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# RSGDA

REPAIR SHOP & GASOLINE DEALERS ASSOCIATION

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### **President Signs Historic Tax Relief Bill Making Estate Tax Exemption Permanent**

SSDA-AT applauds the permanent estate tax relief included in the “One Big Beautiful Bill” (OBBB), signed into law by President Trump on July 4.

A centerpiece of the legislation is the permanent increase of the unified estate, gift, and generation-skipping transfer (GST) tax exemptions to \$15 million per individual and \$30 million per couple, with both amounts indexed for inflation. Unlike prior tax reforms, which included sunset provisions or automatic reversion to lower thresholds, OBBB enshrines these higher exemption levels into permanent law.

The new law represents the most favorable federal estate tax environment since SSDA-AT began its advocacy efforts. Just over two decades ago, in 2001, the exemption stood at a mere \$675,000, with a top tax rate of 55%. The sweeping changes in OBBB mark a dramatic and welcome shift.

While SSDA-AT continues to support the complete repeal of the federal estate tax, this legislation is a meaningful step forward. With these increased and permanent exemption levels, family-owned businesses can now prioritize growth and succession planning without the looming threat of devastating tax liabilities.

### **U.S. District Court's Ruling on Debit Card Swipe Fees**

Retail industry advocacy groups applauded a federal judge's ruling that overturns the Federal Reserve's 2011 cap on debit card swipe fees.

In the case of *Corner Post v. Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve* in the U.S. District Court for the District of North Dakota, Judge Daniel Traynor granted summary judgment in the 2021 federal lawsuit filed by the Watford City, N.D.-based *Corner Post* truck stop and convenience store.

In his ruling, Judge Taynor vacated regulations setting the debit card swipe fee rate but put implementation on hold pending appeals "to prevent interchange transactions from becoming a completely unregulated market." He noted that the order does not prevent the Fed's proposed cap reduction, pending since 2023, from taking effect if the Fed chooses to move forward with it.

Prior to the ruling, regulations allowed banks that have at least \$10 billion in assets and follow rates set centrally by Visa and Mastercard to charge up to 21 cents per debit card transaction, as well as 1 cent for fraud prevention and 0.05%

of the transaction amount for fraud loss recovery. The lawsuit argued that the 2011 rate was set too high due to a 2010 law requiring that the rate be "reasonable" and "proportional" to banks' costs.

The North Dakota Retail Association and the North Dakota Petroleum Marketers Association joined Corner Post in the lawsuit, which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled last year could move forward. The 6-3 decision found that the lawsuit filed by Corner Post was not blocked by the statute of limitations because the time limit did not begin for the business until it began accepting debit cards upon opening for business in 2018.

### **Lower US Gasoline and Utility Prices Helped to Curb US July Inflation: BLS**

Declines in U.S. gasoline, electricity and natural gas prices helped to curtail the overall rate of inflation in July, the Bureau of Labor Statistics said on Tuesday.

The Consumer Price Index for all goods and services rose by 0.2% on a seasonally adjusted basis in July, down from an 0.3% jump in June. On an annual basis, the CPI increased 2.7% before seasonal adjustment, unchanged from June.

The index for energy fell by 1.1% in July after rising 0.9% in June due to declines in the gasoline, electricity and gas utility indexes. The energy index was down 1.6% year to year, the agency's data showed.

The gasoline index fell by 2.2% in July and was down 9.5% from a year ago. In July, the natural gas utility index dipped 0.9%, though it was up 13.8% year to year. The electricity index was down 0.1%, but up 5.5% from a year ago.

The fuel oil index rose by 1.8% in July after increasing in May and June, though it was down by nearly 3% from July 2024, the bureau said.

The food away from home index, which includes convenience store food service, increased by 0.3% in July after rising by 0.4% in June. The index was up 3.9% on an annual basis.

The index for shelter rose 0.2% in July and was the largest driver of the increase in the "all items" category, BLS said.

--Reporting by Donna Harris

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### **AAA Data Suggests Lower Costs Will Boost Travel Labor Day Weekend**

Lower prices for fuel, hotel and airfare this summer are prompting many Americans to squeeze in one last trip before summer ends, AAA said Friday in a news release.

Summer gasoline prices are lower than they've been for the last three years, matching 2021's averages, said AAA, which gets fuel price information from OPIS.

Last year, the national average for regular gasoline was \$3.33 on Labor Day. Prices should stay below 2024 levels

unless there's a major storm affecting Gulf Coast refineries, but gasoline prices have seen few fluctuations this year because of steady crude oil prices, the association said.

In July and early August, OPIS DemandPro shows fuel demand down about 2% from last year, about 6% from two years ago and almost 8% from three years ago.

AAA said this summer, domestic roundtrip flights are 6% cheaper compared to last year, averaging \$720 a ticket, and booking data also show that hotel rates are 11% lower and car rental costs are 3% cheaper than a year ago.

AAA car rental partner Hertz said its advanced bookings show the top destinations are Orlando, Fla., Denver, Boston, Los Angeles and Atlanta.

The cost to travel internationally this Labor Day weekend is a "mixed bag," AAA said. Hotels are 2% cheaper than a year ago, but airfare is 8% more expensive. European cities make up most of AAA's top international destinations, but the number one spot belongs to Vancouver, B.C.

--Reporting by Donna Harris

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### **C-store Financial Survey for Q2: Circana**

In Q2 2025, the C-Store channel continued to face challenges, with total sales declining 7.9% year-over-year, primarily driven by a steep 12.4% drop in fuel sales. Despite this, both foodservice and CPG segments showed resilience, with foodservice dollar sales increasing 3.3% and CPG posting a marginal 0.1% gain.

However, the C-Store channel continued to underperform the broader MULO+ market, particularly in unit sales, which fell 2.7% YOY compared to a 1.2% increase in MULO+.

Fuel remains the largest contributor to C-Store sales, but its declining share has elevated the importance of foodservice and CPG. Price-per-unit growth decelerated but still outpaced MULO+, helping drive an increase in dollars per trip despite fewer overall visits.

