



The Deputy Secretary of Transportation

Washington, D.C. 20590

January 14, 2002

The Honorable John D. Graham
Administrator, Office of Information
and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Dr. Graham: *John*

Thank you for your letter of December 7, 2001, requesting that the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) consider giving greater priority to modifying the frontal occupant protection standard by establishing a high-speed, frontal offset crash test. I appreciate your interest and attention to areas in which we can enhance vehicle occupant protection.

In addition to the Transportation Recall Enhancement, Accountability and Documentation Act requirements, we are making offset frontal crash protection one of our highest safety rulemaking priorities in the current fiscal year. As you have indicated, lower extremity injuries are rarely fatal but account for substantial societal costs associated with long-term impairment. NHTSA has been evaluating lower extremity injury assessment devices, and expects to issue an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in early 2002 seeking public comment on which device might be best suited for use in offset frontal crashes. It is our hope that we will be able to issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking by the end of this fiscal year.

Again, I appreciate your suggestion that NHTSA give higher priority to expansion of the frontal occupant protection standard. If there is any additional information I can provide, please feel free to contact me or Jeffrey W. Runge, M.D., NHTSA Administrator, at (202) 366-1836.

Sincerely yours,

Michael

Michael P. Jackson