General Motors Investing Big, Producing Jobs in Michigan General Motors will be adding U.S. investments GM announced for future job growth in Michigan identified the following job op-or retaining approximately 900 earlier this year. and the U.S. portunities:

jobs across three Michigan facilities during the next 12 months. the 7,000 jobs and \$1 billion in

GM on March 15 outlined a series of programs the company is The 900 jobs are in addition to supporting to promote the over- ness, the company, GM spokesall development of skills required man Pat Morrissey said, has

As a result of working closely with the UAW to grow the busi-

• Romulus Powertrain Plant: Approximately 220 new jobs to increase production of the 10speed automatic transmission Chevrolet Camaro ZL1.

• Flint Assembly Plant: About

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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Detroit Auto Scene

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MARCH 20, 2017

Ford Seeing Just What 3D Printers Can Do

ing how large-scale one-piece auto parts, like spoilers, could be printed for prototyping and future production vehicles, as the first automaker to pilot the Stratasys Infinite Build 3D printer.

Capable of printing automotive parts of practically any shape or length, the Stratasys Infinite Build system could be a breakthrough for vehicle manufacturing – providing a more efficient, affordable way to create tooling, prototype parts and components for low-volume vehicles such as Ford Performance products, as well as personalized car parts, said Ford spokeswoman Lloryn Love.

The new 3D printer system is housed at Ford Research and Innovation Center in Dearborn.

"With Infinite Build technology, we can print large tools, fixtures

Ford Motor Company is explor- and components, making us have early access to Stratasys' more nimble in design iterations," said Ellen Lee, Ford technical leader, additive manufacturing research. "We're excited to

new technology to help steer development of large-scale printing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Employees check out a 3D printer at the Ford Innovation Center.

Cadillac Installing V2V in Its Vehicles

Cadillac unveiled Vehicle-to- slippery conditions and disabled show in the instrument cluster Vehicle (V2V) communications this month in the CTS performance sedan, beginning with 2017 interim model year cars in production now.

V2V-equipped vehicles share information that can be used to alert drivers to upcoming potential hazards, laying the groundwork for a connected, safer future, said GM spokesman Steve Martin.

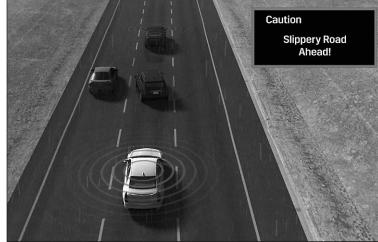
Cadillac's V2V solution uses Dedicated Short-Range Communications (DSRC) and GPS and can handle 1,000 messages per second from vehicles up to nearly 1,000 feet away.

For example, Martin said, when a car approaches an urban intersection, the technology scans the vicinity for other vehicles and tracks their positions, directions and speeds, warning the driver of potential hazards that might otherwise be invisi-

vehicles, Brekus said. Through the next-generation Cadillac user experience infotainment system, drivers can customize alerts to

and available head-up display. Only vehicles equipped with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



V2V tech will make it possible for cars to 'talk' to each other.



A 2017 Ram truck that has been "upfitted" using Chrysler products.

Chrysler Trucks Now Have Modern 'Upfit' Systems

Ram Commercial on March 15 revealed two new programs to assist commercial upfitters, dealers and customers in viewing, certifying and installing a wide array of truck-mounted products.

Ram Augmented Reality Upfit Configurator and Q Pro, combined with ease of adaptation, give Ram Commercial an upper hand on the competition, said Fiat Chrysler spokesman Nick Cappa.

"The commercial truck segments rely heavily on customer options, reliability and ease of conversion and no one does it better than Ram," said Mike Manley, head of Ram Brand, FCA -Global. "As part of continued improvement, Ram Commercial addresses all three areas with the introduction of Ram Augmented Reality Upfit Configurator and Q Pro while maintaining industry leadership for ease-to-upfit on our Chassis Cab trucks and Pro-Master vans."

Introduced late last year, the Ram Augmented Reality Upfit Configurator, Cappa said, is a computer-generated visual program allowing upfitters and dealers to virtually showcase a number of solutions to customers.

Prospective buyers have the opportunity to virtually walk around the vehicle and even view inside to assess the various options via computer simulation. Originally offered on the Ram Pro-Master full-size van, the configurator has now expanded to the Ram ProMaster City and the entire Ram Chassis Cab line (3500, 4500 and 5500), Cappa said.

Ram Commercial has officially launched Q Pro, a new qualification process for upfitters to certify their product with Ram Engineering. Q Pro allocates Ram Engineering resources to survey, make recommendations and certify upfitter products. Once certified, the upfitter can use Ram's Q Pro co-brand, Cappa said, to help market their product, and customers can rest assured their new truck and upfit meet the highest standards, including:

- Quality, reliability and
- durability; Regulatory compliance;
- Standardized process
- controls; • Warranty and continuous

improvement. The commercial vehicle market is competitive and the Ram

"From the introduction of air bags to the debut of OnStar. Cadillac continues its heritage of pioneering safety and connectiviadvances," said Richard Brekus, Cadillac global director of Product Strategy.

"V2V essentially enables the car to sense around corners. Connecting vehicles through V2V holds tremendous potential, as this technology enables the car to acquire and analyze information outside the bounds of the driver's field of vision. As an early mover, we look forward to seeing its benefit multiply as more V2V-equipped vehicles hit the road."

V2V-enabled data alerts drivers of potentially hazardous situations ahead, giving them additional time to react. Common hazardous scenarios that prompt alerts are hard braking,

President Trump to Look at Changing Old Emissions Rules

Donald Trump's decision to reexamine Obama-era rules that govern automobile gas mileage could be the first round of a potentially bruising political fight: revoking the ability of California and other Democratic-leaning states to set their own, tougher car-emission standards.

Environmental groups are preparing for the clash, which began even before Trump acted and is likely to be settled by the courts.

California's unique status dates to 1970, in the early days of the Clean Air Act. Because of the state's smoggy skies, Congress gave California a "waiver," allowing it to set stricter pollution standards than the rest of the nation. The California standard is

DETROIT (AP) - President now used by at least a dozen - its current emissions standards. mostly Northeastern - states, including New York and Massachusetts.

> The Trump administration has said it wants one uniform fuel mileage requirement for automakers across the U.S. Environmental groups and California officials fear that the administration will try to revoke the waiver, and they're taking action to fight it in court.

> California Gov. Jerry Brown denounced the Trump administration's move, telling Environmental Protection Agency chief Scott Pruitt in a letter March 15 it was a "gift to polluters."

> Brown warned automakers in another letter last week that his state would take the "necessary steps" to preserve

Buttressing Brown's threats, California filed a motion last week to intervene in a new lawsuit brought by auto manufacturers against the EPA, a move immediately joined by New York State. The actions will allow the two states to defend the tougher emissions standards in court.

