alcohol related causes have increased. These other causes include driver-controlled behaviors such as driving while fatigued, aggressive driving, and distracted driving (including cell phone use, talking to others in the vehicle, eating, and reading). NHTSA is committed to the development of effective programs to reduce the incidence of these crashes

While alcohol-related driving is studied by numerous sources, relatively little is known about the public's attitudes and behaviors with respect to those other driver-controlled factors. In order for NHTSA to properly plan and evaluate programs directed at reducing crashes, and to provide information to support states, localities and law enforcement agencies, it needs to understand the public's current beliefs and behaviors.

The findings from these proposed collections will assist NHTSA in identifying the extent of the problem, the public's perceptions of the dangers of these various problem-driving actions and potential acceptance of various strategies to reduce related fatalities. NHTSA will use the findings to help focus current programs and activities to achieve the greatest benefit, to develop new programs to decrease the likelihood of drivers engaging in these problem-driving behaviors, and to provide informational support to states, and localities that will aid them in their efforts to reduce problem-driving related crashes and injuries.

Description of the Likely Respondents (Including Estimated Number, and Proposed Frequency of Response to the Collection of Information)

Under these proposed collections, telephone interviews averaging approximately 15 minutes in length will be administered to two separate randomly selected samples of 2,000 persons of the general driving age public age 16 and older. The respondent samples would be selected from all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia. Interviews would be conducted with persons at residential phone numbers selected using a modified random-digit-dialing methodology. No more than one respondent per household would be selected, and each sample member would complete just one interview. Businesses are ineligible for the sample and would not be interviewed.

Estimate of the Total Annual Reporting and Record Keeping Burden Resulting from the Collection of Information

NHTSA estimates that respondents in the sample would require an average of 15 minutes to complete the telephone interview. Thus, estimated reporting burden on the general public would total 1,000 hours for the proposed surveys. The respondents would not incur any reporting or record keeping cost from the information collection.

Rose A. McMurray,

Associate Administrator, Office of Traffic Safety Programs.

[FR Doc. 01–11945 Filed 5–10–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Petition for Exemption From the Federal Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard; General Motors

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

ACTION: Grant of petition for exemption.

SUMMARY: This document grants in full the petition of General Motors Corporation (GM) for an exemption of a high-theft line, the Chevrolet Venture, from the parts-marking requirements of the Federal Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard. This petition is granted because the agency has determined that the antitheft device to be placed on the line as standard equipment is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard.

DATES: The exemption granted by this notice is effective beginning with model year (MY) 2002.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Rosalind Proctor, Office of Planning and Consumer Programs, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Ms. Proctor's telephone number is (202) 366–0846. Her fax number is (202) 493–2290.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In a petition dated October 5, 2000, General Motors Corporation (GM), requested an exemption from the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR part 541) for the Chevrolet Venture vehicle line beginning withMY 2002. The petition is pursuant to 49 CFR part 543, Exemption From Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard, which provides for exemptions based on the installation of an antitheft device as standard equipment on a vehicle line.

Section 33106(b)(2)(D) of Title 49, United States Code, authorized the Secretary of Transportation to grant an exemption from the parts marking requirements for not more than one additional line of a manufacturer for MYs 1997—2000. However, it does not address the contingency of what to do after model year 2000 in the absence of a decision under Section 33103(d). 49 U.S.C. § 33103(d)(3) states that the number of lines for which the agency can grant an exemption is to be decided after the Attorney General completes a review of the effectiveness of antitheft devices and finds that antitheft devices are an effective substitute for parts marking. The Attorney General has not yet made a finding and has not decided the number of lines, if any, for which the agency will be authorized to grant an exemption. Upon consultation with the Department of Justice, we determined that the appropriate reading of Section 33103(d) is that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) may continue to grant parts-marking exemptions for not more than one additional model line each year, as specified for model years 1997–2000 by 49 U.S.C. 33106(b)(2)(C). This is the level contemplated by the Act for the period before the Attorney General's decision. The final decision on whether to continue granting exemptions will be made by the Attorney General at the conclusion of the review pursuant to section 330103(d)(3).

GM's submission is considered a complete petition as required by 49 CFR part 543.7, in that it met the general requirements contained in § 543.5 and the specific content requirements of § 543.6.

