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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that the FHWA and other Federal agencies have taken final agency actions subject to 23 U.S.C. 139(l)(1) by issuing licenses, permits, and approvals for the following highway project in the State of Washington: Yakima Grade Separation: Lincoln Avenue and B Street Project in Yakima County, Washington. The purpose of the Yakima Grade Separation project is to improve freight mobility through the city of Yakima by creating grade separation of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad tracks at the Lincoln Avenue and Martin Luther King Boulevard, formerly known as B Street, crossings in downtown Yakima, and includes the realignment of Front Street. The project will be constructed over no more than two years, and the FHWA project reference number is 000S062. The actions by the Federal agencies on this project, and the laws under which such actions were taken, are described in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project, approved on April 11, 2006, in the FHWA Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) issued August 17, 2006, and in other documents in the FHWA project files. The EA, FONSI, and other project records are available by contacting FHWA or the Washington State Department of Transportation at the addresses provided above. The EA and FONSI can be viewed and downloaded from the project Web site at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/TA/Operations/Environmental/Yakima_EA.pdf or viewed at public libraries in the project area.

This notice applies to all Federal agency decisions as of the issuance date of this notice and all laws under which such actions were taken, including but not limited to:

1. *General:* National Environmental Policy Act [42 U.S.C. 4321-4351]; Federal-Aid Highway Act [23 U.S.C. 109 and 23 U.S.C. 128].
2. *Air:* Clean Air Act, as amended [42 U.S.C. 7401-7671(q)].
3. *Land:* Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 [49 U.S.C. 303]; Landscaping and Scenic Enhancement (Wildflowers) [23 U.S.C. 319].
4. *Wildlife:* Endangered Species Act [16 U.S.C. 1531-1544 and Section 1536]; Anadromous Fish Conservation Act [16 U.S.C. 757(a)-757(g)]; Fish and

Wildlife Coordination Act [16 U.S.C. 661-667(d)]; Magnuson-Stevenson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976, as amended [16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*].

5. *Historic and Cultural Resources:* Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended [16 U.S.C. 470(f) *et seq.*]; Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1977 [16 U.S.C. 470(aa)-470(ll)]; Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act [16 U.S.C. 469-469(c)]; Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) [25 U.S.C. 3001-3013].

6. *Social and Economic:* Civil Rights Act of 1964 [42 U.S.C. 2000(d)-2000(d)(1)]; American Indian Religious Freedom Act [42 U.S.C. 1996]; Farmland Protection Policy Act [7 U.S.C. 4201-4209]; the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended [42 U.S.C. 61].

7. *Wetlands and Water Resources:* Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1251-1377 (Section 404, Section 401, Section 319) [33 U.S.C. 1251-1377]; Coastal Zone Management Act [16 U.S.C. 1451-1465]; Land and Water Conservation Fund [16 U.S.C. 4601-4604]; Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300(f)-300(j)(6)]; Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 [33 U.S.C. 401-406]; TEA-21 Wetlands Mitigation [23 U.S.C. 103(b)(6)(m), 133(b)(11)]; Flood Disaster Protection Act [42 U.S.C. 4001-4128].

8. *Hazardous Materials:* Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act [42 U.S.C. 9601-9675]; Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 [Pub. L. 99-499]; Resource Conservation and Recovery Act [42 U.S.C. 6901-6992(k)].

9. *Executive Orders:* E.O. 11990 Protection of Wetlands; E.O. 11988 Floodplain Management; E.O. 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations; E.O. 11593 Protection and Enhancement of Cultural Resources; E.O. 13007 Indian Sacred Sites; E.O. 13287 Preserve America; E.O. 13175 Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments; E.O. 11514 Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality; E.O. 13112 Invasive Species.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 139(l)(1)

Bryan L. Dillon,

*South Central Region Area Engineer,
Olympia, Washington.*

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Petition for Exemption From the Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard; Ford

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 Ford Motor Company (Ford) in accordance with § 543.9(c)(2) of 49 CFR part 543, *Exemption from the Theft Prevention Standard*, for the Ford Taurus X (formerly the Ford Freestyle) vehicle line beginning with model year (MY) 2008. 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) 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Deborah Mazyck, Office of International Vehicle, Fuel Economy and Consumer Standards, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Ms. Mazyck's telephone number is (202) 366-0846. Her fax number is (202) 493-2290.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In a petition dated December 15, 2006, Ford requested an exemption from the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR part 541) for the Ford Taurus X (formerly the Ford Freestyle) vehicle line beginning with MY 2008. The petition requested an exemption from parts-marking pursuant to 49 CFR part 543, *Exemption from Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard*, based on the installation of an antitheft device as standard equipment for an entire vehicle line.