Foodservice traffic remained negative but showed improvement, with a 2% decline in visits offset by a 5% increase in average check size. Meanwhile, consumer sentiment rebounded in June, and value perception continues to shape shopper behavior, especially in food and beverage choices.

### **Trump Megabill Gives the Oil Industry Everything it Wants and Ends Key Support for Solar and Wind, CNBC**

President Donald Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act ends long-standing federal support for solar and wind power, while creating a friendly environment for oil, gas and coal production.

The House of Representatives passed Trump's megabill ahead of a White House-imposed deadline, after the Senate narrowly approved the controversial legislation.

Trump has made his priorities on energy production clear. The U.S. will rely on oil, gas, coal and nuclear to meet its growing energy needs, the president said last weekend, bashing wind and solar power.

The president's embrace of fossil fuels and hostility to renewable energy is reflected in his signature domestic policy law. It delivers most of the oil and gas sector's top priorities, according to the industry's lobby group, while ending tax credits that have played a crucial role in the growth of solar and wind power.

Oil, gas and coal are winners The law opens up federal lands and waters to oil and gas drilling after the Biden administration enacted curbs, mandating 30 lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico over 15 years, more than 30 every year on lands across nine states and giving the industry access to Alaska. The law also slashes the royalties that producers pay the government for pumping oil and gas on federal lands, encouraging higher output.

The law also spurs oil companies to use a carbon capture tax credit to produce more crude. The tax credit was designed to support nascent technology that captures carbon emissions and stores them underground. Under Trump's bill, producers would receive an increased tax benefit for injecting those emissions into wells to produce more oil.

The law ends the hydrogen tax credit in 2028, later than previous versions of the bill. Chevron, Exxon and others are investing in projects to produce hydrogen fuel.

The law phases out clean electricity investment and production tax credits for wind and solar that have played a crucial role in the growth of the renewable energy industry. The investment credit has been in place since 2005 and the production credit since 1992. The Inflation Reduction Act extended the life of both until at least 2032.

Solar and wind farms that enter service after 2027 would no longer be eligible for the credits. There is an exception, however, for projects that start construction within 12 months of the bill becoming law. The phaseout is more gradual than previous versions of the legislation, which had a hard deadline of December 31, 2027.

### **EPA Moves to Revoke Finding Underpinning GHG Emission Regulations**

The Trump administration on Tuesday unveiled its plan to revoke the finding that greenhouse gases endanger human health, which could allow for the invalidation of multiple federal climate regulations.

An announcement by the Environmental Protection Agency about the move specifically addressed its impact on EPA vehicle emissions standards, saying that if the proposal is finalized it would "remove all greenhouse gas standards for light-, medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and heavy-duty engines, starting with EPA's first greenhouse gas standards set in 2010 for light-duty vehicles and those set in 2011 for medium-duty vehicles and heavy-duty vehicles and engines."

The Obama administration made the endangerment finding in 2009, providing the legal basis for EPA to then

institute regulations aimed at curbing greenhouse gas emissions. While supporters say the finding is a crucial tool for U.S. efforts to fight climate change, detractors claim the determination was based on flawed science by those seeking to give EPA the statutory authority to use the Clean Air Act to set emissions standards for greenhouse gases.

"Many stakeholders have told me that the Obama and Biden EPAs twisted the law, ignored precedent, and warped science to achieve their preferred ends and stick American families with hundreds of billions of dollars in hidden taxes every single year," EPA Administration Lee Zeldin said during an event at an auto dealership in Indiana to announce the effort.

Zeldin said overturning the finding and resulting regulations "would end \$1 trillion or more in hidden taxes on American businesses and families."

Chris Spear, president of the American Trucking Associations, said rescinding the rule would reverse Biden-era efforts to force the electrification of the heavy-duty trucking sector.

"This electric-truck mandate put the trucking industry on a path to economic ruin and would have crippled our supply chain, disrupted deliveries, and raised prices for American families and businesses," he said. "The trucking industry supports cleaner, more efficient technologies, but we need policies rooted in real-world conditions."

The effort to revoke the endangerment finding is likely to face multiple court challenges, with environmental groups on Tuesday vowing legal action. "The EPA wants to shirk its responsibility to protect us from climate pollution, but science and the law say otherwise. If EPA finalizes this illegal and cynical approach, we will see them in court," said Christy Goldfuss, executive director of the Natural Resources Defense Council environmental group.

EPA is required to gather public comment before formally deciding to revoke the finding, a process expected to be complete by the end of the year. The environmental group Earthjustice said it "will be working with clients and partners to submit comprehensive legal and technical comments" in support of the finding.

U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., the ranking Democrat on the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, said the EPA move will encourage state-level action across the country imposing limits on greenhouse gas emissions.

"While there is no substitute for federal action to limit carbon pollution, I expect that states and cities across the country will try to fill the void created by EPA's shameful retreat, and the oil and gas industry, facing a patchwork of regulatory regimes, will rue the day it put this awful scheme in motion," he said in a statement.

--Reporting by Steve Cronin

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### **Charging Network EVgo Obtains Loan for Infrastructure Buildout**

EVgo, one of the largest public fast-charging networks in the U.S., has obtained a five-year \$225 million commercial bank loan from five lenders to develop more than 1,500 new fast-charging stalls around the country, the company said Tuesday as it announced second-quarter financial results.

The company said it has the option to increase the credit facility \$75 million to up to \$300 million.

EVgo, which partners with businesses like gasoline stations, grocery stores, restaurants and shopping centers, has more than 1,100 fast-charging locations across more than 40 states. It added 240 new stalls in the second quarter and ended the quarter with 4,350 stalls in operation. The company said it also removed 100 legacy stalls.

Network throughput reached 88 gigawatt hours in Q2, up 35% from a year ago. During the quarter, the average daily throughput per stall for the EVgo public network was 281 kilowatt hours per day, up 22% from the 230 kilowatt hours per day seen a year earlier.