In its petition, GM provided a detailed description and diagram of the identity, design, and location of the components of the antitheft device for that vehicle line. GM will install its PASS-Key III antitheft device as standard equipment on its MY 2002 Chevrolet Venture vehicle line. GM stated that the PASS-Key III device provides the same kind of functionality as the PASS-Key and PASS-Key II devices, which have been the basis for exemptions previously granted to GM. However, the PASS-Key III device uses more advanced technology than the PASS-Key II device and provides new features and refinements.

Specifically, the PASS-Key III device uses a transponder embedded in the head of the key which is excited by a coil surrounding the key cylinder. The transponder in the key then emits a modulated signal at a specified radio frequency. The identity of the key is a unique code within the modulated signal. The key cylinder coil receives and sends the modulated signal to the

decoder. When the decoder module recognizes a valid key code, it sends an encoded message to the Powertrain Control Module (PCM) to enable fuel flow and starter operation. If an invalid key is detected, the PASS-Key III decoder module will transmit a different password to the PCM to disable fuel flow and starter operation.

The PASS-Key III device has the potential for over four trillion unique electrical key codes. GM believes that the sheer volume of these codes is a highly effective deterrent to the common intruder. The PASS-Key III device is designed to shut down for three to four minutes if an invalid key is detected, preventing further attempts to start the vehicle during that shutdown.

GM states that the design and assembly process of the PASS-Key III device and components are validated for a vehicle life of 10 years and 150,000 miles of performance. In order to ensure the reliability and durability of the device, GM conducted tests, based on its own specified standards. GM provided a detailed list of the tests conducted. GM stated its belief that the device is reliable and durable since it complied with the specified requirements for each test.

GM compared the PASS-Key III device proposed for the Chevrolet Venture line with its first generation PASS-Key device, which the agency has determined to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as would compliance with the parts-marking requirements. GM stated that its PASS-Key III device is activated when the owner/operator turns off the ignition of the vehicle and removes the key. According to GM, no other intentional action is necessary to achieve protection of the vehicle other than removing the key from the ignition.

GM stated that the theft rates, as reported by the National Crime Information Center, are lower for GM models equipped with PASS-Key-like devices which have been granted exemptions from the parts-marking requirements than theft rates for similar, earlier models that have been parts-marked. Therefore, GM concludes that the PASS-Key-like devices are more effective in deterring motor vehicle theft than the parts-marking requirements of 49 CFR part 541.

Further, GM states that the PASS-Key III device has been designed to significantly enhance the functionality and theft protection provided by earlier generations of PASS-Key devices. Based on the performance of PASS-Key and PASS-Key II devices on other GM models, and the advanced technology utilized in the PASS-Key III device, GM believes that the PASS-Key III device will be more effective in deterring theft than the parts-marking requirements of 49 CFR part 541.

GM also stated that as with previous PASS-Key devices, the PASS-Key III device will not provide any visible or audible indication of unauthorized entry. However, based on comparison of the reduction in theft rates of Chevrolet Corvettes using a passive antitheft device and an audible/visible alarm with the reduction in theft rates for the Chevrolet Camaro and Pontiac Firebird models equipped with a passive antitheft device without an alarm, GM believes that an alarm or similar attention attracting device is not necessary and does not compromise the antitheft performance of these systems.

The agency notes that the reason that the vehicle lines whose theft data GM cites in support of its petition received only a partial exemption from parts-marking was that the agency did not believe that the antitheft devices on these vehicles (PASS-Key and PASS-Key II) by itself would be as effective as parts-marking in deterring theft because it lacked an alarm system. On that basis, it decided to require GM to mark the vehicle's most interchangeable parts (the engine and transmission), as a supplement to the antitheft device. Like those earlier antitheft devices GM used, the device on which this petition is based also lacks an alarm system. Accordingly, it cannot perform one of the functions listed in 49 CFR part 543.6(a)(3), that is, it cannot call attention to unauthorized attempts to enter or move the vehicle.