Under § 543.5(a), a manufacturer may petition NHTSA to grant exemptions for one of its vehicle lines per year. Ford has petitioned the agency to grant an exemption for its Ford Taurus X vehicle line beginning with MY 2008. In its petition, Ford provided a detailed

description and diagram of the identity, design, and location of the components of the antitheft device for the Ford Taurus X vehicle line. Ford will install its passive antitheft device as standard equipment on the vehicle line. Features of the antitheft device will include an electronic key, ignition lock, and a passive immobilizer. Additionally, the Ford Taurus X will have a standard perimeter alarm system which will monitor all the doors, the decklid and the hood of the vehicle. Ford's submission is considered a complete petition as required by 49 CFR 543.7, in that it meets the general requirements contained in § 543.5 and the specific content requirements of § 543.6.

The antitheft device to be installed on the MY 2008 Ford Taurus X is the SecuriLock Passive Anti-Theft Electronic Engine Immobilizer System (SecuriLock). The Ford SecuriLock is a transponder-based electronic immobilizer system. Ford stated that the integration of the transponder into the normal operation of the ignition key assures activation of the system. When the ignition key is turned to the start position, the transceiver module reads the ignition key code and transmits an encrypted message to the cluster. Validation of the key is determined and start of the engine is authorized once a separate encrypted message is sent to the powertrain's control module (PCM). The powertrain will function only if the key code matches the unique identification key code previously programmed into the PCM. If the codes do not match, the powertrain engine starter will be disabled. Ford also stated that the SecuriLock electronic engine immobilizer device makes conventional theft methods such as hot-wiring or attacking the ignition lock cylinder ineffective and virtually eliminates drive-away thefts.

Ford stated that the Ford Freestyle (renamed Taurus X for MY 2008) has experienced very low theft rates. The agency's theft rate data is not available for calendar year/model year (CY/MY) 2005 and 2006, however, Ford calculated its own theft rate data for the MY 2005 and 2006 Ford Freestyle vehicle line based on its CAFE production volumes and the National Insurance Crime Bureau theft data per one thousand vehicles produced. Ford stated that the theft rate for CY/MY 2005 and 2006 were 0.6744 and 1.3473, respectively. Accordingly, Ford stated that, although the NICB theft data indicates that there was an increase in the overall theft rate for CY/MY 2006 vehicles, its calculations showed that the rate for the Ford Freestyle continued

to stay below the agency's median theft rate of 3.5826.

Additionally, Ford noted the reduction in theft rate for other vehicle lines equipped with the SecuriLock device. Ford's SecuriLock device was first introduced as standard equipment on its MY 1996 Mustang GT and Cobra. In MY 1997, the SecuriLock system was installed on the entire Mustang vehicle line as standard equipment. Ford stated that the 1997 model year Mustang with SecuriLock shows a 70% reduction in theft compared to the MY 1995 Mustang, according to National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) theft statistics. There were 149 reported thefts for 1997 compared to 500 reported thefts in 1995.

In addressing the specific content requirements of 543.6, Ford provided information on the reliability and durability of its proposed device. To ensure reliability and durability of the device, Ford conducted tests based on its own specified standards. Ford also provided a detailed list of the tests conducted and believes that the device is reliable and durable since the device complied with its specified requirements for each test.

Based on the evidence submitted by Ford, the agency believes that the antitheft device for the Ford Taurus X vehicle line 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 (49 CFR part 541). Based on the information Ford provided about its device, the agency concludes that the device will provide the five types of performance listed in § 543.6(a)(3): Promoting activation; attracting attention to the efforts of unauthorized persons to enter or operate a vehicle by means other than a key; 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 Ford has provided adequate reasons for its belief that the antitheft device will reduce and deter theft.

For the foregoing reasons, the agency hereby grants in full Ford's petition for exemption for the Ford Taurus X vehicle line from the parts-marking requirements of 49 CFR part 541. The agency notes that 49 CFR part 541, Appendix A-1, identifies those lines that are exempted from the Theft Prevention Standard for a given model year. 49 CFR 543.7(f) contains publication requirements incident to the disposition of all part 543 petitions.

Advanced listing, including the release of future product nameplates, the beginning model year for which the petition is granted and a general description of the antitheft device is necessary in order to notify law enforcement agencies of new vehicle lines exempted from the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard.

If Ford decides not to use the exemption for this line, it must formally notify the agency. If such a decision is made, the line must be fully marked according to the requirements under 49 CFR 541.5 and 541.6 (marking of major component parts and replacement parts).

NHTSA notes that if Ford 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. Section 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 anti-theft 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 wishes to minimize the administrative burden that § 543.9(c)(2) could place on exempted vehicle manufacturers and itself. 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*. 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: April 18, 2007.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Associate Administrator for Rulemaking.

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