

safety is being compromised or if the continuation of the exemption is not consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136 or chapter 313, may take immediate steps to revoke the exemption or impose additional requirements as part of the exemption.

## VI. Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b), FMCSA requests public comment from all interested persons on ACC and AHAA's application for renewal of the exemption from § 393.87.

All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated at the beginning of this notice will be considered and will be available for examination in the docket at the location listed under the Addresses section of this notice. Comments received after the comment closing date will be filed in the public docket and will be considered to the extent practicable. In addition to late comments, FMCSA will also continue to file, in the public docket, relevant information that becomes available after the comment closing date. Interested persons should continue to examine the public docket for new material.

**Sue Lawless,**

*Acting Deputy Administrator.*

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**BILLING CODE 4910-EX-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2023-0026]

### Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Hearing

**AGENCY:** Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:** Notice of final disposition.

**SUMMARY:** FMCSA announces its decision to exempt 10 individuals from the hearing requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in interstate commerce. The exemptions enable these hard of hearing and deaf individuals to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

**DATES:** The exemptions are applicable on February 9, 2024. The exemptions expire on February 9, 2026.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Christine A. Hydock, Chief, Medical Programs Division, FMCSA, DOT, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W64-224, Washington, DC 20590-0001, (202) 366-

4001, [fmcsamedical@dot.gov](mailto:fmcsamedical@dot.gov). Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. If you have questions regarding viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Dockets Operations, (202) 366-9826.

## SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

### I. Public Participation

#### A. Viewing Comments

To view comments go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Insert the docket number (FMCSA-2023-0026) in the keyword box and click "Search." Next, sort the results by "Posted (Older-Newer)," choose the first notice listed, and click "Browse Comments." If you do not have access to the internet, you may view the docket online by visiting Dockets Operations in on the ground floor of the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 366-9317 or (202) 366-9826 before visiting Dockets Operations.

#### B. Privacy Act

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(6), DOT solicits comments from the public on the exemption requests. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). As described in the system of records notice DOT/ALL 14 (Federal Docket Management System), which can be reviewed at <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/privacy/privacy-act-system-records-notices>, the comments are searchable by the name of the submitter.

### II. Background

On January 3, 2024, FMCSA published a notice announcing receipt of applications from 10 individuals requesting an exemption from the hearing requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) to operate a CMV in interstate commerce and requested comments from the public (89 FR 432). The public comment period ended on February 2, 2024, and no comments were received.

FMCSA has evaluated the eligibility of these applicants and determined that granting exemptions to these individuals would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved by complying with § 391.41(b)(11).

The physical qualification standard for drivers regarding hearing found in § 391.41(b)(11) states that a person is

physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person first perceives a forced whispered voice in the better ear at not less than 5 feet with or without the use of a hearing aid or, if tested by use of an audiometric device, does not have an average hearing loss in the better ear greater than 40 decibels at 500 Hz, 1,000 Hz, and 2,000 Hz with or without a hearing aid when the audiometric device is calibrated to American National Standard (formerly ASA Standard) Z24.5-1951.

This standard was adopted in 1970 and was revised in 1971 to allow drivers to be qualified under this standard while wearing a hearing aid (35 FR 6458, 6463 (Apr. 22, 1970) and 36 FR 12857 (July 8, 1971), respectively).

### III. Discussion of Comments

FMCSA received no comments in this proceeding.

### IV. Basis for Exemption Determination

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), FMCSA may grant an exemption from the FMCSRs for no longer than a 5-year period if it finds such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption. The statutes also allow the Agency to renew exemptions at the end of the 5-year period. However, FMCSA grants medical exemptions from the FMCSRs for a 2-year period to align with the maximum duration of a driver's medical certification.

The Agency's decision regarding these exemption applications is based on relevant scientific information and literature, and the 2008 Evidence Report, "Executive Summary on Hearing, Vestibular Function and Commercial Motor Driving Safety." The evidence report reached two conclusions regarding the matter of hearing loss and CMV driver safety: (1) no studies that examined the relationship between hearing loss and crash risk exclusively among CMV drivers were identified; and (2) evidence from studies of the private driver's license holder population does not support the contention that individuals with hearing impairment are at an increased risk for a crash. In addition, the Agency reviewed each applicant's driving record found in the Commercial Driver's License Information System, for commercial driver's license (CDL) holders, and inspections recorded in the Motor Carrier Management Information System. For non-CDL holders, the Agency reviewed the driving records from the State Driver's Licensing Agency. Each applicant's record

demonstrated a safe driving history. Based on an individual assessment of each applicant that focused on whether an equal or greater level of safety would likely be achieved by permitting each of these drivers to drive in interstate commerce, the Agency finds the drivers granted this exemption have demonstrated that they do not pose a risk to public safety.