The charging network said it added more than 122,000 new customer accounts in Q2, for a total of 1.5 million customer accounts at the end of the quarter.

EVgo reported its Q2 net loss worsened slightly from a year ago to \$29.8 million from \$29.6 million.

However, it said revenue reached a record of \$98 million, up 47% from the second quarter last year.

--Reporting by Donna Harris,

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## **EV Drivers Favor Location & Convenience When Charging**

*Angela Hanson*

Electric vehicle (EV) drivers value convenience nearly as highly as they do charging speed, according to a new survey of 1,000 EV owners commissioned by Konect, Gilbarco Veeder-Root's EV Charging offering, operated by Vontier.

When asked which features would make certain charging sites more appealing than others, nearly a third (32%) reported they would favor the chargers nearest to them. They also don't want to wait when they arrive, as 36% said they avoid locations with unreliable chargers and 29% prefer to have more than one charger on site.

Findings reveal that detours between 10 and 20 minutes are a dealbreaker for 21% of drivers, while nearly twice as many (37%) refuse to go more than 20 minutes out of their way to charge. These drivers are willing to pay for that convenience: 93% of respondents would accept higher charging costs in order to avoid a 20-minute detour, with an average price premium of 63%.

The survey also highlights the importance of the wider on-site experience drivers are demanding while they are plugging in:

- Free WiFi ranked as the most desirable feature for 36% of respondents, followed by clean restroom access (30.6%)

- 27.5% favor loyalty perks or reward schemes
- 27.4% care about on-site food and drink options, such as a café or restaurant

However, location remains critical, with drivers willing to make an average 12-minute detour to get everything they want. Fewer than 1% said they would travel more than 20 minutes even for a site with all of their preferred amenities.

The survey results underline growing pressure on charging providers to focus on what some in the industry call "Charging 2.0," according to Gilbarco: reliability, integration with everyday destinations and consistent driver experience. Fast charging speed still matters, but location and predictability are emerging as additional differentiators.

## **US Transportation Dept. Seeks Input on EV Charger Infrastructure Funding**

The Department of Transportation has asked for public input on newly revised guidance for a \$5 billion program launched during the Biden administration to help build public EV chargers across the country.

The updated guidance is designed to expedite the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program by making it easier for states to obtain federal matching funds and giving them more flexibility on how to use the money, according to a notice Wednesday in the Federal Register. States administer the NEVI grants.

Though the interim guidance took effect last week, the comment period ends Aug. 27.

The five-year NEVI program was started in February 2022 and was established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed in 2021. But only a small fraction of the funds was spent or contracted.

Many fuel station retailers and travel stop operators have applied for state grants from the program to add chargers.

The federal notice said the Federal Highway Administration made several changes to the NEVI guidance released last year that are designed to streamline state plans to implement the program.

For example, states have more flexibility to determine the distance between charging stations and when the program is built out. After the highways designated as alternative fuel corridors are built out, the rest of the NEVI funds can be used on public roads statewide, the notice said.

The guidance also encourages the grants to go toward charging sites where the owners of the charging station also own the property where the charger is installed.

Last week, the DOT also said it lifted its freeze that had prevented states from using federal dollars to build electric vehicle charging stations under the NEVI program.

--Reporting by Donna Harris

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## **US-EU Deal Sets a 15% Tariff On Most Goods Averting the Threat of a Trade War**

The United States and the European Union agreed on Sunday to a trade framework setting a 15% tariff on most goods, staving off — at least for now — far higher import duties on both sides that might have sent shock waves through economies around the globe.

As with other, recent tariff agreements that Trump announced with countries including Japan and the United Kingdom, some major details remain pending in this one.

Without an agreement, the EU said it was prepared to retaliate with tariffs on hundreds of American products, ranging from beef and auto parts to beer and Boeing airplanes.

The EU had agreed to buy an additional \$750 billion worth of U.S. energy over the next three years and invest \$600 billion more than it already is in America — as well as make a major military equipment purchase. Trump said tariffs “for automobiles and everything else will be a straight across tariff of 15%” and meant that U.S. exporters, “Have the opening up of all of the European countries.”

Both sides agreed on tariffs exclusions for on a number of strategic products like all aircraft and component parts, certain chemicals, certain generic drugs, semiconductor equipment, some agricultural products, natural resources and critical raw materials.

Von der Leyen had a mandate to negotiate because the European Commission handles trade for member countries. But the Commission must now present the deal to member states and EU lawmakers, who will ultimately decide whether or not to approve it.

## **Trump Executive Order Codifying Tariffs Beginning August 7<sup>th</sup> .**

On July 31, President Trump issued an Executive Order introducing a new round of tariffs, set to take effect on August 7th.

Goods loaded onto vessels or in transit to the U.S. ports August 7th will not be subject to them, so long as they are entered by Oct. 5. If U.S. Customs and Border Protection determines that any goods were “transshipped to evade applicable duties,” they will require a 40% tariff, as well as other fees and penalties.

While the industry is still reviewing the full scope of the order, several provisions are worth noting, particularly as they relate to raw materials and key trade partners.

Products covered by the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) are exempt.

However, the existing 50% industry-specific tariff on aluminum and steel, remains in place and takes precedence over the newly announced rates unless otherwise specified.

Key regional impacts include:

- Canada: Tariffs on most Canadian goods have increased from 25% to 35%, effective August 1.
- Mexico: A 25% tariff remains in effect. Negotiations for a reciprocal agreement have been extended by 90 days,

providing temporary relief for cross-border trade of materials and products.

- European Union: A 15% tariff applies to most goods, including specialty items. Aluminum and steel imports will eventually be governed by a quota system, yet to be finalized.
- United Kingdom: Goods from the UK will face a 10% tariff. Aluminum and steel from the UK remain under a temporary 25% tariff, also slated to shift to a quota-based structure.
- China: A 30% tariff continues on most Chinese imports, with a 90-day extension granted beyond the original August 12 deadline to reach a trade agreement.