"President Trump's action represents a dramatic wrong turn in our nation's efforts to fight air pollution from passenger cars and trucks and protect the health of our children, seniors and all communities," said New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman.

Trump took the first step toward a legal showdown on March 15 in Michigan when he announced that the government

will re-examine fuel economy requirements for 2022-2025. The rules were affirmed in the waning days of the Obama administration as part of a broader effort to control greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.

Although the Trump administration says it hasn't decided whether to weaken the requirements, Trump has promised the CEOs of major car companies that he'll reduce "unnecessary regulations." His EPA chief, Pruitt, has said he doesn't believe carbon dioxide is a primary contributor to global warming, putting him at odds with Obama's EPA and mainstream climate science.

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Cadillac Helping Vehicles Talk **To Each Other**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

compatible V2V systems communicate with one another, Brekus said. Multiple V2Vequipped vehicles create an ad hoc wireless network that allows for the transfer of information without relying on sight lines, good weather conditions or cellular coverage.

The V2V technology on the 2017 CTS operates on the 5.9 GHz spectrum allocated by the Federal Communications Commission.

V2V is included as a standard feature on the 2017 CTS in the U.S. and Canada and complements a robust suite of available active safety features, Martin said.

CTS offers Driver Awareness and Driver Assist active safety features such as Adaptive Cruise Control with full-speed range, automatic front and rear braking, forward collision mitigation, lane keep assist and rear cross traffic alert.

This move with V2V is contining a trend. In 2016, Cadillac pioneered the world's first Rear Camera Mirror, increasing the driver's rearward vision by approximately 300 percent, Martin said.

General Motors Invests Heavily, Creates Jobs in Michigan CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 be adjusting production plans this neering and technical skills re-

180 retained jobs by redeploying team members from Lansing Delta Township to support production of the Chevrolet Silverado HD and GMC Sierra HD pick-up trucks.

• Lansing Delta Township: Approximately 500 retained jobs to support production of the new Chevrolet Traverse and Buick Enclave in the first quarter of 2018.

"The job commitments announced today demonstrate the confidence we have in our products, our people and an overall positive outlook for the auto industry and the U.S. economy," said GM Chairman and CEO Mary Barra.

As previously announced, Morrissey said the Lansing plant will spring as it transitions from building three models – the Chevrolet Traverse, Buick Enclave and GMC Acadia (new GMC Acadia now built in Spring Hill, Tenn.) – to two models, the new Traverse and Enclave. During this transition, the plant will not operate a third shift.

When the plant has fully launched the new crossovers by early 2018, GM will bring back about 500 jobs to give the companv flexibility to meet market demand for the new crossovers, Morrissey said. Since 2009, GM and the UAW announced investment commitments in Michigan of nearly \$10 billion.

GM also outlined its support for several initiatives aimed at promoting the development of engiquired for future job growth in Michigan and the U.S.:

• FIRST Robotics: Inspires and recognizes science and technology education.

• Take 2: An internship program for professionals with technical backgrounds who took a career break of two or more years and are interested in returning to the workforce.

· Girls Who Code: A partnership to inspire and empower thousands of U.S. middle and high school girls to become future leaders in technology and engineering fields.

• SAE International's A World in Motion (AWIM): A teacher-administered, industry volunteer-assisted program that brings STEM education to life in K-12 classrooms.

 Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program (DAPCEP): Program to encourage and prepare students across southeast Michigan for the technical jobs of the future.

• TechForce: Partnership with Arizona Science Center and Phoenix public schools designed to provide students with handson experiences that encourage both STEM and career and technical education.

• Student Corps: An internship program in underserved Michigan communities partnering high school students with GM retirees and college students on service work, job training and life skills development.

Ford Testing Out Just What **3D Printing Tech Can Do**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for automotive applications and requirements.'

Wider adoption of 3D printing has been driven by recent technology advances, new areas of application and government support, according to Global Industry Analysts, Lee said.

By 2020, the global market for this emerging technology is expected to reach \$9.6 billion, the organization reports. As 3D printing becomes increasingly efficient and affordable, companies are employing it for manufacturing applications in everything from aerospace to education to medicine.

3D printing could bring immense benefits for automotive production, including the ability to produce lighter-weight parts that could lead to greater fuel efficiency, Lee said. A 3D-printed spoiler, for instance, may weigh less than half its cast metal counterpart.

The technology is more costefficient for production of lowvolume parts for prototypes and specialized race car components, Lee said.

Additionally, Ford could use 3D printing to make larger tooling and fixtures, along with personalized components.

With 3D printing, specifications for a part are transferred from the computer-aided design program to the printer's computer, which analyzes the design.

The device then goes to work, printing one layer of material at a time, then gradually stacking layers into a finished 3D object.

When the system detects the raw material or supply material canister is empty, a robotic arm automatically replaces it with a full canister. Lee said.

This allows the printer to operate unattended for hours - days, even.

Using traditional methods to develop, say, a new intake manifold, an engineer would create a computer model of the part, then have to wait months for prototype tooling to be produced. With 3D printing technology, Ford can print the intake manifold in a couple of days, at a significant cost reduction.

3D printing is not yet fast enough for high-volume manufacturing, but it is more cost-efficient for low-volume production, Lee said.

Additionally, minus the constraints of mass-production processes, 3D-printed parts can be designed to function more efficiently.



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Ford touchscreens can now read handwritten Chinese characters.

New Mustang Touch Screen Can Read Chinese Writing

the touchscreen.

Engineers from Ford's Research and Engineering Center in Nanjing have helped Mustang -China's top-selling sports coupe - master the ancient art of the country's traditional handwriting system, said Ford spokesman Anderson Chan.

With SYNC 3, Ford's next generation in-car media and navigation system, Mustang can understand handwritten Chinese characters inputted with a swipe of the finger, Chan said. With enhanced voice recognition technology, SYNC 3 also recognizes voice commands in Mandarin Chinese, providing drivers with a seamless connectivity experience, from selecting music to searching for a destination.

Previously, inputting Chinese characters on an in-car touch screen would require typing in pinyin (phonetic spellings of Chinese words using the alphabet) and then selecting one of multiple characters, all of which have analogous pronunciations, in order to enter a command or search for a destination, Chan

The writing is on the wall - uh, er Chinese - who have difficulties using pinyin.

The Chinese version of SYNC 3 is far more than just a translation of a global technology," said Fisher Xu, SYNC supervisor for Ford Asia Pacific. "It's really been localized to respond to a Chinese driver's needs with a local point of view, from the voice commands that understand our accents and our habits, to the way we structure our statements.

