



# Montana Automobile Dealers Association

MARCH 2017 NEWS BULLETIN

## March News and Updates

Wow! It is hard to believe another month is gone and looking forward to complete the first quarter of 2017. It has been very busy for the Association with a lot of moving parts. One of the very important pieces is the two bills that the legislative committee and Bruce are working on. I am happy to report both SB-89-Wrongful Termination and SB-108-Right of First Refusal are moving along very well to this point. A big "thank you" for all who have assisted with and have had a part in this process.

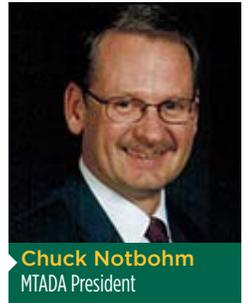
The other piece is the five-city tour, discussing the MTADA Automotive Industry Technician Career Pathway Program. I was able to attend the one in Miles City and was very impressed with the conversation of all who attended ranging from auto dealers, local educators, school administrators, college recruitment personnel, school counselors and state officials. Kelsey did a great job monitoring the discussion and bring ideas together that can result in a cooperative method of increasing awareness and involvement in different automotive careers including

technicians. We are looking forward to present the next phase to the membership soon. Please stay tuned for more.

Another piece was the Next Gen meeting in Chico Hot Spring. Unfortunately, my next gen was unable to attend because of bad weather and road conditions. I trust that those who were able to attend got a lot of useful information from the sessions.

Finally, I would like to remind you of the 103rd MTADA Convention at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort August 25th and 26th. We are looking forward to a great time together, so please plan to attend. More information is forth coming in the newsletters.

*Talk to you again next month. ■*



Chuck Notbohm  
MTADA President

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## IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Director's Message</i>	p2
<i>Legal Update</i>	p5
<i>NextGen Wrap-Up</i>	p6
<i>March Trivia</i>	p9
<i>Diabetes Prevention</i>	p9

*and more!*

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:

### Jobs Bounce Debated As Trump Promises CAFE Review

President Trump's plan to conduct a second midterm review of federal fuel-economy and carbon-dioxide emissions standards arguably sets right a wrong because the previous examination was rushed through with limited industry input, but whether easing those goals will create jobs is considered debatable.

"EPA pulled a fast one," Rebecca Lindland, analyst with Kelley Blue Book, says of the late-2016 CAFE review. "It was incredibly disingenuous."

President Obama brokered a deal with automakers selling light vehicles in the U.S. for a lofty CAFE standard of 54.5 mpg (4.3 L/100 km) by 2025. The stair-stepped rules, which began with the '17 model year, importantly are footprint-based to keep the playing field level between makers of predominantly larger or smaller vehicles. It also contains credits and other loopholes to make the bogey easier to meet.

However, another carrot Obama presented to the industry with the rules was a midterm review in 2016 to determine how the industry was progressing against the tougher standards ahead of the final 2022-2025 set of regulations. A first step in the review was a technical assessment paper released in July by the EPA, NHTSA and California Air

Resources Board. It concluded automakers were making the necessary innovations to improve efficiency at a faster pace and lower cost than anticipated. They said 54.5 mpg by 2025 might be unrealistic, although a number just slightly lower could be doable.

The review was to continue with commentary from stakeholders until April, but the EPA moved the deadline up to January and decided to maintain the standards as originally written before Obama left office.

"We all agreed that 2017-2018 will be used to carry out a thorough midterm review with the full participation of the auto industry," FCA CEO Sergio Marchionne said last week after a Trump rally outside Detroit to announce reopening the review. "I know for a fact that we were not called in (to the late-2016 review). To me it was like somebody reneged on a deal. I don't like it."

Mitch Bainwol, president and CEO of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, a lobbyist for the industry and



Don Kaltschmidt  
NADA Director

Continued on **NEXT PAGE**

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early critic of the EPA's accelerated review, calls Trump's decision a win for analysis over politics.

Others claim a second review puts at risk billions of dollars in potential fuel savings for consumers and possibly dramatic reduction in tailpipe emissions.

"Automakers pushed the administration toward (Trump's) announcement, but they are doing their own industry a disservice," says Therese Langer, director-transportation program at the American Council for Energy Efficient Economy, an advocate for energy efficiency.

"Any delay in settling efficiency standards introduces uncertainty that will disrupt manufacturers' product planning," she adds. "What is certain is that technological stagnation is not a recipe for continuing the remarkable success our domestic manufacturers have achieved in recent years."

U.S. Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA) called any easing of the rules "the wrong way to go for our security, economy and environment."

However, Trump's rhetoric has presented his administration's second look at the standards as fulfilling a campaign promise of relaxing burdensome industry regulations to stimulate job growth. The president also plans to target tax reform, among

other business-friendly policy steps. Whether jobs will come from looser efficiency standards is debatable.

"Trump could revitalize the auto industry," says Gary Chaison, an industrial relations labor historian at Clark University in Worcester, MA. "It's payback time."

