



News capsule



Nebraska Autobody Association - Automotive & Business News

An investigation by New York attorney general Andrew Cuomo revealed that United Health Group had used its own database, Ingenix, to calculate questionable payments to health care professionals. Cuomo began his investigation after receiving hundreds of complaints. Cuomo called United's manipulation of the numbers through its influence over Ingenix a 'gross conflict of interest' one which was meant to 'deceive and defraud'. United agreed to a \$50 million settlement. Database conflicts of interests are also common to the collision repair industry where insurers influence inevitably creates questions about the entire validity of database. Shops that wish to report database problems can do so by clicking the DEG link on the NABA web site at <http://www.nebraskaautobody.com/>

A bill introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives would establish state and national standards for conducting safety inspections of motor vehicles. H.R. 259 has been referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. If passed, automobiles would be subject to annual inspections to ensure that they meet or exceed motor vehicle safety standards.

Gov. Dave Heineman delivered his state-of-the-state address to the Nebraska Legislature last week focusing on four priorities: a) ensuring no tax increases; b) providing additional funding for K-12 and higher education; c) preserving services for vulnerable Nebraskans, and; d) maintaining a strong cash reserve fund. Gov. Heineman, speaking to lawmakers, also told Nebraskans to brace for tougher days ahead as the effects of the national economic slowdown seep into the Cornhusker state. With strong fiscal reserves, Nebraska is in a better position to weather the economic downturn than many other states.

Business entities in Nebraska will be able to file required reports online with the Nebraska Secretary of State's Office at <http://www.sos.ne.gov/> Effective Jan. 5, the secretary of state's office began accepting online filings of biennial reports of limited liability companies and annual reports of limited liability partnerships. Secure payments for the online filings may be made by credit card or electronic check. The new service provides additional efficiencies for businesses and has the potential to significantly ease the paperwork handled by the Secretary of State's Office "The plan is to expand the type of reports that can be filed online in future years," said Nebraska Secretary of State, John Gale.

The Property Casualty Insurers Association of America (PCIA) said it will oppose any legislation this year that would restrict insurers' ability to make recommendations or suggestions to consumers on (choosing) individual repair facilities or that would impede insurers' ability to manage the claim repair process and control costs'. PCI anticipates that state legislatures will continue to grapple with a wide range of auto repair issues.

Toyota Motor Corp. is working on getting a diminutive battery-operated vehicle on U.S. streets in the next two years. Toyota's 'Urban Commuter' will be a cousin of Japan's IQ Minicar, which can be recharged at any electrical outlet. The expansion of Toyota's battery vehicles underscores the long-term environmental and energy-cost issues that are fueling the design of future vehicles.

Kenneth 'Ken' A. Olesen, 72, of Grand Island died Saturday, Jan. 3, 2009, at St. Francis Medical Center. Ken was an expert in frame and unibody straightening for Chief Automotive. He freely volunteered his knowledge and expertise to NABA members. As an individual, he was a true professional and liked by all.

Fight For What's Right Join the Nebraska AutoBody Association

Membership application available at

<http://www.nebraskaautobody.com/filedownloads/memberap1&2.pdf>

The information in this news capsule is obtained and condensed from sources believed to be accurate and reliable but readers should consult with an appropriate business professional before acting on information contained herein. Information contained herein does not necessarily reflect the opinions of NABA, its leadership or management. Summary prepared by Norbert Zaenglein.