"For instance, when you talk to a friend in China and they ask where you are, they're really looking for a building name or a point of interest, not a street number. It's probably different to other parts of the world, and SYNC 3 is smart enough to know this preference, seamlessly."

Ford's multi-modal handwriting feature allows users to scribble characters by hand, and instantly recognizes each stroke of the character as it is made, by tracing it and turning it into a typeface, Chan said.

With more than 2,500 commonly used characters in the Chinese language and a wide range of different writing styles and habits, it leverages automate ic association technology based on a large database of characters and fuzzy search algorithms to save users time and increase accuracy SYNC 3 can also decipher Chinese characters written at angles of up to 15 degrees. This means that after a driver is buckled up and about to pull out of a parking space, they can lean over and comfortably handwrite any address or point of interest, Chan said. Or, while they're driving, their front seat passenger can lean across and scribble, and the system understands that just as easily. After the system finds the address, the driver or passenger can zoom in and out on the map just by pinching the 8-inch screen, just like a smartphone. The new Mustang was introduced in Asia for the first time in 2015, Chan said. Sales in China have continued to grow, jumping 45 percent in 2016. It's China's best-selling sports coupe.



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said

Even with predictive technology, this process can be slow and less intuitive for the driver, and doesn't suit people - usually old-

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Detroit Auto Scene

MARCH 20, 2017

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PAGE 3

2018 Equinox's New Design is 'Attractive, Aero-Efficient'

last year, compact SUVs are the largest vehicle segment in the U.S., and customers say they want passenger and cargo space that fits their lifestyle without compromising on fuel efficiency.

That was the task for the Design and Aerodynamic teams working on the shape of the new 2018 Equinox: to create an allnew compact SUV that is a perfect balance of style, function and efficiency, said Jeff Perkins, Equinox design manager.

Working closely with the aerodynamics team, we were able to craft a final design that is the ultimate win-win scenario," said Perkins.

"Together, we reached the aerodynamic goals intended to give the new Equinox an efficiency-enhancing edge on the highway with the sculpted look and cargo space we set out to achieve.

The 2018 Equinox offers an EPA-estimated 32 mpg on the highway (FWD models).

The teams took great care, said Perkins, in creating a refined new vehicle shape that maintains the key proportions of a small crossover/SUV.

In addition to delivering the utility and functionality customers look for in the segment, he said, the Equinox's expressive exterior has a lean, sculpted form sporting Chevrolet's signature design cues.

"Aerodynamic performance is a big contributor to fuel economy, but the box-like shapes of crossovers and SUVs are not conducive to aero efficiency," said Nick Lico, Global Aerodynamics development lead.

Working with Design, we were able to craft an athletic shape that is both attractive and segment-leading in aero efficiency.'

The new Equinox's overall length was reduced by 4.7 inches to further right-size the vehicle for customers, making it easier to park and maneuver. Despite the smaller exterior dimensions, interior volume increased by 3.5 cubic feet. The reduced length, however, posed another challenge to aero efficiency, because it is tougher to push a shorter shape cleanly through the air.

More than 500 hours in GM's full-scale wind tunnel produced an exterior that not only maintains the essence of the intended design, but reduces wind resistance by 10 percent over the previous model.

New, electronically controlled upper and lower grille shutters account for the greater aero performance. They close in certain conditions on the highway, when engine cooling needs are reduced, pushing more air around the vehicle to reduce drag.

With more than 2.7 million sold the compact SUV market is exploding in popularity.

"In the past, we'd take the design cues from larger SUVs and use them in the design of compact SUVs," Perkins said. "But now customers want compact SUVs that don't have that trucky look. They want something that is sleek and modern, while at the same time has the cargo space they want.

The new 2018 Equinox, said Perkins, is a fresh and modern compact SUV, featuring an expressive design, increased cargo space, the latest connectivity, expanded roster of available safety features and all-new range of turbocharged engines - including the segment's first turbo-diesel.

Cargo area has increased, he said, with new storage features such as a large, hidden underfloor storage space and a flat cargo floor that makes loading and unloading easier.

Perkins said the biggest surprise in designing the new Equinox was how effective it was changing small details of design.

"We found a number of small trips that were effective in improving aerodynamics," Perkins said

"Take the front fenders as an example. Look at how they are shaped. They are smooth and fluid. It's important, when designing a vehicle, that the air on the side stay attached. The challenge is that aerodynamics dictate a flat surface to do that but we



Perkins shows off the latest Equinox design, where sleekness and aerodynamics were the goals.

want a shape that is sharp-looking and aerodynamic. Design is where art and science intersect."

Perkins said Computer Aided Design (CAD) helps smooth out the design process by making the process quicker. But once a design has been completed in the computer, they still create fullsized clay sculptures.

"You have to see a design in real space," Perkins said. "Sometimes you have a design that looks great on the computer screen, but when you see it realized in clay, it just looks off. When that happens, we make adjustments to the clay model, scan the adjusted version and send those dimensions back to the computer for study."

Purposeful technologies are designed to help keep passengers safe, comfortable and connected. Teen Driver is also offered, along with new safety features including Safety Alert Seat, Surround Vision, Forward Collison Alert with Following Distance Indicator and more.

Perkins said they do a lot of consumer research when coming up with new designs. One thing he heard from people about the new Equinox was that it looks new and modern and sleek.

'That's what we were going for," Perkins said. "We want people to look at the new design and see that it's new and fresh.

Perkins said now that the 2018 Equinox is completed, he's working on the next iteration of the vehicle

The 2018 Equinox is on sale now.

It's assembled in GM's Ingersoll, Ont., CAMI facility.



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TIME: 11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (lunch included)

LOCATION: Courtyard Downtown Detroit 333 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI 48226 (Room: Cascade Ballroom D)

Additional details include:

• The larger rear spoiler was designed to help reduce turbulence at the rear of the vehicle for less wind resistance.

• The rear corner incorporates a series of cleverly incorporated "air trips," as the designers call them, for optimal air separation at the edges of the taillamps and corners at the D-pillars.

• New tire deflectors help achieve the same aerodynamic advantage as a traditional air dam, but without compromising the Equinox's sculpted design.

• Underbody panels on FWD models improve airflow beneath the vehicle.

All this attention to detail is important, Perkins said, because

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"These standards are costly for

automakers and the American

people," Pruitt said March 15. He

promised a "thorough review"

that will "help ensure this national program is good for consumers

Environmental groups predict

Trump will weaken the stan-

dards, which now require the

fleet of new cars and trucks to

average 36 miles per gallon in

and good for the environment."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



2017 Ram Heavy Duty is an experience for Columbus auto show visitors.

Ram Takes on Columbus

worth showing off, show it off. And that's what the Ram brand

did at last week's Columbus, Ohio, auto show.