It is unclear, though, where in the auto industry chain new jobs would sprout from looser efficiency regulations, or how many could be created. In fact, the promise of new jobs from a rules rollback runs contrary to arguments underpinning their enactment in 2011.

As supporters pushed for tough 2017-2025 standards, they touted job creation as a major benefit of the rules, alongside cleaner air and reduced annual fuel costs for Americans. The UAW, National Resources Defense Council and National Wildlife Foundation stated in a report to the EPA and NHTSA during drafting of the standards that if 75% of the additional content needed for fleets to reach 40 mpg (5.9 L/100 km) by 2020 were put into production, an estimated 150,000 new jobs would be created.

"The final rule will likely have a positive effect on employment in R&D and at suppliers and auto assemblers for additional parts such as turbochargers," NHTSA concluded.

Continued on **PAGE 8**

## OVERTIME RULE CONFERENCE

The MTADA will be hosting a teleconference for our dealers with the Chief Regulatory attorney from NADA on April 5th at 9:30 AM on the new DOL Overtime Rule. This will be a great opportunity to ask questions and receive important information regarding the new Overtime Rule.

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**LEGAL UPDATE**

# The Times, They Are A-Changin’



R. J. "Jim" Sewell, Jr.  
MTADA General Counsel

Back in 1964, when I was a senior at Powell County High School in Deer Lodge, Bob Dylan was all the rage as folk music took hold and doo wop was on the way out. Undoubtedly many of you remember, as I do, those famous Dylan lyrics . . . “come gather round people, wherever you roam and admit that the waters around you have grown . . . if your breath to you is worth saving, then you better start swimming or you’ll sink like a stone, for the times, they are a-changing.” There is a new sheriff in town and change is the order of the day.

An article on the opinion page of the Arizona Republic of the March 22, 2017 issue brought those lyrics back to mind as I read the “My Turn” article written by Scott Pruitt, the new Administrator of the EPA. Administrator Pruitt’s essay relates to your business, the auto business. I didn’t see this article in the trade press and thought you might enjoy reading what Pruitt has to say. Here’s the article in its entirety.

**“MY TURN” - SCOTT PRUITT, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency**

**THE PRESIDENT IS PROTECTING WORKERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

There’s a phrase I’ve used often over the past several weeks — “The future ain’t what it used to be.” After my first full month serving as administrator to the Environmental Protection Agency, there’s no question times are changing.

And last week, we saw yet another example of how our president continues to lead the way.

Auto manufacturing continues to be one of the driving forces in the American economy, accounting for 3 percent of our GDP. Forty-five states have 10,000 or more auto jobs. Automakers and their

suppliers employ more than 3.5 million Americans. The American people clearly want it to stay that way.

President Donald Trump promised to fight to keep auto-manufacturing jobs here in the United States, and he has asked his entire Cabinet to help.

Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao and I, as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, took steps to help. We have announced that we will revisit the previous administration’s rule that finalized standards to increase fuel economy to the equivalent of 54.5 mpg for cars and light duty trucks by Model Year 2025.

EPA will work with our partners at DOT to take a fresh look. This thorough review will help ensure that this national program is good for consumers and good for the environment.

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## NEXTGEN MEETING WRAP-UP

March 6th and 7th the MTADA hosted the first Next Generation Dealers Meeting of 2017 at Chico Hot Springs. While the weather kept some people from attending, we had an awesome meeting with some great discussions and presenters. Thank you to all of the dealers and speakers who braved the weather to join us for this event!

The first day of the meeting, we had a small welcome reception along with a delicious dinner, drinks and conversation. The MTADA chairman, Whitney Olson, greeted everyone and said a few welcoming words. Dinner was followed by some much needed relaxation in the hot springs with great company. The second day is where we really got down to business.

Unfortunately the first speaker we originally lined up, Lauren Bailey with NADA, was unable to make it due to the weather. However, that didn't slow down the momentum of the meeting. We started the day off with John Luckett, the senior vice president of "The Warranty Group". John gave our Next Gen dealers the inside scoop on dealer's re-insurance and provided creative solutions to improve their bottom line.

The second speaker, Max Zanan, had a tough act to follow but he stepped up to the plate and delivered a great

presentation. Max is the president of total Dealer Compliance and was a member of the panel at the most recent compliance summit in Las Vegas and is a guru on dealership compliance. He gave a clear and comprehensive overview of dealership compliance and it's importance on day to day operations. He spoke on why dealers are targets for Federal and State regulators, how lack of proper complaint resolutions procedures trigger investigations, why and how to avoid deceptive advertising, along with ways to protect the dealership while improving customer satisfaction.

The last speaker, Brad Ouldhouse, brought us into the digital era speaking on social media for business. He explained how advertising in today's market has drastically changed in the last 10 years and it behooves us to take note of these changes. He explained that many of today's buyers are on their phone and we need to make sure they see our advertisements, whether that's on Facebook mobile, twitter or snapchat. He also informed us that it's important to also tell stories about our businesses and employees on social media to further engage our

customers and build trust. He presented some strategies to the dealers on how to use their marketing budget to reach the most consumers in their market.