While this summary highlights major developments, the Executive Order includes a full list of affected countries and product categories. Those in the industry are encouraged to review the complete language of the order to determine any direct or downstream impacts.

## **NADA Report: July Auto Sales Figures**

New light-vehicle sales in July 2025 were stronger than expected. July 2025’s SAAR totaled 16.4 million units, up 7.1% from June 2025’s SAAR and an increase of 3.7% year-over-year. July’s year-over-year comparison may have been larger, but July 2024’s results included sales that would have occurred in June 2024 were it not for the massive software outage that affected many dealerships across the country.

With EV tax credits set to expire September 30<sup>th</sup>, we expected to see increased activity in the EV space. While BEV sales in July 2025 increased by 22.7% compared to June 2025, sales were flat when compared to July 2024. The same is true for market share year-to-date for BEVs, which totaled 7.4%—also flat year-over year. Meanwhile, plug-in hybrids—some of which are also eligible for the EV tax credit—saw sales and market share decline slightly year-over-year. The most popular alternative-fuel segment continues to be hybrids, which posted a 37.7% year-over-year sales gain in July 2025. Year-to-date, hybrids have also picked up 3 percentage points of market share.

As vehicle prices have continued to rise, so too have monthly payments. According to J.D. Power, the average monthly payment on a new-vehicle finance contract is expected to reach \$742, up \$12 year-over-year. The average new-vehicle finance rate in July 2025 is also expected to be up year-over-year by 30 basis points to 6.54%.

July’s sales results exceeded expectations. Despite this strong performance, one month is not enough to adjust our full-year sales forecast of 15.3 million units. J.D. Power estimates that tariffs are adding \$4,275 in cost per vehicle on average. Many OEMs reported significant impacts to their bottom line due to tariffs. It remains to be seen how long OEMs can absorb the price hikes before passing the costs along to consumers. We expect to have more clarity on changing OEM pricing strategies in the fall as 2025 models transition to 2026 models.

## **NFIB Urges Florida Congressman to Support REPAIR Act**

The National Federation of Independent Business met with U.S. Congressman Gus Bilirakis at a meeting with small business owners. He is the Chairman for Commerce, Manufacturing, & Trade Subcommittee, where he has prioritized Right to Repair legislation, a top issue for Florida's small businesses.

In addition to discussing beneficial ownership requirements and a permanent 20% Small Business Deduction, Bilirakis was told the REPAIR Act needed to pass to protect independent repair shops from anticompetitive behavior.

NFIB is now actively encouraging its members to contact their representatives and advocate for repealing beneficial ownership reporting and supporting the REPAIR Act.

## **Supply Chain Disruptions Force Detroit Axle to Cut Jobs and Close Facility**

Automotive supplier Detroit Axle will be closing its warehouse in Ferndale, Michigan, and letting go of 102 employees, citing recent U.S. import tariff policy, reports Detroit Free Press.

Founded in 1990, Detroit Axle sells and distributes parts like CV axles, wheel hub and bearings, suspension and chassis parts, complete strut assemblies, and shock absorbers to automakers and aftermarket customers.

The company will be closing its warehouse on Eight Mile Road in Ferndale, and letting go of 102 employees, including front counter sales, supervisors, shipping personnel, box makers, drivers, and more. Detroit Axle currently employs 201 to 500 employees, according to its LinkedIn page.

This comes after the company filed a complaint with the U.S. Court of International Trade in June over recent tariffs. According to Detroit Axle, it relies on contracts with Chinese manufacturers for certain parts no U.S.-based companies offer, and that increased prices would be too much for the company to absorb or for its customers to take on.

## **ASE to Retire Five Certification Tests at End of Year**

The National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence will be discontinuing five of its certification tests at the end of 2025, as shared in a recent press release.

The following tests will be affected by the decision:

- Test E1: Truck Equipment Installation and Repair
- Test E2: Electrical/Electronic Systems Installation and Repair
- Test E3: Auxiliary Power Systems Installation and Repair
- Test P4: General Motors Parts Consultant
- Test X1: Undercar Specialist Exhaust Systems

Certifications and recertifications for these tests will no longer be available after Dec. 31, 2025. ASE has said it will ensure all impacted users and systems are notified accordingly.

## **Ford Recalls 200K Vehicles for Backup Camera Display Fault**

Ford Motor Co. has recalled 200,000 vehicles for backup camera display issues, including a blank screen or image retention after shifting out of reverse, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The recalled Ford models include the Transit Connect, F-150, Explorer, Bronco Sport, Maverick Ranger, Mustang, Expedition, EcoSport, Escape Fusion Edge, F-250 Super Duty and Corsair. Lincoln models include the Continental, Navigator, Nautilus and Aviator. The model year range of each vehicle varies, but all are between 2018 and 2024.

Dealers will update the rearview camera software on the vehicles, free of charge. Owner notification letters are expected to be mailed starting July 28.

In May, Ford issued a recall for over 1 million vehicles for similar backup camera display issues, which was also related to APIM software. Among the recalled models were the 2021-2024 Bronco, Ranger and Expedition and F-Series pickups.

A second recall was also issued in May for 160,000 Ford Super Duty pickups and SUVs, which was also for backup camera display faults due to faulty printed circuit board connectors.

The backup camera fault can reduce the driver's view of their surroundings when backing up, increasing the risk of a crash. The report also cites the elevated safety risk due to driver distraction if the camera image remains frozen on the display after shifting out of reverse.

According to the recall report, an error in the SYNC 3 software for the infotainment system can cause "system instability concerns and/or a failure to preserve certain settings across ignition cycles," which may cause the camera display issues.

Other non-safety related symptoms may also be noticed by customers, including incorrect language settings and/or potential inability to receive software updates.

Customers will be instructed to take their vehicle to a Ford or Lincoln dealer to have a SYNC 3 software flash update performed.

