Driver Monitoring Systems Mandated by U.S. Congress by 2026

Driver monitoring systems (DMS) have been increasing as a part of modern vehicles’ safety equipment, and as a part of the new U.S. infrastructure package, they could become standard.

DMS technology works by using cameras to ensure that the vehicle’s driver is awake, alert and paying attention to the road. The system is programmed to take various actions, depending on the driver’s behavior, ranging from providing warnings to slowing or stopping the vehicle.

The system is expected to be a standard safety feature as soon as 2023 in cars around the world. DMS also found its way into the $1 trillion U.S. infrastructure package signed by President Biden in November 2021. Congress attached a mandate to the package that automakers would be required to equip cars with the technology as a way of preventing drunken or impaired driving by 2026.

The mandate was applauded by organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD), who cited a 2020 study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety that found that 9,000 people are killed each year in the United States in drunken-driving accidents.

“We need technology to stop the nightmare on our roads,” said Alex Otte, president of MADD. “Existing technologies and those in development will stop the hazardous driving behavior of people who refuse to make the right choice themselves.”

The mandate in the infrastructure package states that the safety equipment must “passively monitor the performance of a driver of a motor vehicle to accurately identify whether that driver may be impaired” and “prevent or limit motor vehicle operation if an impairment is detected.”

The mandate gave the National Highway Traffic

Continued on page 43
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