After deciding those petitions, however, the agency obtained theft data that show declining theft rates for GM vehicles equipped with either version of the PASS-Key device. Based on that data, it concluded that the lack of a visible or audible alarm had not prevented the antitheft device from being effective protection against theft and granted three GM petitions for full exemptions for car lines equipped with the PASS-Key II device. The agency granted in full the petition for the Buick Riviera and Oldsmobile Aurora car lines beginning with model year 1995, (see 58 FR 44874, August 25, 1993); the Chevrolet Lumina and Buick Regal car lines beginning with model year 1996, (see 60 FR 25938, May 15, 1995); and, the petition for the Cadillac Seville car line beginning with model year 1998, (see 62 FR 20058, April 24, 1997). In all three of those instances, the agency concluded that a full exemption was warranted because PASS-Key II had shown itself as likely as parts-marking to be effective protection against theft despite the absence of a visible or audible alarm.

The agency concludes that, given the similarities between the PASS-Key III device and the earlier PASS-Key devices (PASS-Key and PASS-Key II), it is reasonable to assume that PASS-Key III device, like those devices, will be as effective as parts-marking in deterring theft. The agency believes that the device will provide the other types of performance listed in 49 CFR 543.6(a)(3): promoting activation; preventing defeat or circumvention of the device by unauthorized persons; preventing operation of the vehicle by unauthorized entrants; and ensuring the reliability and durability of the device.

As required by 49 U.S.C. 33106 and 49 CFR 543.6(a)(4) and (5), the agency finds that GM has provided adequate reasons for its belief that the antitheft device will reduce and deter theft. This conclusion is based on the information GM provided about its antitheft device, some of which includes confidential information describing reliability and functional tests conducted by GM for the antitheft device and its components. GM requested confidential treatment for some of the information and attachments submitted in support of its petition. In a letter to GM dated January 2, 2001, the agency granted the petitioner's request for confidential treatment of these materials.

For the foregoing reasons, the agency hereby grants in full GM's petition for exemption for the MY 2002 Chevrolet Venture vehicle line from the parts-marking requirements of 49 CFR part 541.

If GM decides not to use the exemption for this line, it must notify the agency formally, and thereafter must mark the line fully as required by 49 CFR 541.5 and 541.6 (marking of major component parts and replacement parts).

NHTSA notes that if GM wishes in the future to modify the device on which this exemption is based, the company may have to submit a petition to modify the exemption. § 543.7(d) states that a part 543 exemption applies only to vehicles that belong to a line exempted under this part and equipped with the antitheft device on which the line's exemption is based. Further, § 543.9(c)(2) provides for the submission of petitions ''to modify an exemption to permit the use of an antitheft device similar to but differing from the one specified in that exemption.''

The agency did not intend in drafting part 543 to require the submission of a modification petition for every change to the components or design of an

antitheft device. The significance of many such changes could be de minimis. The agency wishes to minimize the administrative burden which § 543.9(c)(2) could place on exempted vehicle manufacturers and itself. Therefore, NHTSA suggests that if the manufacturer contemplates making any changes the effects of which might be characterized as de minimis, it should consult the agency before preparing and submitting a petition to modify.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 33106; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

Issued on: May 7, 2001.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Associate Administrator for Safety, Performance Standards.

[FR Doc. 01–11946 Filed 5–10–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34037]

General Railway Corporation d/b/a Iowa Northwestern Railroad Corporation—Operation Exemption—Line of Dickinson Osceola Railroad Association

General Railway Corporation d/b/a Iowa Northwestern Railroad Corporation (GRC), a noncarrier, has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to operate approximately 37.21 miles of rail line currently owned by Dickinson Osceola Railroad Association (DORA). The rail line to be operated extends between milepost 79.34, at a point west of Superior, IA, and the end of the line at approximately milepost 116.55, a point west of Allendorf, IA, in Dickinson and Osceola Counties, IA. GRC states that, on April 2, 2001, an agreement was reached between it and DORA, wherein DORA designated GRC as operator of the line. GRC further states that ownership of the line is expected to be transferred to GRC from DORA in the near future. GRC certifies that its projected revenues will not exceed those that would qualify it as a Class III rail carrier and its revenues are not projected to exceed $5 million.[1]

The transaction was scheduled to be consummated on or shortly after May 2, 2001 (7 days after the exemption was filed).

If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio.* Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34037, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, one copy of each pleading must be served on John Larkin, General Railway Corporation, 4814 Douglas St., Omaha, NE 68132.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at www.stb.dot.gov.

Decided: May 4, 2001.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 01–11825 Filed 5–10–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P

[1] *See Dickinson Osceola Railroad Association—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Union Pacific Railroad Company,* STB Finance Docket No. 34008 (STB served Mar. 5, 2001).