

CFR 553.21). This limitation is intended to encourage commenters to detail their primary arguments in a concise fashion.

Written comments to the public docket must be received by September 29, 2003.

All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date will be considered and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. However, the rulemaking action may proceed at any time after that date.

NHTSA will continue to file relevant material in the docket as it becomes available after the closing date, and it is recommended that interested persons continue to examine the docket for new material.

Those persons who wish to be notified upon receipt of their comments in the docket should enclose, in the envelope with their comments, a self-addressed stamped postcard. Upon receiving the comments, the docket supervisor will return the postcard by mail.

Copies of all comments will be placed in the Docket for this interim final rule in the Office of Docket Management, Room PL-401, Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590.

VII. Regulatory Analyses and Notices

A. Economic Impacts

Executive Order 12866, "Regulatory Planning and Review" (58 FR 51735, October 4, 1993), provides for making determinations whether a regulatory action is "significant" and therefore subject to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) review and to the requirements of the Executive Order. The Order defines a "significant regulatory action" as one that is likely to result in a rule that may:

- (1) Have an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more or adversely affect in a material way the economy, a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, local, or Tribal governments or communities;

- (2) Create a serious inconsistency or otherwise interfere with an action taken or planned by another agency;

- (3) Materially alter the budgetary impact of entitlements, grants, user fees, or loan programs or the rights and obligations of recipients thereof; or

- (4) Raise novel legal or policy issues arising out of legal mandates, the President's priorities, or the principles set forth in the Executive Order.

This rulemaking document was not reviewed under Executive Order 12866. It is not significant within the meaning of the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures. It does not impose any burden on manufacturers and extends the compliance date for existing regulatory requirements for a period of three years. The agency believes that this impact is so minimal as to not warrant the preparation of a full regulatory evaluation.

B. Environmental Impacts

We have not conducted an evaluation of the impacts of this final rule under the National Environmental Policy Act. This rulemaking action extends the date by which manufacturers of vehicles built in two or more stages must comply with the upper interior head impact protection requirements of Standard No. 201. It does not impose any change that would have any environmental impacts. Accordingly, no environmental assessment is required.

C. Impacts on Small Entities

Pursuant to the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the agency has considered the impact this rulemaking will have on small entities. As this action will provide a short term benefit for small entities by delaying the compliance date, it will have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities within the context of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96-354) requires each agency to evaluate the potential effects of a rule on small businesses. The Small Business Administration (SBA) has set size standards for determining if a business within a specific industrial classification is a small business. The Standard Industrial Classification code used by the SBA for Motor Vehicles and Passenger Car Bodies (3711) defines a small manufacturer as one having 1,000 employees or fewer.

Most of the intermediate and final stage manufacturers of vehicles built in two or more stages have 1,000 or fewer employees. This interim final rule extends the date by which these manufacturers must produce vehicles that meet the upper interior head protection requirements of Standard No. 201. Although this action does not modify those requirements, it provides these small businesses additional time to meet them. In the agency's view, issuance of this interim final rule is necessary to prevent adverse effects that may have been underestimated in a prior rulemaking establishing the requirements at issue. For this reason, this interim final rule regarding the

compliance date will have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The agency performed a Regulatory Flexibility Analysis for the previous one-year extension and placed a copy in the docket. See "Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, Head Impact Protection, FMVSS 201," June 2002, Docket # 02-12480. That analysis is applicable to this three-year extension as well.

D. Federalism

E.O. 13132 requires NHTSA to develop an accountable process to ensure "meaningful and timely input by State and local officials in the development of regulatory policies that have federalism implications." E.O. 13132 defines the term "Policies that have federalism implications" to include regulations that 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." Under E.O. 13132, NHTSA may not issue a regulation that has federalism implication, that imposes substantial direct compliance costs, and that is not required by statute, unless the Federal government provides the funds necessary to pay the direct compliance costs incurred by State and local governments, or NHTSA consults with State and local officials early in the process of developing the proposed regulation.

This interim final rule will 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 as specified in E.O. 13132. Thus, the requirements of section 6 of the Executive Order do not apply to this rule.

E. The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-4) requires 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 more than \$100 million annually. This action, which extends the compliance date by which manufacturers of vehicles built in two or more stages must meet the upper interior head impact protection requirements of Standard No. 201, will not result in additional expenditures by