is requested within brackets: ''[ ].''

You are also required to submit to the Office of Chief Counsel one redacted ''public version'' of the information for which you are seeking confidential treatment. Pursuant to section 512.5(a)(2), the redacted ''public version'' should include redactions of any information for which you are seeking confidential treatment (*i.e.,* the only information that should be unredacted is information for which you are not seeking confidential treatment).

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.* 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 John Piazza at *John.Piazza@dot.gov.*

Will the agency consider late comments?

We will consider all comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above under **DATES**. To the extent possible, we will also consider comments that the docket receives after that date. If the docket receives a comment too late for us to consider in developing a final rule (assuming that one is issued), we will consider that comment as an informal suggestion for future rulemaking action.

How can I read the comments submitted by other people?

You may read the comments received by the docket at the address given above under **ADDRESSES**. The hours of the docket are indicated above in the same location. You may also see the comments on the internet. To read the comments on the internet, go to *https://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. You can arrange with the docket to be notified when others file comments in the docket. See *www.regulations.gov* for more information.

List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 571

Imports, Motor vehicle safety, Motor vehicles.

Proposed Regulatory Text

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration proposes to amend 49 CFR part 571 as follows:

PART 571—FEDERAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY STANDARDS

■ 1. The authority citation for 49 CFR part 571 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 322, 30111, 30115, 30117, and 30166; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.95.

■ 2. Amend § 571.210 by:

■ a. Revising paragraphs S4.2.1 and S4.2.2; and

■ b. Revising Figures 7 and 8;

The revisions read as follows:

§ 571.210 Standard No. 210; Seat belt assembly anchorages

* * * * *

S4.2.1 *Seats with Type 1 or certain Type 2 seat belt assemblies.*

(a) For vehicles with a GVWR less than or equal to 4,536 kg manufactured before September 1, 2027, and vehicles with a GVWR greater than 4,536 kg manufactured before September 1, 2030, except as provided in S4.2.5, the anchorages, attachment hardware, and attachment bolts for any of the following seat belt assemblies shall withstand a 22,241 N force when tested in accordance with, at the choice of the manufacturer, S5.1(a), (b), or (c):

(1) Type 1 seat belt assembly; and

(2) Lap belt portion of either a Type 2 or automatic seat belt assembly, if such seat belt assembly is equipped with a detachable upper torso belt.

(b) For vehicles with a GVWR less than or equal to 4,536 kg manufactured on or after September 1, 2027, and vehicles with a GVWR greater than 4,536 kg manufactured on or after September 1, 2030, except as provided in S4.2.5, the anchorages, attachment hardware, and attachment bolts for any of the following seat belt assemblies shall withstand a 22,241 N force when tested in accordance with, at the choice of the manufacturer, S5.1(b) or S.5.1(c):

(1) Type 1 seat belt assembly; and

(2) Lap belt portion of either a Type 2 or automatic seat belt assembly, if such seat belt assembly is equipped with a detachable upper torso belt.

S4.2.2 *Seats with certain Type 2 or automatic seat belt assemblies.*

(a) For vehicles with a GVWR less than or equal to 4,536 kg manufactured before September 1, 2027, and vehicles with a GVWR greater than 4,536 kg manufactured before September 1, 2030, except as provided in S4.2.5, the anchorages, attachment hardware, and attachment bolts for any of the following seat belt assemblies shall withstand a 13,345 N force applied to the lap belt portion of the seat belt assembly simultaneously with a 13,345 N force applied to the shoulder belt portion of the seat belt assembly, when tested in accordance with, at the choice of the manufacturer, S5.2(a), (b), or (c):

(1) Type 2 and automatic seat belt assemblies that are installed to comply with Standard No. 208 (49 CFR 571.208); and

(2) Type 2 and automatic seat belt assemblies that are installed at a seating position required to have a Type 1 or Type 2 seat belt assembly by Standard No. 208 (49 CFR 571.208).

(b) For vehicles with a GVWR less than or equal to 4,536 kg manufactured on or after September 1, 2027, and vehicles with a GVWR greater than 4,536 kg manufactured on or after September 1, 2030, except as provided in S4.2.5, the anchorages, attachment hardware, and attachment bolts for any of the following seat belt assemblies shall withstand a 13,345 N force applied to the lap belt portion of the seat belt assembly simultaneously with a 13,345 N force applied to the shoulder belt portion of the seat belt assembly, when tested in accordance with, at the choice of the manufacturer, S5.2(b) or S5.2(c):

(1) Type 2 and automatic seat belt assemblies that are installed to comply with Standard No. 208 (49 CFR 571.208); and

(2) Type 2 and automatic seat belt assemblies that are installed at a seating position required to have a Type 1 or Type 2 seat belt assembly by Standard No. 208 (49 CFR 571.208).

