

**ORAL TESTIMONY OF
THE HONORABLE DAVID L. STRICKLAND
ADMINISTRATOR, NATIONAL HIGHWAY
TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, AND
CONSUMER PROTECTION
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

HEARING ON

Committee Draft of The Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 2010

May 6, 2010

**Chairman Rush, Ranking Member Whitfield, and
Members of the Committee:**

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss proposals to strengthen the authority of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). I applaud the committee members and their staff for working so hard to understand these issues and for reflecting that understanding in the committee draft of “The Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 2010.” Time has not permitted full review of all of the draft legislation’s provisions throughout the Executive Branch, so my remarks will be confined to some of the major provisions.

Today’s hearing is an opportunity to work together to improve safety on our Nation’s roadways. We very much

appreciate the provisions in the committee draft that would enhance NHTSA's vehicle safety authority.

NHTSA is a strong Agency; this bill's authorities would make us stronger. If enacted, these measures would significantly increase the Agency's leverage in dealing with manufacturers. The addition of imminent hazard authority would bring NHTSA's authority into line with that of many other safety and health agencies. This provision gives NHTSA an important avenue through which to deliver on its consumer protection mission—a mission I strongly believe in.

As part of that safety mission, NHTSA collects a wealth of information in various databases. We share in President Obama's assessment that information maintained by the Federal Government is a national asset. This proposed bill would require NHTSA to improve the accessibility of the information on its publicly available safety databases.

We will be very happy to do so and we have several ideas on how to make our recall and investigations data more user friendly.

Even in their current state, NHTSA's information stores are among the most outstanding consumer safety databases in government; improving them would promote transparency. Transparency promotes accountability and provides information for citizens about what their Government is doing.

I want to work with the Secretary and the Congress to strengthen and improve NHTSA so that it can continue to achieve its mission of saving lives, preventing injuries, and reducing economic costs due to road traffic crashes. We will be accountable to the President, to the Secretary

of Transportation, and to the American Public, whom we are proud to serve.

Thank you and I look forward to answering your questions.