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U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

February 02, 2012

[REDACTED]
Des Moines, IA [REDACTED]

NVS-216 nlm
Ref. No. 10430733

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence concerning motor vehicle headlights. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) received your correspondence. We regret any inconvenience our delay in responding may have caused you.

You have concerns regarding the newer, bright headlamps with a blue tint, which may include high intensity discharge (HID), or light emitting diode (LED) headlamps. You state that the light from these headlamps is too intense and want them banned.

NHTSA has a safety standard for lamps, reflective devices and associated equipment. The purpose of this standard is to reduce crashes and injuries by providing adequate illumination of the roadway and by enhancing the visibility of motor vehicles on public roads. For headlamps, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 108 contains intensity and color requirements in order to balance seeing distance needs while limiting glare to other drivers.

Older technology halogen headlamps do have a yellow tint as opposed to the more recently introduced HID and LED headlamps which produce a whiter color with a slight blue tint. Some consumers have associated this whiter color with glare and in response, NHTSA conducted research to further our understanding of the subject. In 2008, we compiled a summary of our research which included the impact of glare on older drivers. A copy of this report is on our NHTSA web site at, www.nhtsa.gov/Research/Human+Factors/Headlighting.

One of the conclusions that we found was that glare with a bluish tint may cause more discomfort, but it does not decrease a glared drivers seeing distance. Additionally, the agency has taken actions against importers of HID retrofit kits. These kits may not be manufactured or imported into the United States because they facilitate the installation of HID light sources into lamps that were designed for use with halogen bulbs.



Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment in the future, we would appreciate it if you would complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq or call the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be obtained at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems.

Sincerely,



Randy Reid, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement