

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration****[Docket No. NHTSA-2003-16480]****Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1999 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation****AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1999 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe passenger cars are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This document announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that 1999 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe passenger cars that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) they are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is December 17, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh St., SW., Washington, DC 20590 (docket hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Anyone is able to 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.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70; Pages 19477-78) or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Coleman Sachs, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202-366-3151).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A), a motor vehicle that was not originally manufactured to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards shall be refused admission into the United States unless NHTSA has decided that the motor vehicle is

substantially similar to a motor vehicle originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States, certified under 49 U.S.C. 30115, and of the same model year as the model of the motor vehicle to be compared, and is capable of being readily altered to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Petitions for eligibility decisions may be submitted by either manufacturers or importers who have registered with NHTSA pursuant to 49 CFR part 592. As specified in 49 CFR 593.7, NHTSA publishes notice in the **Federal Register** of each petition that it receives, and affords interested persons an opportunity to comment on the petition. At the close of the comment period, NHTSA decides, on the basis of the petition and any comments that it has received, whether the vehicle is eligible for importation. The agency then publishes this decision in the **Federal Register**.

Sunshine Car Import L.C. of Cape Coral, Florida ("SCI") (Registered Importer 01-289) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1999 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe passenger cars originally manufactured for sale in foreign markets are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which SCI believes are substantially similar are 1999 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe passenger cars that were manufactured for sale in the United States and certified by their manufacturer as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified 1999 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe passenger cars to their U.S.-certified counterparts, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

SCI submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that non-U.S. certified 1999 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe passenger cars, as originally manufactured, conform to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as their U.S. certified counterparts, or are capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that non-U.S. certified 1999 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe passenger cars are identical to their U.S. certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standard Nos. 101 *Controls and Displays*, 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence*, 103 *Defrosting and Defogging Systems*, 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems*, 105 *Hydraulic Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 109 *New*

Pneumatic Tires, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 114 *Theft Protection*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 124 *Accelerator Control Systems*, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*, 202 *Head Restraints*, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*, 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 212 *Windshield Mounting*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, 301 *Fuel System Integrity*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

The petitioner states that the vehicles also comply with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR part 581.

The petitioner also contends that the vehicles are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: inspection of all vehicles and installation of U.S.-model headlamps, tail lamps, side markers, and high mounted stop lamps on vehicles that are not already so equipped.

Standard No. 110 *Tire Selection and Rims*: installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 111 *Rearview Mirror*: replacement of the passenger side rearview mirror with a U.S.-model component or inscription of the required warning statement on the mirror's face.

Standard No. 118 *Power Window Systems*: inspection of all vehicles and installation, in vehicles that are not already so equipped, of a relay in the power window system so that the window transport will not operate with the ignition switched off.

Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection*: inspection of all vehicles to ensure that they are equipped with door beams identical to those in the U.S. certified model and installation of those components on vehicles that are not already so equipped.

The petitioner states that all vehicles must be inspected for compliance with the Theft Prevention Standard found in 49 CFR 541, and that an anti-theft system capable of immobilizing the vehicle must be installed in any vehicles that are not already so equipped.

The petitioner also states that a vehicle identification plate must be affixed to the vehicles near the left windshield post and a reference and certification label must be affixed in the area of the left front door post to meet the requirements of 49 CFR part 565. The petitioner further states that a