Ford has now issued 88 recalls since Jan. 1, extending to over 4.4 million vehicles, according to NHTSA data. It's the highest number of recalls of any automaker. In June alone, the automaker issued 20 separate recalls for over 868,000 vehicles.

## **Range Rover Recalls 121,000 SUVs Over Suspension Cracks**

JLR, the company formerly known as Jaguar Land Rover, has recalled 121,509 Range Rover and Range Rover

Sport SUVs from model years 2014-2017 because critical parts of their suspensions can detach.

The company tells federal safety officials that “the front suspension upper knuckle joint could develop a crack. In extreme cases, this may lead to detachment of the upper suspension arm.” That could make a vehicle hard to control.

Dealers will inspect the front suspension knuckles. If they find any sign of cracking, they’ll replace them. If they don’t spot a problem, they’ll install a protective bracket to help prevent cracks from starting.

### **NHTSA Investigates Kia Recall Remedy for 2021-2023 Seltos and Soul Models**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has opened an audit into a recent recall remedy prescribed by Kia, following an investigation of complaints received.

As reported by USA TODAY, over 137,000 vehicles are included in the audit announced on Aug. 6, comprising 2021-2023 Seltos and Soul models. These vehicles were originally recalled in February for piston oil rings that were inadequately manufactured.

The issue could lead to the surface of the cylinder wall being gradually damaged, resulting in increased oil consumption. Affected vehicles may exhibit abnormal noises from the engine, and the oil pressure warning light coming on.

Dealers were instructed to replace the engine if necessary, and to install piston-ring sensing noise software. However, NHTSA said that after reviewing 47 complaints received between April and June, it sees vehicle owners alleging the solution to be ineffective and inaccessible.

### **Over 90,000 Mitsubishi Vehicles Recalled For Liftgate Spring Defect**

The Mitsubishi is recalling 91,697 vehicles, covers certain 2018-2022 Outlander PHEV and 2014-2020 Outlander vehicles, according to a notice posted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The Mitsubishi recall, issued on Aug. 7, is due to a fault in the car’s liftgate gas spring cylinders, which could corrode and lose pressure, potentially causing a rupture and the car’s liftgate to fall unexpectedly.

Owners of impacted vehicles are expected to be mailed on Oct. 6, according to the recall. Dealers will also replace the left and right liftgate gas springs, free of charge.

### **Mercedes-Benz Has Seized Millions of Counterfeit Auto Parts Through Task Force**

With an influx of counterfeit parts entering the auto industry, Mercedes-Benz has been seizing them through a dedicated task force, according to Car Buzz. Working in collaboration with law enforcement, the Mercedes-Benz Brand Protection Team carries out worldwide raids to stop counterfeit parts production, following months of research

into websites, leads, and other sources leading them to counterfeit production sites.

According to Lita Silje Jänisch, head of Global IP Enforcement department at Mercedes-Benz Intellectual Property, the task force seized over 1.7 million counterfeit Mercedes-Benz products last year, and eliminated over 212,000 listings online for them, following 793 raids.

These counterfeit parts often include critical safety components like brake pads, wheels, or suspension components. They’re usually sold on social media and other online platforms for a lower cost than OEM parts, but can have severe defects.

### **High Costs for Routine BMW Maintenance Sparks Backlash**

A BMW owner recently took to social media to share the high prices he faced for routine maintenance at the local dealership, as recently shared by Car Scoops.

When Reddit user Khalnayak took in his 2021 M3 for routine maintenance, he was met with a total cost of \$1,199.85 for his visit.

This cost included a \$399.95 oil change for the M3, which takes 7.4 quarts of 0W-30, and \$340 for a replacement of the cabin air filter, a component that runs for less than \$40 at most stores.

Additionally, the customer was also charged \$179.95 for a Standard Scope, which was likely a scan of the ECU through the OBDII port; and another \$279.95 was charged for a “Vehicle Check.”

According to the Reddit user, these charges came right after his complimentary maintenance plan expired. Despite having been a customer, the BMW owner promptly took his business elsewhere, opting instead for DIY work. With the cost of vehicle ownership only continuing to rise, it’s clear customers like Khalnayak need providers who can offer reliable service as well as reasonable prices.

### **Nebraska Sues GM Over OnStar Data Practices**

Nebraska is the latest state to sue GM and OnStar, accusing the companies of collecting and selling driver data without adequate consent, according to GM Authority.

The suit alleges that GM misrepresented what OnStar-connected services do, led customers to believe OnStar enrollment was mandatory to access basic safety features, collected and sold personal data without adequate disclosure, and incentivized dealership employees to enroll customers without adequate consent.

GM has said these claims are “unclear or lack merit,” sharing in a statement. “GM’s OnStar Smart Driver service is optional to customers, who give their consent three times before limited data is shared with an insurance carrier through a third party,” said GM. “Customer benefits include learning more about their safe driving behaviors or vehicle performance that, with their consent, may be used to obtain insurance quotes. Customers can also unenroll from Smart Driver at any time.”

## **Federal Lawmakers Question FDA's Decision on JUUL System**

A group of eight U.S. legislators are seeking answers from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) following the agency's decision to issue marketing granted orders (MGOs) for the JUUL System.

U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) today led the group senators in sending a letter to FDA Commissioner Martin Makary questioning the agency's move in mid-July. With the FDA's MGOs, Juul Labs Inc. can keep its JUUL System on the market.

In the letter to Makary the senators wrote that JUUL is the e-cigarette brand that ignited the youth vaping "epidemic" and is responsible for addicting millions of children to nicotine, many of whom would have never picked up a cigarette. In addition to Durbin, the letter is signed by U.S. Sens. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.).

According to the letter, U.S. senators have been urging the FDA to take several factors into consideration when reviewing PMTAs: a tobacco product's history of addicting children, use of flavors to appeal to youth, perceptions among youth and the role of nicotine in increasing risk of addiction.

The lawmakers also noted that Juul Labs has reached settlement agreements over the marketing of its products 48 states and territories totaling more than \$1.1 billion.