* * * * *

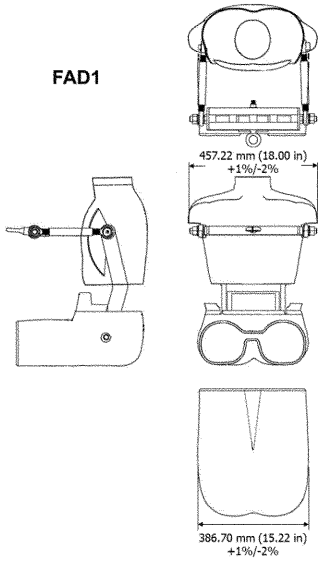

Figure 7 to § 571.210–FAD1 (provided for illustration purposes)

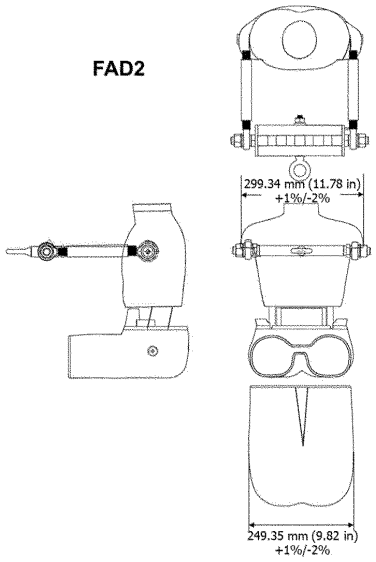

Figure 8 to § 571.210–FAD2 (provided for illustration purposes)

Issued under authority delegated in 49 CFR 1.95.

Jonathan Morrison,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2026–12912 Filed 6–25–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Parts 595 and 597

[Docket No. NHTSA–2024–0100]

RIN 2127–AM60

ADS-Equipped Vehicle Safety, Transparency, and Evaluation Program; Withdrawal

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

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking; withdrawal.

SUMMARY: This action withdraws the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) published in the **Federal Register** on January 15, 2025, which proposed to establish the Automated Driving System-Equipped Vehicle Safety, Transparency, and Evaluation Program (AV STEP). The proposal would have created a voluntary program for vehicle manufacturers, developers of Automated Driving Systems (ADS), and fleet operators or system integrators of such vehicles. Based on its reevaluation of the proposal, consideration of the comments received, and subsequent progress on other ADS initiatives, NHTSA is withdrawing the rulemaking.

DATES: The NPRM published in the **Federal Register** on January 15, 2025, at 90 FR 4130, is withdrawn as of June 26, 2026.

ADDRESSES: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building, Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Lina Valivullah at *lina.valivullah@dot.gov* or 202–366–1810.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Summary of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

On January 15, 2025, NHTSA published an NPRM (90 FR 4130) proposing to establish the ADS-equipped Vehicle Safety, Transparency, and Evaluation Program (AV STEP). This would have been a voluntary program in which participating entities agreed to certain reporting requirements and public disclosures about their operations. The comment period for the proposal closed on March 17, 2025. In total, NHTSA received 37 comments. The commenters expressed a variety of perspectives about various aspects of the program. A central theme of the comments was that the program was not likely to be as effective or comprehensive a regulatory tool as originally intended. For example, certain entities that would have been eligible to participate in the program expressed low interest in voluntarily participating in a program with requirements they characterized as stringent. Certain other stakeholders, including some safety advocates, expressed concern that the program likely would not provide NHTSA with sufficient oversight to ensure an appropriate level of safety. Commenters also noted that the proposal was complex and would have required adding an entirely new part, with multiple subparts, to NHTSA's regulations. Thus, these commenters believed that the proposal would not achieve its objective of encouraging robust participation while providing NHTSA with effective oversight mechanisms. In addition, several of the key goals of the proposal, such as improving NHTSA's exemption programs, have been furthered recently through separate initiatives as part of the Automated Vehicle (AV) Framework announced in April 2025.[1] These improvements have addressed certain considerations that originally prompted the proposal. As a result, and as further explained below, NHTSA is withdrawing the AV STEP proposal.

The NPRM proposed a voluntary program for vehicle manufacturers and ADS developers, as well as fleet operators and system integrators of ADS-equipped vehicles. Two levels of participation were proposed, based largely on the extent to which a vehicle relied on an ADS in its operations. Entities could have applied to participate with vehicles that met all applicable NHTSA Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) or

[1] *See* U.S. Dept. of Transp., Trump's Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy Unveils New Automated Vehicle Framework as Part of Innovation Agenda (Apr. 24, 2025), available at *https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/trumps-transportation-secretary-sean-p-duffy-unveils-new-automated-vehicle-framework.*