Columbus International Auto Show attendees were able to experience the power, capabilities and performance of the awardwinning Ram trucks at the Ram Truck Experience test track, returning to the auto show March 16-19.

"We are proud to showcase the most innovative lineup of fullsize pickup trucks on the market," said Jeff Hines, director of the Great Lakes Business Center – FCA US, at the auto show. "The Ram Truck Experience will be engaging and memorable for riders as they experience the refined interior, capabilities and handling of the Ram 1500, 2500 and 3500.

Participants in the Ram Truck Experience were given rides with a performance driver through an indoor obstacle course that demonstrates various truck capabilities, including: 30-degree wedge to demonstrate traction: rocks and logs to demonstrate

When you have something articulation and stability; bumps to demonstrate suspension; and a Ram Mountain to demonstrate the ground clearance, approach and departure angles.

> Upon completion of the ride, participants were given a commemorative RAM T-shirt.

There was no additional fee for auto show attendees to participate in the experience.

real-world driving conditions by 2025, about 10 mpg higher than the current standard. The auto industry is concerned that the standards will be hard to meet because people are buying more trucks and SUVs and shunning fuel-efficient cars. Trump administration The

downplayed any potential fight, saying officials have more than a year to resolve differences. A decision is not due until April 2018. Currently, California and feder-

al standards are mostly the same. But if Trump relaxes the standards, California and the other states likely would keep the 36 mpg rule in place, potentially creating two standards. Since about 40 percent of the nation's vehicles are in states that follow California rules, automakers probably would conform to them rather than build two different vehicles for the U.S. market.

States Push Back Against Trump Proposal

That means California would end up setting national policy. That's a problem for the industry because car prices could rise and hurt sales. The EPA estimates the current standards will cost \$875 per vehicle, while a study commissioned by the auto industry estimates it at \$1,249 per vehicle by 2025. However, the government says fuel savings would more than offset the added costs.

If no agreement is reached, the administration could try to revoke California's latest waiver, setting up an epic legal battle over who controls emissions and fuel economy policies.

A senior White House official said March 14 that the administration wants to negotiate one national standard. "We wel-come California to the table," the official told reporters in a conference call. He spoke on condition of anonymity even though Trump has criticized the use of unnamed sources.

"If California wants to go a different direction (in 2018), we'll have to deal with it at that point," he said.

The feds have some leverage: A new waiver will be needed in 2025.

Regardless of what happens in the U.S., automakers who sell globally will still have to improve vehicle efficiency because of rising fuel economy standards in the rest of the world. China, Europe and Japan will all require fleets to average 47 miles per gallon or higher by 2020.

Ram Makes Upfitting Trucks Easier

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Chassis Cab truck line is designed and engineered with the upfitter in mind, Cappa said. The Ram 3500, 4500 and 5500 are the easiest Chassis Cab trucks in the market to upfit, period, he said.

Cappa said the following features outline Ram Commercial's claims:

- Ram Chassis Cab 3500, 4500 and 5500;
- Industry standard Cab-axle (CA) lengths and frame width;
- No DEF tank relocation needed;
- Flat frame rails;
- Vehicle system interface

module (VSIM) to communicate w/aftermarket modules;

- Left- or right-side power takeoff (PTO) capability;
- Largest-in-class brakes; • Electronic stability control
- (ESC) on all models; Best-in-class fuel tank capac-
- ity of 74 gallons.
- Ram ProMaster vans: • Vertical interior walls:
 - Lowest load floor:
- · Predrilled holes to ease upfit
- Best-in-class standard V6
- horsepower; · Best-in-class turning diame
 - ter: • Best-in-class standard interior
 - cargo height.



What is What with Trump's Mileage, Emission Proposals

by DEE-ANN DURBIN AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) - President Donald Trump plans to re-examine federal fuel economy requirements for new cars and trucks.

The requirements were a centerpiece of President Barack Obama's strategy to combat global warming. But Trump appears to be making good on a pledge to car company CEOs to reduce "unnecessary regulations."

Here's what's happening: What are CAFE and GHG standards?

CAFE (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) standards are milesper-gallon targets for cars and trucks set by the U.S. government. The standards are based on size and are weighted by sales. Each manufacturer has a different requirement based on the models it sells.

Congress required the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to develop CAFE standards in 1975 after gasoline shortages during the Arab oil embargo. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began regulating greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from vehicles in 2007. The agencies work together to produce CAFE standards.

The standard for passenger cars stayed at 27.5 mpg from 1990 until 2007. In 2009, the government set a fuel economy standard of 34.1 mpg for cars and light trucks by 2016. In 2012, it set a new target of 54.5 mpg by 2025. The number can change depending on the mix of vehicles customers buy. Right now, it stands at 51.4 mpg because SUVs and trucks are selling well.

President Trump wants automakers to expand production in the U.S. and hire more workers. In exchange, he has promised to cut regulations and taxes. Gasoline is more than \$1 per gallon cheaper than it was in 2012. when the standards were issued. The low prices hurt demand for more fuel-efficient cars. If those cars don't sell, their high mileage can't be counted toward an automaker's corporate average fuel economy.

But environmental groups say weakening the standards would increase pollution and require consumers to spend more on gas

How are automakers improving their fuel economy?

Manufacturers have introduced all-electric cars like the Chevrolet Bolt and increased the use of lightweight materials like aluminum. Engine technologies, such as direct fuel injection and more efficient transmissions, are also contributing.

The standards give manufacturers extra credit for new technologies, such as hybrid engines for pickup trucks and stop-start systems, which automatically shut off the engine when the vehicle stops in traffic.

Do those added technologies make my vehicle more expensive?

Yes. In its final ruling in January, the EPA estimated the fuel economy standards will cost \$875 per vehicle. A study commissioned by the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers estimates the cost of compliance at \$1,249 per vehicle. However, the EPA says the standards would save consumers up to \$1,620 in

Under the current standard, would my car get 54.5 miles a gallon in the year 2025?

No. Manufacturers can apply credits for various fuel-saving technologies to arrive at that figure. Real-world mileage would be closer to 36 mpg.

What's happening now?

In the last days of the Obama administration, the EPA completed a review of the standards for model years 2022-25 and left them unchanged, saying the car companies have many affordable options to help them comply. The industry protested, saying the review was too hasty and didn't consider the fact that gas prices have fallen and few consumers want the smallest, most fuel-efficient vehicles.

President Trump is reopening the evaluation process, which could lead to weaker standards. Why would the government consider changing the standards?

gas over the life of their vehicle.

If the standards are weakened, will that affect what kinds of cars are available?

Maybe. Automakers might choose to offer fewer electric or hybrid cars in the U.S., since those are less profitable than trucks and SUVs. They also could scrap subcompact cars, which are unpopular with U.S. consumers but help meet fuel economy targets.

