

NHTSA will reassess this rulemaking in relation to the Executive Order, the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 and other requirements for analyzing rulemaking impacts if, after using the information received in response to this advanced notice, the agency decides to issue a proposal to amend its current regulations. To that end, the agency solicits comments, information, and data useful in assessing the impacts of making the potential changes discussed in this document.

Privacy Act

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all submissions 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>.

Issued: December 22, 2003.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Associate Administrator for Rulemaking.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 533

[Docket No. 2003–16709]

RIN 2127–AJ26

Reforming the Automobile Fuel Economy Standards Program; Request for Product Plan Information

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

ACTION: Request for comments.

SUMMARY: The purpose of this request for comments is to acquire information regarding vehicle manufacturers' future product plans to assist the agency in analyzing possible reforms to the corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) program which are discussed in a companion notice published today. The agency is seeking information that will help it assess the effect of these possible reforms on fuel economy, manufacturers, consumers, the

economy, motor vehicle safety and American jobs.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 27, 2004.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments [identified by DOT DMS Docket Number 2003–16709] by any of the following methods:

- Web Site: <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the DOT electronic docket site.

- Fax: 1–202–493–2251.

- Mail: Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Nassif Building, Room PL–401, Washington, DC 20590–001.

- Hand Delivery: Room PL–401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For non-legal issues, call Ken Katz, Lead Engineer, Fuel Economy Division, Office of Planning and Consumer Standards, at (202) 366–0846, facsimile (202) 493–2290, electronic mail kkatz@nhtsa.dot.gov. For legal issues, call Otto Matheke, Office of the Chief Counsel, at (202) 366–5263, electronic mail omatheke@nhtsa.dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

In a companion document, an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking, published today in the **Federal Register**, NHTSA is seeking comments relating to possible enhancements and reforms to the CAFE program that will assist in furthering fuel conservation, while protecting motor vehicle safety and American jobs. To assist the agency in analyzing possible reforms to the CAFE program, in addition to the questions found in the body of the advanced notice of proposed rulemaking, NHTSA has included a number of additional questions, found in an appendix to this notice, directed primarily toward vehicle manufacturers.

The appendix requests information from manufacturers regarding their product plans from MY 2003 through MY 2012, and the assumptions underlying those plans. The agency would appreciate answers that are as responsive as possible so that the agency can analyze the impact of the reforms on the entire industry. Because some of the possible reforms may

change the distinction between passenger cars and light trucks, the agency is requesting data from manufacturers for both their passenger car plans AND their light truck plans.

In an attempt to assure conformity in data submittal and to assist manufacturers with supplying information to the agency regarding their product plans from MY 2003 through MY 2012, NHTSA has developed spreadsheet templates for manufacturers' use. These templates are the preferred format for data submittal, and can be found on the agency's CAFE website at: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/CAFE/rulemaking.htm>. The Appendix also includes sample tables that manufacturers should refer to when submitting their data to the Agency.

II. Public Participation

Interested persons are invited to comment in response to this request for comments. It is requested, but not required, that two copies be submitted to the Office of Docket Management, Room PL–401, Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590.

Your comments must be written and in English. To ensure that your comments are correctly filed in the Docket, please include the docket number of this document in your comments. All comments must be limited to 15 pages in length. Necessary attachments may be appended to those submissions without regard to the 15-page limit (49 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 April 27, 2004.

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.

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

Comments may also be submitted to the docket electronically by logging onto the Dockets Management System website at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Click on