

**Products Liability Law Daily Wrap Up, NHTSA NEWS—MOTOR VEHICLES
—NHTSA grants temporary exemption for low-speed driverless
vehicle, (Feb. 7, 2020)**

Products Liability Law Daily Wrap Up

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By Colleen Kave, J.D.

The automated vehicle will not have mirrors or a windshield.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) granted Nuro's request for a temporary exemption from certain low-speed vehicle standard requirements, thus clearing the way for the company to deploy the "R2," a low-speed, occupantless electric delivery vehicle. The R2 includes the same automated driving system as Nuro's previously deployed compliant vehicle, but would not have certain traditionally required features, such as mirrors and a windshield. According to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao, the omitted features "no longer make sense" since the R2 is designed to have no human occupant and operates exclusively using an automated driving system ([NHTSA News Release](#), February 6, 2020).

Nuro will be permitted to produce and deploy no more than 5,000 R2 vehicles during the two-year exemption period, and NHTSA will closely monitor the automaker's operations during and after that time. Nuro intends to operate these vehicles as part of a local delivery service for restaurants, grocery stores, and other businesses.

NHTSA asserts that the exemption will not lower the safety of the R2 since the vehicle is expected to rely on the same automated driving system as Nuro's earlier compliant vehicle. However, due to the R2's unique and novel design, NHTSA has determined that it would be in the public interest to maintain greater oversight of the R2 than typical for an exempt vehicle. Accordingly, the exemption has been conditioned on a set of terms including mandatory reporting of information about the operation of the R2 (including the automated driving system) and required outreach to the communities where the R2 will be deployed.

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