Consequently, FMCSA finds further that in each case exempting these applicants from the hearing standard in § 391.41(b)(11) would likely achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption, consistent with the applicable standard in 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(1).

#### V. Conditions and Requirements

The terms and conditions of the exemption are provided to the applicants in the exemption document and include the following: (1) each driver must report any crashes or accidents as defined in § 390.5T; (2) each driver must report all citations and convictions for disqualifying offenses under 49 CFR parts 383 and 391 to FMCSA; and (3) each driver is prohibited from operating a motorcoach or bus with passengers in interstate commerce. The driver must also have a copy of the exemption when driving, for presentation to a duly authorized Federal, State, or local enforcement official. In addition, the exemption does not exempt the individual from meeting the applicable CDL testing requirements.

#### VI. Preemption

During the period the exemption is in effect, no State shall enforce any law or regulation that conflicts with this exemption with respect to a person operating under the exemption.

#### VII. Conclusion

Based upon its evaluation of the 10 exemption applications, FMCSA exempts the following drivers from the hearing standard; in § 391.41(b)(11), subject to the requirements cited above:

Crystal Anderson-Grose (MA)  
 Ricardo Cabrera (FL)  
 Cody DeVries (TX)  
 Elexis Fernandez Quian (FL)  
 Joshua Grant (ME)  
 Kennard Johnson (IL)  
 Barbara Nacarelli (NE)  
 Bridgette Nielson (UT)  
 Darrious Smith (TX)  
 Steven Warren (AZ)

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b), each exemption will be valid for 2 years from the effective date unless revoked earlier by FMCSA. The exemption will be revoked if the

following occurs: (1) the person fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the exemption; (2) the exemption has resulted in a lower level of safety than was maintained prior to being granted; or (3) continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136, 49 U.S.C. chapter 313, or the FMCSRs.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket No. FRA-2023-0002-N-42]

#### Proposed Agency Information Collection Activities; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:** Notice of information collection; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) and its implementing regulations, this notice announces that FRA is forwarding the Information Collection Requests (ICRs) summarized below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. These ICRs describe the information collection and their expected burden. On October 2, 2023, FRA published a notice providing a 60-day period for public comment on the two ICRs. FRA received no comments related to the proposed collections of information.

**DATES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before March 22, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments and recommendations for the proposed ICRs should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find the particular ICR by selecting “Currently under Review—Open for Public Comments” or by using the search function.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Joanne Swafford, Information Collection Clearance Officer, at email: [joanne.swafford@dot.gov](mailto:joanne.swafford@dot.gov) or telephone: (757) 897-9908 or Ms. Arlette Mussington, Information Collection Clearance Officer, at email: [arlette.mussington@dot.gov](mailto:arlette.mussington@dot.gov) or telephone: (571) 609-1285.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The PRA, 44 U.S.C. 3501-3520, and its

implementing regulations, 5 CFR part 1320, require Federal agencies to issue two notices seeking public comment on information collection activities before OMB may approve paperwork packages. See 44 U.S.C. 3506, 3507; 5 CFR 1320.8 through 1320.12. On October 2, 2023, FRA published a 60-day notice in the **Federal Register** soliciting public comments on the ICRs for which it is now seeking OMB approval. See 88 FR 67866. FRA received no comments related to the proposed collections of information.

Before OMB decides whether to approve the proposed collections of information, it must provide 30 days for public comment. Federal law requires OMB to approve or disapprove paperwork packages between 30 and 60 days after the 30-day notice is published. 44 U.S.C. 3507(b)-(c); 5 CFR 1320.12(d); see also 60 FR 44978, 44983 Aug. 29, 1995. OMB believes the 30-day notice informs the regulated community to file relevant comments and affords the agency adequate time to digest public comments before it renders a decision. 60 FR 44983, Aug. 29, 1995. Therefore, respondents should submit their respective comments to OMB within 30 days of publication to best ensure having their full effect.

*Comments are invited on the following ICRs regarding:* (1) whether the information collection activities are necessary for FRA to properly execute its functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of FRA's estimates of the burden of the information collection activities, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used to determine the estimates; (3) ways for FRA to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information being collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of information collection activities on the public, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

The summaries below describe the ICRs that FRA will submit for OMB clearance as the PRA requires:

*Title:* Identification of Railroad Cars.

*OMB Control Number:* 2130-0506.

*Abstract:* This collection of information is associated with 49 CFR 232.3(d), formerly contained in Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) Order 13528. Paragraph (d)(3) of 49 CFR 232.3 conditionally excepts certain export, industrial, and other cars not owned by a railroad from part 232 compliance. It requires cars to be identified by a card attached to each side of the equipment, signed by the shipper, specifically noting that the car