There are caveats. Automakers will still have to meet rising fuel economy standards in China and Europe, so they won't stop making efficient vehicles. If gas prices rise, U.S. consumers might demand more fuel-efficient cars.

California and other blue states have a history of passing stricter standards than the rest of the country. If that continues, automakers would have to keep their most fuel-efficient models in U.S. showrooms, since California is the biggest market in the U.S.



Mopar's NHRA Drag Racing **Team Strong**

Florida's Gainesville Raceway been synonymous with has speed since 1969. For close to five decades, some of drag racing's most revered records have been set at the track's prestigious NHRA Gatornationals each March.

This year, Mopar and Dodge will look to continue that tradition in both the Pro and Sportsman classes across four days of competition.

The four Mopar-backed Dodge Charger R/T Funny Cars from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) are off to a stellar start on the young season and hope to carry that momentum into the first East Coast race on the 2017 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series calendar.

To kick off the year, two-time series champion Matt Hagan has collected two consecutive Wally trophies in February with wins in the NHRA Winternationals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona and the Arizona Nationals at Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park behind the wheel of his Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T car.

All four DSR Funny Cars currently sit in the top eight in the point standings.

In the Top Fuel ranks, DSR's Mopar drivers are off to as hot a start as their Funny Car brethren. Leah Pritchett won her hometown Winternationals in the Papa John's/Mopar Pennzoil Dragster on Feb. 12, then followed it up two weeks later with a win in the Arizona Nationals for the second year in a row.

She also set a new national elapsed-time record during qualifying for that event with a pass of 3.658 seconds at 329.34 mph.

While Pritchett leads the point standings and her team is looking to make even more power in Gainesville, Tony Schumacher is solidly in the second spot in the Mopar-powered U.S. Army Dragster.

2016 Funny Car World Champion Ron Capps is the most recent Mopar-powered Dodge winner of the Gatornationals, claiming the event title in 2015. He is a threetime Gatornationals champion, while Tony Schumacher has won the event four times. One of Florida's favorite sons, drag racing pioneer and longtime Mopar driver Don Garlits, won the 1972, 1977, 1978 and 1986 editions of the event in Top Fuel. In 1986, he also broke the 270-mph barrier at his home track.

Renault Denies That Company **Faked Results**

PARIS (AP) - Renault is deny-

ing a report that its vehicles are equipped with software that allowed its vehicles to cheat on emissions testing.

The statement March 15 from the French carmaker followed a report in the newspaper Liberation, which claimed to have obtained an investigative document from the Economy Ministry indicating that emissions from two models - the Renault Captur and the Clio IV - spewed emissions more than 300 percent higher than the legal limit in reallife conditions.

The ministry's fraud department handed its findings to prosecutors in November.

French authorities raided Renault premises after Volkswagen was found to have used software to cheat on United States diesel emissions tests

Renault recalled 15,000 cars last year over excessive levels of harmful gases, but the company insisted there was no intentional wrongdoing on its part.

Buick Can Keep Basketball Fans Informed

It has begun - March Madness. more popular, Colley said. Last And Buick has come up with a way NCAA basketball fans can keep up with the tournament even if they're in their cars.

NCAA March Madness started on March 16, and Buick owners in the U.S. with an in-vehicle On-Star 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspot use a new unlimited prepaid data plan enabled by AT&T. The plan is only \$20 a month and available across Buick's entire 2017 retail portfolio of vehicles, said GM spokesman Phil Colley.

Buick drivers and their passengers already love being able to access email, check social media and live stream video from their vehicles, Colley said, and now passengers can stream all their favorite sporting events without being concerned about running out of data or missing any gamewinning plays.

Such packages are becoming

year, Buick owners increased their OnStar 4G LTE data usage by 285 percent compared to 2015.

As a longstanding NCAA partner, Buick is especially excited to have this plan available for March Madness, one of the most streamed sporting events of the year, Colley said. March Madness streaming reached 65 million people in 2016 and total live streaming of the tournament hit an all-time high of 1.1 billion minutes.

"Our customers' lives are increasingly more mobile and it is important we provide connectivity solutions that meet their on-the-go expectations," said Duncan Aldred, vice president, Global Buick and GMC. "We are providing our owners with a data plan where the only limit is turning the car off."

In addition to the 4G LTE connection enabled by AT&T, the On-Star Basic Plan comes standard on all new Buick retail models, Aldred said.

The Basic Plan includes select remote vehicle services and the OnStar AtYourService marketplace via the myBuick mobile app among other features, Colley said.

"As an NCAA Corporate Champion, we're proud to play a role in delivering this capability to Buick customers," said Joe Mosele, vice president, Internet Things Solutions, AT&T. of "March Madness is one of the most streamed sporting events in the world, and with AT&T's 4G LTE-enabled Wi-Fi and this new



Fans can follow March Madness in their cars, thanks to Buick.

unlimited data plan, passengers can enjoy endless entertainment and pricing, visit OnStar.com, on the go."

For more information on plans Colley said.

Wipro Opens New Research Site in Detroit

Wipro Limited, a global information technology, consulting and business process services company headquartered in India, on March 15 opened its Automotive Engineering Center (AEC) in Detroit.

The center aims to drive innovation in connected vehicle concepts as well as design, product engineering, digital customer-vehicle experiences, artificial intelligence, and sensors-driven advanced vehicle data analytics, said Wipro spokesman Adam Gasper.

The Wipro's AEC is part of Wipro's vision to build a global network of delivery centers that offer best-in-class engineering and IT services, augmented by leading-edge automotive domain and digital solutions, Gasper said. The center will serve as a hub to support the automotive engineering and IT requirements of Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and Tier I suppliers based in North America.

for delivering product design and supporting the development and validation of automotive cockpit electronic products such as navigation systems, connectivity systems, instrument clusters, Head-Up Displays (HUDs), advanced safety systems, vehicle diagnostics and advanced analytics, and end-to-end connected vehicle solutions.

"Wipro is committed to addressing the local and global needs of its engineering customers, and assisting them in gaining both scale and time-tomarket advantages," said Anita Ganti, senior vice president and global head, Product Engineering Services, Wipro Limited. "This center. located in the automotive hub of Detroit, will enable us to deliver differentiated connected automotive engineering and innovation-led solutions for our customers.'

Alex Beylin, vice president and Global Automotive Business

This center will use local talent Head, Wipro Limited, said, "This center will showcase Wipro's automotive engineering and digital technology capabilities and will also enable effective collaboration within the southeast Michigan automotive community.'

Wipro has over two decades of experience in delivering differentiated solutions for leading global automotive electronic Tier I suppliers and OEMs and has been a partner in their digital transformation journey.

