

May 12, 2023

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
c/o Office of Defects Investigation

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Sirs,

I'd like to inform you of a situation I experienced and noticed whilst driving a rented electric vehicle (Tesla Model 3) in San Francisco last week.

Background:

- 1) In a traditional gas/diesel powered vehicle when the accelerator is not pressed the vehicle coasts and often maintains speed. To actively slow a car or truck one must press the brake pedal. Brake lights are activated as the pedal is pressed regardless of the amount of pressure applied to the brakes. Brake lights alert the drivers behind that the vehicle is slowing or is positioned to slow.
- 2) In an electric vehicle (EV), when the accelerator is not pressed the EV goes into regenerative braking mode. This mode charges the batteries using friction. Said friction rapidly slows the vehicle however, no brake lights are triggered because the brake pedal was not pressed.

Real World Danger:

- 1) While traveling at highway speeds on the [REDACTED] the cars in front of me began to slow. By merely lifting off the accelerator the regenerative stopping power of the motors allowed me to slow at the same pace without signaling to cars behind my vehicle. Once, this almost resulted in a rearend collision.
- 2) With my colleagues in the car and another EV in front of me, I was able to demonstrate in heavy traffic that the car could go from highway speeds (again on the [REDACTED]) to a dead stop at an off ramp without pressing the brake pedal. This was confirmed by the matched pace and subsequent regenerative braking of the EV in front of us that did the same thing. The car in front came to a complete stop without having to press the brake pedal. To my colleague's surprise he commented that when we reached the red light not once had I pressed the brakes, yet all occupants felt significant braking force.

Recommendation: Regenerative braking of EV's should also trigger brake lights notifying vehicles behind the EV that the pace of the vehicle is slowing with the same force as if brakes were applied.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - Williamsville, NY - [REDACTED]

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