The senators' concerns come after the FDA reversed its original decision to issue Juul Labs marketing denial orders in June 2022. "Related to this reversal, we are deeply troubled by the appearance of conflicts of interest between the Trump administration and the e-cigarette industry in the United States."

For example, President Trump's former counselor for public health and science now leads Juul's federal lobbying operation," the letter continued. Beyond Juul, the senators also called out ties between other tobacco companies and the White House chief of staff's lobbying firm.

The legislators requested responses from the FDA to a list of questions by Aug. 22.

## **NOAA Predicts Above-Normal 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season**

NOAA's outlook for the 2025 Atlantic hurricane season, which goes from June 1 to November 30, predicts a 30% chance of a near-normal season, a 60% chance of an above-normal season, and a 10% chance of a below-normal season.

The agency is forecasting a range of 13 to 19 total named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher). Of those, 6-10 are forecast to become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 3-5 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher). NOAA has a 70% confidence in these ranges.

The season is expected to be above normal – due to a confluence of factors, including continued ENSO-neutral conditions, warmer than average ocean temperatures, forecasts for weak wind shear, and the potential for higher activity from the West African Monsoon, a primary starting point for Atlantic hurricanes.

The high activity era continues in the Atlantic Basin, featuring high-heat content in the ocean and reduced trade winds. The higher-heat content provides more energy to fuel storm development, while weaker winds allow the storms to develop without disruption.

This hurricane season also features the potential for a northward shift of the West African monsoon, producing tropical waves that seed some of the strongest and most long-lived Atlantic storms.

## **Arizona TikTok Prankster Arrested for Targeting Automotive Businesses in Tempe**

A TikTok prankster has been arrested for viral content created at the expense of several automotive service shops in Tempe, Arizona, reports People. Heston Cobb—known as Heston James by his 1.6 million TikTok followers—was behind several incidents where groups of men entered businesses and took over.

One video, posted on July 4, shows Cobb telling the employees of an auto repair shop that he was sent “from corporate” and had received multiple complaints about the shop. Then, a van full of men in jumpsuits enter the shop, and the group starts picking up tools and pretending to work on the cars themselves.

In a separate report from 12News, an employee of a local Big Brand Tire that was targeted described what he saw. The men came in and were opening the doors to customers' vehicles, going underneath cars, and even using equipment to remove tires from the cars.

The businesses targeted by Cobb were largely automotive service related, including a Jiffy Lube, Pep Boys, Big Brand Tire & Service, and Hyland Auto Repair, shares People.

Cobb was arrested on July 23, and faces one count of burglary in the third degree, two counts of criminal impersonation, five counts of disorderly conduct, and five counts of criminal trespass.

## **FDA Denies Marketing of blu Disposable Vapor Product**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a marketing denial order (MDO) for blu Disposable Classic Tobacco 2.4%, an e-cigarette product manufactured by Fontem US, LLC.

As a result of the decision, the company cannot market or distribute this product in the United States or risk enforcement action by FDA. The company may submit a new application for the product subject to the MDO.

According to the FDA, it evaluates premarket tobacco product applications (PMTAs) based on a public health

standard that considers the risks and benefits of the product to the population as a whole. After reviewing the company's PMTA, the agency determined that the application lacked sufficient evidence to demonstrate that permitting marketing of the product would be appropriate for the protection of the public health, which is the standard legally required by the 2009 Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act.

To date, the FDA has authorized e-cigarettes currently on the market that had evidence that adults who smoke will completely switch to those products or significantly reduce their cigarette consumption and are potentially less harmful.

To find a list of tobacco products that may be legally marketed and sold in the U.S., visit the FDA's [Searchable Tobacco Products Database](#).

### **Virginia Auto Repair Shop Targeted by Catalytic Converter Theft Overnight**

Speedy Auto Service in Norfolk, Virginia, was targeted by thieves who stole two catalytic converters overnight.

Shortly before 1:30 a.m. on Aug. 18, surveillance footage showed two individuals in the Speedy Auto Service parking lot. When shop technicians arrived to the shop and conducted routine inspection on their vehicles, they found that two catalytic converters were gone.

*Cory Cale, who has worked at the shop for seven years, said that this is not the first incident to take place, and that thieves have many reasons to target catalytic converters due to their many uses—but warned that it only hurts all parties involved in the end.*

“Anything regarding emissions on a vehicle, to remove any sort of emissions in general, is a federal crime. So there's a little bit more of a scare for that as well. And it's not if you get caught, it's when you will get caught,” said Cale.

### **Did You Know**

The NYS Association sells 10 Day Petroleum Reconciliation books (dip books). These books have been produced in cooperation with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and are intended for use by stations having up to six totalizers for sale of each petroleum product and a total of four petroleum tanks or less. Each book has space for entry of 200 days of record keeping, meaning they will last for slightly more than one-half year.

The price is \$19 per book and includes the cost of shipping. To order, call (518) 452-4367.

### **Your Inspection License May be Worth Money**

Depending on where you are located, it may be possible to sell your license. Before merely turning it in, contact the association for further information.

### **DMV Record Retrieval**

DMV record retrieval is available to association members and affiliates at a cost of \$12 per record. Additionally, you may order DMV certified paper abstracts of driver's license, vehicle registration, and vehicle title records for an additional fee of \$2 per abstract. Please call (518) 452-4367 or (585) 924-4423.

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**DMV/VERIFI Message #131****Date: 07/23/2025****Registration Sticker and Inspection Certificate Removal**

When a dealer acquires a motor vehicle with a registration sticker displayed, the dealer MUST immediately remove the sticker (see Commissioners Regulation Part 78.17).

Leaving the registration sticker affixed may result in citations (parking tickets) being issued to the prior registrant

A New York State dealer may be held accountable for any citations issued due to the registration sticker remaining on a motor vehicle. This remains true if a motor vehicle was acquired directly from the owner, or wholesale from another dealer (both dealers may be held accountable)

When a dealer acquires a motor vehicle with an inspection certificate that was issued to the prior owner/registrator, the dealer MUST immediately remove the inspection certificate, even if issued within the last 30 days (see Commissioners Regulation Part 78.15).

DMV will be auditing dealers for compliance.

Motor Vehicle Dealers & Transporters Regulations may be found at: <https://dmv.ny.gov/forms/cr78.pdf>

If you have any questions about these requirements, you may contact Technical Services at 518-474-5282 option 4.

**DMV/VERIFI Message #132****Date: 7/29/2025****Clean Pass Program Expiration**

The Clean Pass program enabled by federal legislative authorization is currently set to expire on September 30th, 2025. As Congress and the President have not reauthorized this program, Clean Pass will end on September 30th.

Beginning October 1st, 2025, vehicles currently participating in the Clean Pass program will no longer be permitted to use the HOV lane without meeting HOV occupancy requirements.

**DMV/VERIFI Message #133****Date: 08/01/2025****Updated Form MV-465 and New Form MV-465ITP Available in VERIFI**

DMV recently updated form MV-465 (Registration Transmittal Form) and created a new form MV-465ITP (In-Transit Permit Transmittal Form) in conjunction with revisions to the Dealer Plate Issuance Manual (MV-461). These forms are now available in the VERIFI system for generation.

Form MV-465 has been updated to be used solely for Registration transmittals for Motor Vehicle, ATV and Boat Sales. It has also been updated to instruct dealers to drop off or mail all registration paperwork/transmittals to your local DMV for processing.

Form MV-465ITP has been created to be used for In-Transit Permit Transmittals. This form also includes the updated address to mail all paperwork for processing of ITP's. To create a transmittal form in VERIFI, Select the "Transfers" tab from the left side menu and then on the top right select either "Generate MV-465 or MV-465ITP".

Once that has opened, complete the required fields and select either the appropriate Registration Plate(s) or ITP(s) that you would like included on the current transmittal form and then select "Generate".

For further guidance please consult the Dealer Plate Issuance Manual (MV-461) which can be viewed and/or downloaded at <https://dmv.ny.gov/forms/mv461.pdf> Please share this information with all appropriate staff. Thank you

# Making a Case for ADAS

Chris Jones

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 127 ruling, which will make automatic emergency braking standard to help reduce rear-end crashes by September 2029, means that auto repair shops need to be more meticulous about advanced driver assistance systems, and do them by the book.

As vehicles with ADAS technology become more prevalent in auto shops, Steve Dawson of Hunter Engineering says one of the big challenges today is that calibration systems that were once individual are now intertwined. Adding to the challenge of deciphering ADAS is when cars use these systems to interact natively on the driver's behalf (e.g., the aforementioned automatic emergency braking).

Systems such as those require properly aligned ADAS components that have travel speeds and direction calibrated accurately, adaptive cruise control functioning to follow cars at a safe distance, and no corrective action needed. If a car is off half a degree from the thrust line, automatic corrective action may be applied unintentionally and could create a serious hazard on the road.

*ADAS by the Numbers:*

- 5 million vehicles require ADAS service in an independent shop in 2023
- \$283 million in calibration work outsourced
- 90% of ADAS work is outsourced to mechanical repair shops
- 75% of ADAS calibrations outsourced to collision shops
- 60% of passenger vehicles registered in the U.S. have ADAS components that need calibration of touched, moved, or replaced

*When to Recalibrate*

All OEMs require ADAS calibration after a collision. "If we touch this system, if we just align the car, it needs to be recalibrated," Dawson says. Repair shops need to pull up repair procedures for alignments, and if shops are subletting ADAS work, the subcontracting partner, be it another shop, dealership, or mobile technician, should know what has to happen for a proper alignment.

"There are a number of things that have to be verified, and the other shop must know what to do," Dawson says, adding that in the long run, all auto repair shops should provide ADAS. "I want you to think about it. You're going to need to be in the ADAS business. It's going to be like having a paint booth in a couple of years. You can be subletting 50% of your profits if you don't do (ADAS) in-house."

*Where Do ADAS Systems Need Calibration?*

- Collision
- Sensor removal or replacement
- Lift, level, or lower vehicle (change ride height)
- Wheel alignment
- Windshield
- Mirror and underhood work
- Tire/wheel package upgrades (change in overall diameter)

He stressed the need for shops to use the right tools (including OEM tools), have trained technicians who are versed in electrical diagnostics, and access to OEM websites for files to download firmware to communicate with the car and above all, for the technician performing the calibration to follow OEM procedures and make sure the vehicle is on a level surface.

"When we're talking about ADAS, it's about having the right tools to work effectively," Dawson says. "And it's critical that we get the training that we need and that we're doing the most accurate calibrations that we can, and we're following those OEM procedures."

*Additional Considerations*

Dawson called ADAS calibration a team sport—everyone in the shop needs to be involved. "It's critical to have a process in place for liability and making sure nothing falls through the cracks," Dawson says. "Your shop is liable for the work of the (repairing partner). All processes must be written down and documented, or they didn't happen," Dawson says.

*ADAS and Profitability*

For many shops, ADAS calibrations open the door to a significant annual profit center. Dawson says auto shops offering ADAS can add \$140,000 per year of additional revenue by doing ADAS calibrations in-house. As sensors become more complex, the average charge for calibration changes. While equipment cost and space are often a deterrent for many shops, Dawson says most ADAS can be completed within a modest footprint that's well-lit. He recommended shops keep digital documentation showing visually what needs to be done.

# Secrets to Selling the Big Jobs

*Tess Owings*

It's a conversation that nobody likes to have, but everyone in this business has to do it—sometimes multiple times in one day. That repair the customer thought would be roughly \$200? It just shot to \$2,000. Wouldn't it be great if there were a secret to selling these big jobs? A simple solution to leave you and your customers happier with the entire situation? Victor Broski, service advisor at Newport Motorsports in Costa Mesa, California, may have the answer: Approach it as if you know they're going to say yes.