With its automotive product design and engineering expertise in electronics, software, engineering design services, manufacturing execution systems, product lifecycle management, Cloud solutions, and enterprise IT applications management, and remote infrastructure services, Wipro has been able to deliver a range of products that create unique user experiences with highest levels of reliability, Gasper said.

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Volkswagen Subsidiary Audi Headquarters Searched

BERLIN (AP) – German media report that authorities are March 10 in the U.S. to a scheme searching offices of Audi in connection with an investigation into the luxury automaker's parent company Volkswagen's cheating on diesel emissions tests.

The daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung and public ARD television reported that Audi offices at its headquarters in Ingolstadt, as well as buildings in the states of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Lower Saxony, were being searched March 15.

The raids come in connection with a fraud investigation launched by Munich prosecutors several weeks ago.

Neither Munich nor Ingolstadt prosecutors could be reached immediately for comment.

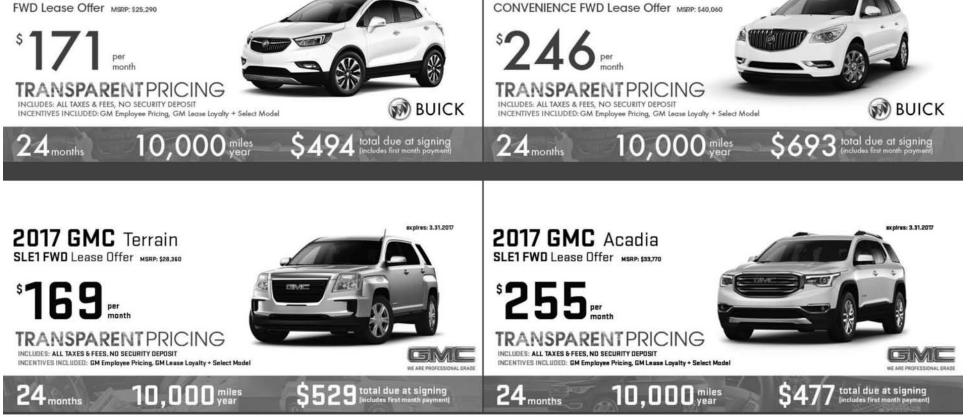
Volkswagen pleaded guilty to get around American pollution rules. If a judge agrees to the Justice Department's sentencing recommendation, the scandal will cost the company more than \$20 billion in the U.S. alone.

On March 14, Matthias Mueller, CEO of Volkswagen, said the United States remains a "core market" for the company despite its diesel emissions scandal and has underlined that it hopes to expand there. The VW brand has only a small share in the U.S. market although it is important for the company's luxury brands Porsche and Audi. It makes cars in Chattanooga, Tenn.

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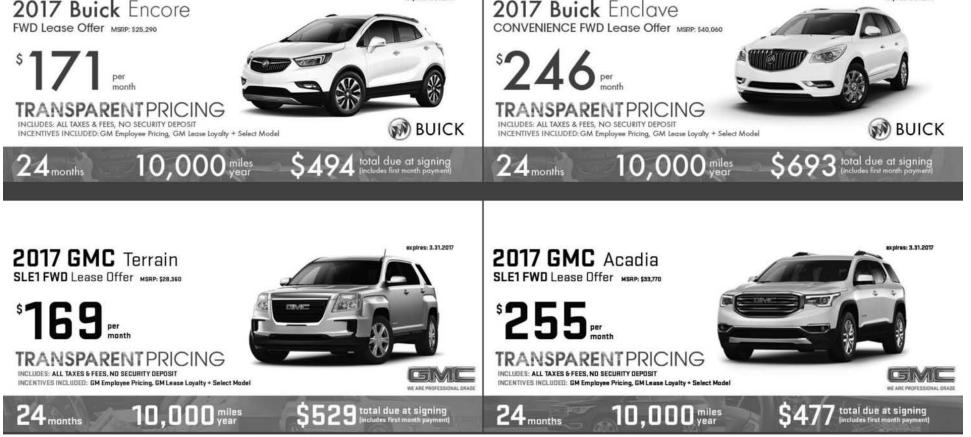
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GM, Ford Car Sales Drop in China; BMW, Toyota, Nissan Show Increase

BELJING (AP) – China's auto sales growth decelerated in the first two months of the year following a sales tax increase.

Sales of sedans, minivans and SUVs rose 6.3 percent from a year earlier to 3.8 million units, down from December's 9.1 percent growth, an industry group, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers, reported March 10. Total vehicle sales, including trucks and buses, rose 8.8 percent to 4.4 million.

Sales in the world's biggest auto market – by number of units sold – rose 15 percent last year after a 10 percent sales tax on small-engine vehicles was cut by half. The government restored part of that in January, raising the tax from 5 percent to 7.5 percent.

A steady decline in sales growth is squeezing both global brands that look to China's crowded market to drive revenue and newer local brands that are gradually expanding abroad. Forecasters expect growth in mid-single digits this year.

Chinese commercial data can be volatile in January and February due to the Lunar New Year holiday, which starts on different dates each year. Analysts often combine the two months to screen out the impact of the twoweek holiday.

Demand for SUVs, especially lower-priced Chinese brands, helped to offset weakness in sedan sales.

Sales of SUVs, popular with families that see them as a safe urban ride, rose 21.6 percent to 1.5 million, accounting for 40 percent of passenger vehicle sales. Sales by Chinese brands rose 28.3 percent to 978,000 units.

General Motors Co. said SUVs accounted for nearly half its February sales.

Sedan sales rose 3.8 percent to 1.8 million units.

• GM said sales eked out a 0.3 percent gain from a year earlier in February to 246,730. Sales dropped 24 percent in January.

• Ford Motor Co. said sales in January and February fell 21 percent to 153,073. February sales rose 2 percent to 64,641.

• Nissan Motor Co., the most popular Japanese brand in China, said sales in January and February rose 3.1 percent from a year earlier to 194,241 vehicles.

• Toyota Motor Co. said sales rose 9.6 percent to 183,600 in the first two months of the year.

• BMW AG, Europe's biggest luxury brand, said sales in China of BMW and Mini brand cars rose 14.7 percent in January-February to 92,045.

Europe Car Sales Finally Recovered

MILAN (AP) – European car sales grew 2.2 percent in February to more than 1 million vehicles – close to the level in 2008, just before the economic crisis slid the industry into a prolonged downturn.

Data released March 16 by the European car makers' association, ACEA, showed that the three top markets, France, Germany and Britain, all suffered modest declines, but demand increased in Italy by 6.2 percent and Spain by 0.2 percent.

Sales were down by 3 percent at France's PSA Group as it buys the General Motors European company Opel, which posted a 2 percent dip in registrations. Volkswagen, still recovering from a diesel emissions scandal, saw sales down 6.6 percent while Fiat Chrysler registrations grew by 8 percent.





