

ATTACHMENT 2: EXCERPT FROM SENATE REPORT 112-83

National Automotive Sampling System [NASS].—The Committee provides \$25,000,000 to fully fund modernization of the NASS data collection system, which provides crash data on a nationally representative sample of police-reported motor vehicle crashes and related injuries. This funding is available until expended which is repurposed from the seat belt performance grant program. The Institute for Highway Safety states that NASS provides a “vital means of understanding injury mechanisms and identifying ways to improve crashworthiness and restraint system performance”. Safety researchers and automobile manufacturers also recognize the current NASS sample design created in 1977 is outdated, as data needs and demographics have changed significantly. Furthermore, the current sample size is not large enough to identify trends or problems at the vehicle make/model level in a timely manner. The Committee believes it is important for NHTSA to expand the scope of its data collection relative to the NASS/Crashworthiness Data System [CDS]. Expanding the NASS data collection from its current 24 data collection sites will assure a larger and more representative sample of crashes, increase the precision with which the agency can determine and validate areas of specific rulemaking interest for the Office of Defects Investigation, and assist researchers around the world in making informed decisions on vehicle design and safety policy.

NHTSA must also undertake a comprehensive review of the data elements to be collected from each crash; solicit input from interested parties—including suppliers, automakers, safety advocates, the medical community and research organizations; and assess the need for more data from the pre-crash, crash, and post-crash phases. The agency should consider including the following factors as part of an enhanced data collection initiative: vehicle velocities; vehicle acceleration/deceleration; departure from the roadway; presence of crash avoidance or driver assistance systems in the vehicle(s); and road surfaces and conditions. The funding provided will allow NHTSA to modernize the NASS system to improve data quality, timeliness, and accessibility in responding to the rapidly changing vehicle and highway safety environment. The Committee directs NHTSA to report on its NASS modernization efforts and related expenditures in the President’s annual budget submission to Congress. Additionally, NHTSA shall provide a report on the results of the data element review and recommendations for revision.