Broski recalls being trained at a previous high-end race shop, where he was told a customer would be coming in the next day for a recommended service that would make a small difference but cost a lot of money. He was told the customer was going to say yes. So, the next day, when Broski spoke with the customer, he did so with confidence. Was the customer for sure going to say yes? Did they know something Broski didn't? Maybe, and maybe not, he says. Either way, it worked.

"That stuck with me," Broski says. "That's something I can apply at any shop."

Sure, there are a few other keys to getting it right—as Broski will share—but confidence sells.

## ***Backstory***

Broski has over four decades of experience working in different shops and holds a degree in speech communication, which has helped him approach customers and understand the art of persuasion and negotiation.

## ***Problem***

Broski wasn't always comfortable selling larger jobs. When he started out, there wasn't a lot of training available, and he dreaded that conversation just as much as anyone else. Selling a larger job just puts more pressure on the line, making it more difficult.

## ***Solution***

"Your mind is racing," Broski says. "How do I say it? They're not going to like it. You approach it differently, but you shouldn't."

These tips for selling a big job can be applied to any job, but they can help alleviate the stress.

- *Build Rapport:* The sale happens before the selling, Broski says. You've already presented yourself and your shop to your customer before you have that conversation. If you've made a poor impression, you're not getting that yes. However, if you've taken the time to build trust and create a relationship, there's a very good chance the customer will really listen to what you have to say, and the probability of the sale is very likely. Broski answers every call at the shop. He always has a notepad next to him to write down the

potential customer's name and anything he should remember. He can then say the person's name back to them, which is huge. When someone comes into the shop, he makes sure to engage in conversation and really listen to what they're saying. If they mention kids, follow up on that. If they talk about a big trip they're taking and need their vehicle in good condition, ask about it." When someone wants to tell a story, you listen to it," Broski says. "When someone is telling a story, their brain produces happy chemicals. They're talking to a repair shop and they're happy. Can you imagine that?"

- *Show Confidence:* Here's Broski's key: When you approach the customer, assume they will say yes. Have total confidence, and that will rub off on the customer. Your voice, he says, has a tendency to go down if you don't believe someone will say yes to you, and customers will pick up on that.
- *Create a Plan:* Tell them what their car needs. "I don't say recommending," Broski says. "That's too soft." Broski lists all the work that was found on the car and categorizes it for the customer in a now, soon, and later way—This is what your car needs today, this is what it will need soon, and this is what can be held off on for a while."You can do it now or in two or three months—lots of times they do it now," Broski says. "But they're the ones making the decision. They love that. They know I'm not trying to just sell them things."
- *Write Down What Works:* Throughout Broski's career, he's had plenty of time to try new strategies, and he always writes down what has worked for him. A specific phrase he uses because it's always been positively received is "I'll take care of you."

### ***Aftermath***

Broski says nine times out of 10, he doesn't even think twice about selling a big job. "I'd like to say, 'I don't get bothered by that phone call—but that's a stretch,'" he says.

By creating positive relationships from the start and approaching every sale as though they're going to say yes, Broski says everything has been easier. The call is easier because it increases the chances that a customer will say yes, going home is easier because he's less stressed out, and overall, everything is just better.

### ***Takeaway***

Broski describes his approach to selling big jobs as "a little arrogant," but that's the key. Walking into a conversation with a customer with confidence not only makes the seller feel better, it puts the customer at ease because they feel they're talking with someone they can trust who really believes in the work being sold.

Broski's mentality is one that can be used by everyone at any shop.

"I've got this."

# **The Rise of Natural Smoking Alternatives**

*Isaac Zeiler, Magical Industries Inc.*

Today's convenience store landscape is evolving quickly. More customers — especially those seeking healthier lifestyles — are shifting their buying habits away from traditional tobacco products.

Retailers are now seeing a growing interest in wellness-oriented, nicotine-free alternatives that still address stress, routine and oral fixation. Among the most promising solutions entering the market: natural, aroma-based inhalers designed to mimic the behavioral ritual of smoking, without the baggage.

## ***What's Driving the Demand?***

Several key factors are fueling interest in this emerging category:

### **1. Health-Conscious Consumption**

Consumers are increasingly aware of the risks of addiction and are seeking non-nicotine solutions that still feel satisfying. These inhalers provide a similar hand-to-mouth experience without combustion, vapor or stimulants.

### **2. Habit Replacement**

Many people struggle with quitting because they miss the ritual, not just the chemical. Products that offer sensory cues — like mint or citrus aroma combined with a light throat hit — help satisfy behavioral cravings in a healthier way.

### **3. Regulatory Simplicity**

Because these products are nicotine- and tobacco-free, they avoid age restrictions, U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulation, and many of the merchandising limitations associated with traditional alternatives.

### **4. High Margin, Low Maintenance**

These are compact, fast-moving products with excellent per-unit margins. They require no charging, no accessories and are easy to display in impulse zones such as at the register or in the travel section.

## ***A New Category Worth Watching***

As someone involved in developing products in this space, I've seen firsthand how consumer interest is shifting. The demand isn't just theoretical. Retailers are testing and selling these alternatives right now, and many are reporting that customers use them in tandem with nicotine products or as a bridge while quitting.

There's no vapor, no smoke and no battery. Just a discreet, flavored air inhaler that's TSA-friendly, shelf-stable and ready to use anywhere — from flights and hospitals to office spaces and college campuses.

Some brands are even positioning them as stress relievers, expanding the use case beyond smoking cessation alone.

## ***Why Retailers Should Care***

The convenience channel has always thrived by adapting quickly to consumer trends. Introducing a category like this not only meets the needs of nicotine-conscious consumers, but also creates incremental revenue in underutilized store spaces, with none of the regulatory friction.

And because these products are still new, there's a real opportunity for forward-looking c-store operators to get in early, educate their customers and become the go-to source for a growing class of wellness-driven alternatives.