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Google Spin-Off Waymo Accuses Uber of Stealing Vital Robot-Driving Technology

by MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - A selfdriving car company founded by Google is presenting new evidence to support allegations that a former manager stole technology sold to Uber to help the ridehailing service build its own robot-powered vehicles.

Waymo, a project hatched by Google eight years ago, wove its tale of deceit in sworn statements filed March 10 in a San Francisco federal court.

The documents try to make a case that former Waymo manager Anthony Levandowski conceived a scheme to heist key trade secrets before leaving the company early last year to launch an autonomous vehicle startup that he had been discussing with Uber.

It's the latest salvo in a battle that started last month when Waymo sued Levandowski and Uber for alleged theft of the technology for "LiDAR," an array of sensors that enable self-driving cars to see what's around them so they can safely navigate roads. Experts say an effective Li-

DAR system typically takes years to develop.

leaving After Waymo, Levandowski started a self-driving truck company called Otto that Uber bought for \$680 million to accelerate an expansion into autonomous vehicles.

Uber brushed off Waymo's claims as "a baseless attempt to slow down a competitor."

Waymo is mounting its attack with the help of one of Levandowski's former colleagues, Pierre-Yves Droz, the leader of Waymo's LiDAR project.

In a sworn statement, Droz said Levandowski confided in January 2016 that he planned to "replicate" Waymo's technology at Otto. A Google forensics expert said he determined that Levandowski began downloading thousands of files containing Waymo's trade secrets in December 2015, according to another sworn statement.

Levandowski had previously acknowledged to Droz that he began discussing self-driving cars with Uber in 2015, according to documents. Levandowski, the "told me that it would be nice to create a new self-driving car startup and that Uber would be interested in buying the team responsible for the LiDAR we were developing at Google," Droz said in his declaration.

Then, again in January 2016, Levandowski said that he had been at Uber's San Francisco headquarters seeking an investment in his startup, Droz said.

Waymo also filed papers seeking a court order to block Uber from using any of the technology that it believes Levandowski stole.

If a judge grants that request, it could force Uber to halt its current tests of self-driving cars in Pittsburgh and Phoenix. It's unclear how much of the technology targeted in Waymo's lawsuit is being used in the Uber self-driving cars that are currently picking up passengers in those cities.

Levandowski wasn't alone in his alleged betrayal, according to Waymo.

Other sworn statements filed March 10 identified two other former Waymo employees accused of stealing technology in July 2016 shortly before they joined Uber. They are: Sameer Kshirsagar, Waymo's former global supply manager, and Radu Radutu, an engineer in Waymo's LiDAR department.

The dispute between Waymo and Uber highlights the high stakes in the race to build selfdriving cars that promise not only to revolutionize the way people get around but also the automobile industry. Waymo and Uber are two of the early leaders, while long-established car companies such as Ford, Toyota and General Motors are scrambling to catch up.

Waymo now operates as a subsidiary of Google's corporate parent, Alphabet Inc.



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Intel Spends \$15 Billion For Autonomous Firm

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) – In- \$63.54 for each share of Mobileye tel will buy Israel's Mobileye in a deal valued at about \$15 billion. instantly propelling the computer chip and technology giant to the forefront of autonomous vehicle technology.

The deal announced March 14 combines Mobileye's marketleading software that processes information from cameras and other sensors with Intel's hardware, data centers and its own software, giving automakers a one-stop place to shop for fully autonomous car systems.

"This acquisition essentially merges the intelligent eyes of the autonomous car with the intelligent brain that actually drives the car," Intel CEO Brian Krzanich wrote in a note to employees about the acquisition.

The combination, expected to close by year's end, will allow the companies to bring components to market faster at a lower cost, solidifying Mobileye's leadership position, officials from the companies said.

Automakers and some technology companies are testing autonomous vehicles in California. Michigan and a few other states. Nearly all use Mobileye's software, which reads inputs from cameras, radar, and laser sensors and makes decisions on what an autonomous car should N.V., a 34 percent premium to its March 10 closing price.

The boards of both companies still have to approve the transaction. The companies put the equity value of the deal at \$15.3 billion.

The deal is the latest combination as automakers and technology firms race to build autonomous cars and for leadership in life-saving electronics. Mobileye, with 660 employees, has been forming partnerships worldwide as its growth continued as a separate company. BMW, Intel and Mobileye partnered last year, and Mobileye teamed up with Delphi Automotive to develop building blocks for a fully autonomous car.

Competitors also formed partnerships in 2016. Ride-hailing company Uber Technologies and Volvo signed a \$300 million deal for Volvo to provide SUVs to Uber for autonomous vehicle research. General Motors Co. invested \$500 million in Uber rival Lyft Inc. to develop a fleet of autonomous electric taxis.

Google has a partnership with Fiat Chrysler to work on autonomous minivans, and Volkswagen is working with Uber competitor Gett.

Ford has invested \$150 million in laser sensor maker Velodvne. and it recently announced a \$1 billion purchase of budding robotics startup Argo AI. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the Intel acquisition of Mobileve, which he said was the largest deal in the country's history. He said he's been assured that the company's operations will stay in Israel. "The purchase dramatically proves that the vision we are leading is coming true. Israel is turning into a global technology center, not just in cyber but also in the automotive industry," he said. The combined global autonomous driving company, which includes Mobileve and Intel's autonomous driving group, will be based in Israel, supporting both companies' existing production programs and building on relationships with automakers, Tier 1 parts suppliers and semiconductor partners, the companies said.

Jerusalem-based Mobileye says it has contracts with 27 different automakers. It also makes software that runs automatic emergency braking and semiautonomous cruise control systems that are in cars and trucks on the road today.

Autonomous cars will need higher levels of connectivity to the Internet and access to bigger data centers, which Intel can provide, Krzanich said. The two companies also will combine highly detailed mapping efforts. Automakers, Krzanich said, want lower costs, faster times to market and the ability to get an autonomous driving system in one place.

"If you put all of that together, you really get an end-to-end solution for autonomous driving," said Mobileye Chairman and cofounder Amnon Shashua, who will continue to lead the combined autonomous car unit.

In the deal, Intel Corp. will pay

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Detroit-area Chevy dealers recently donated truckloads of items to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Services Center.

Ed Rinke Among Dealers Aiding Capuchins

Rinke Chevrolet joined with other members of the Metro Detroit Chevrolet Dealers Association to donate a couple of trucks' worth of items to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Services Center as part of the association's "Truckloads for Hope" fundraising effort.

"Every year, the association does something for charity," said Ken Swieczkowski, sales associate at Ed Rinke Chevrolet in Center Line. "This year, we chose the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Services Center to help. So, during February, we solicited donations from staff and customers to raise money for the Capuchins. We then used the money to purchase items from a list that will help people stay clean and stay warm."

Swieczkowski said it was an honor to go to stores and purchase the goods. The dealership had raised enough money to fill two pickup trucks with items from the Capuchin list.

"When I say the trucks were full, I mean they were full," Swieczkowski said. "We filled the beds and we filled the back of the truck cabs that transported the

Rinke Chevrolet joined with ther members of the Metro etroit Chevrolet Dealers Associion to donate a couple of ut of the truck."

> Credit for the size of the dealership's donation goes to its employees and customers, as well as the owner Edgar Rinke.

"Mr. Rinke and the staff were very generous," Swieczkowski said. "And we have great customers who were also willing to donate their money." After dealership employees loaded up the two trucks, they took them to the Capuchin warehouse at the corner of Medbury and Mount Elliott in Detroit on March 3.

"Getting involved and helping out felt great," Swieczkowski said. "Every year, we do something like this, as well as donate to 'Toys for Tots.' We were glad to help out the Capuchins this year."

Ford Recalls Certain 2017 Mustangs

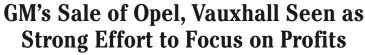
Ford Motor Company has issued a safety compliance recall in North America.

The recall for certain 2017 Ford Mustang vehicles to inspect the left-hand door handle spring, said Ford spokeswoman Elizabeth Weigandt. The company needs to inspect approximately 6,000 2017 Ford Mustang left interior door handle return springs.

In the affected vehicles, the left-hand interior door handle may have been built with a misoriented return spring, which could increase the potential for the return spring to become unseated. If that return spring is unseated, the inertial loads experienced by the interior door handle may cause the door to unlatch during a side impact, increasing the risk of injury in a crash, Weigandt said.

Ford is not aware of any accidents or injuries associated with this issue. The affected vehicles were built at Flat Rock Assembly Plant, Jan. 13 to Jan. 31, 2017.

There are approximately 5,756 vehicles located in North America. The Ford reference number for this recall is 17C04. Dealers make the inspection. There will be no cost for any required service.



by ANGELA CHARLTON and TOM KRISHER Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) – By shedding the bulk of its European operations, General Motors is getting rid of a perennial money drain and gaining essential cash that it can use to reward shareholders and invest in future technology such as electric cars and ridesharing.

The Detroit automaker also indicated that there's a possibility it may pull out of more unprofitable markets in the future.

GM on March 6 sold its European Opel and Vauxhall brands to French carmaker PSA Group for roughly \$2.33 billion, retreating from the world's third-largest auto market after almost two decades of futile efforts to make money. The brands have lost \$20 billion in the fiercely competitive region since last making a fullyear profit in 1999.

"I think they're ready to cut their losses and move on," said Morningstar analyst David Whiston. "They'd rather take their time and money and spend it elsewhere on something that has a better return."

The sale, expected to close by the end of the year, also includes GM's European auto financing arm, which goes to a joint venture between PSA and French bank BNP Paribas. GM has to keep \$6.5 billion in unfunded pension obligations. But it unloads any future losses and about \$1 billion per year in capital expenditures on new products.

GM Chief Financial Officer Chuck Stevens told reporters that the sale also means GM only has to keep \$18 billion on hand to weather an economic downturn, rather than \$20 billion. That \$2 billion will go to speed up a company commitment to buy back \$8 billion worth of stock. GM could repurchase as much as \$5 billion this year.

The sale also was influenced by stronger European clean-air regulations that will require significant spending on electric-car development, as well as currency issues caused by Britain's exit from the European Union, GM said.

"Increasing regulatory and compliance costs will continue to be a burden for the foreseeable future," GM President Dan Ammann said. After the sale, PSA, with a larger scale in Europe, can spread those costs over more vehicles, he said.

GM Chairman and CEO Mary Barra told analysts that the sale may not be GM's last. She said the company has work to do on some international businesses and could make a similar deal for them if they don't make enough money. GM has operations in Asia, South America, the Middle East, North America and elsewhere.

GM still will sell small numbers of high-performance Chevrolets and some Cadillacs in Europe. The deal doesn't include ridesharing or other mobility ventures in Europe.

For PSA, which makes Peugeot and Citroen cars, the acquisition will turn it into Europe's No. 2 automaker after Volkswagen, capping a remarkable turnaround after it was bailed out just three years ago.

PSA will take over 12 Opel and Vauxhall manufacturing facilities that employ about 40,000 people, the companies said, fueling worries that jobs eventually will be cut.

Executives insisted that no layoffs are currently foreseen, while analysts say they're inevitable over the long term. PSA CEO Carlos Tavares said there are ways to contain factory costs other than cutting workers. He said the company would focus on logistics, quality, energy, maintenance and security.

> "I think they're ready to cut their losses and move on." – David Whiston, *Auto Analyst*

Opel and Vauxhall last year sold just under 1.2 million vehicles, amounting to only 5.6 percent of the European market, according to GM.

"Unloading Opel-Vauxhall and the European part of the financing greatly improves GM's balance sheet, allowing investments in growing markets such as China and India," said Rebecca Lindland of *Kelley Blue Book*.

Christian Stadler of Warwick Business School warned that job cuts likely will be coming: "PSA has done it before and there is no other way to realistically achieve the cost savings they have in mind.

"The U.K. is definitely in a bad position as Brexit makes it less competitive than Germany and the unions are stronger in Germany."

Investors in the United States yawned at the sale. Shares in General Motors Co. slipped about 1 percent to \$37.91 March 6.

They're up 9 percent since the first of the year, indicating that investors already were anticipating benefits from the deal.





Volkswagen's Mueller Says That U.S. Market Remains Important

The Associated Press reported on March 14 that the CEO of German automaker Volkswagen says the United States remains a "core market" for the company despite its diesel emissions scandal and has underlined that it hopes to expand there.

Matthias Mueller made the comments at the company's annual news and investor conference at its headquarters in Wolfsburg, Germany.

Mueller said that "we are standing by our investment decisions and intend over the long term to play a significantly greater role there than today."

The Volkswagen brand has only a small share in the U.S. market, although it is important for the company's luxury brands Porsche and Audi.

It makes cars in Chattanooga, Fenn. U.S. authorities uncovered Volkswagen's use of engine control software that enabled vehicles to cheat on emissions tests.

Reuters reported that Mueller said that he was not ruling out a conversation with Fiat Chrysler.

"We are not ready for talks about anything," he had told *Reuters* on the sidelines of the Geneva auto show last week. "I haven't seen Marchionne for months."

Reuters also wrote that Marchionne has long advocated car industry mergers to share the costs of making cleaner and more technologically advanced vehicles and has repeatedly relayed his desire via the media.

"It would be very helpful if Mr. Marchionne were to communicate his considerations to me, too, and not just to you," Mueller said.





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