Overall, it was a great meeting and we'd like to say thank you to ADS of Montana for sponsoring the event. We look forward to the next meeting in the fall of 2017; stay tuned for more information!



By Kelsey Wandke  
Dir. Of Dealer Operations




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**Legal Update** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

After the November election, the EPA rushed through these standards, as Forbes reported, “requiring automakers to more than double their fleet-wide fuel efficiency by 2025, a move that comes earlier than expected and is seen as a measure to try to lock in part of President Obama’s legacy before Donald Trump gets into the White House.”

The auto industry estimates that it would need to spend \$200 billion to comply. That type of expense would lead to higher prices for consumers, lower wages for workers and jobs moving out of the country. The National Center for Policy Analysis says these standards have pushed manufacturing and jobs to Mexico.

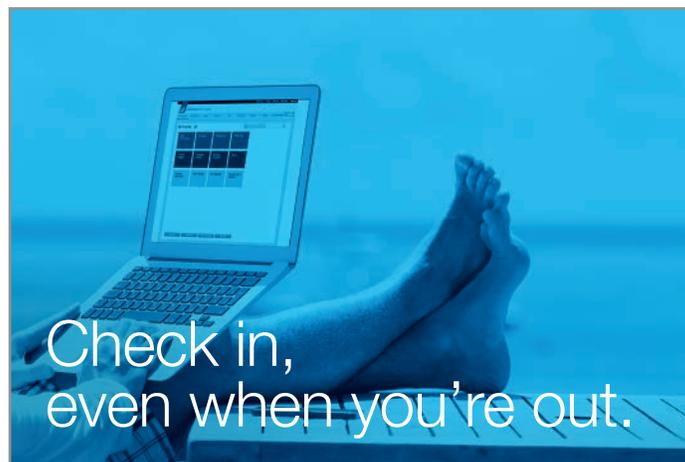
Last week, the EPA and the DOT put a pause on the process to re-examine the rule to hear from all stakeholders.

This is an example of how the Trump administration is going to do things differently. That includes a more transparent EPA. Americans can have both a clean and healthy environment and good paying manufacturing jobs. America is going to create jobs and grow the economy while at the same time be good stewards to our natural resources.

Improved technology has made the United States the world leader in clean air quality. From 1970 to 2015, aggregate national emissions of the six common pollutants dropped an average of 70 percent while gross domestic product grew by 246 percent. We have achieved this reduction during a time when more Americans were driving more cars, more miles. That is remarkable and shows American ingenuity is simply the best.

Increased transparency is a difference the Trump administration is going to bring and with it will come jobs and healthy American families. Yogi Berra was right... The future ain't what it used to be.

*Scott Pruitt is administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.* ■



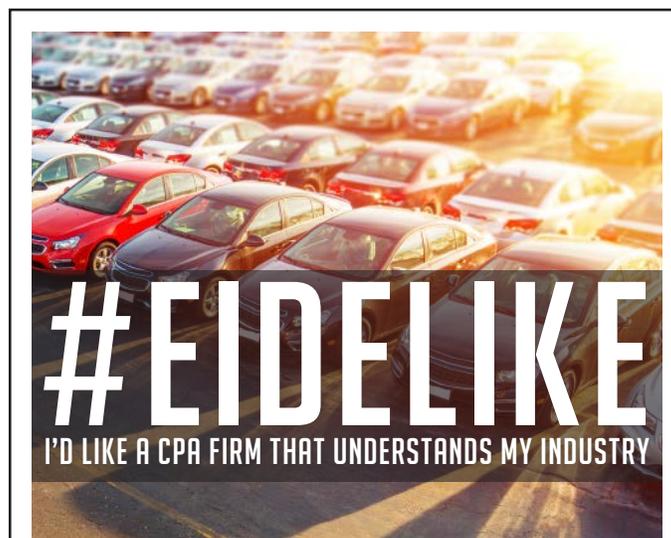
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## Director's Message

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The Defour Group, a Michigan business consultancy, was one voice arguing the potential negative implications of the rule by forecasting 205,000 jobs would be lost as fuel-efficiency technologies raised car prices and deflated sales. The Center for Automotive Research, an Ann Arbor, MI-based think tank, speculated that under the strictest rules the new technologies would increase costs upwards of \$6,000 per vehicle.

NHTSA determined otherwise, saying, "It is highly unlikely the rule would lead to significant job losses in the near-term in the automotive industry."

According to the Obama Admin., U.S. auto industry employment doubled between 2010 and 2015 by adding 500,000 jobs. Suppliers have enjoyed particular success recently, because they have the fuel-saving technologies automakers need.

But the industry also witnessed an historic rebound from record-low sales at the end of the previous decade to all-time annual highs of 17.5 million vehicles in 2015 and 2016. Low interest rates, flexible borrowing terms, consumer confidence and cheap gas have been cited as the primary drivers, not the development of fuel-saving technologies.

Last week, Trump effectively promised the same outcome from going in the opposite direction. Lindland says it is difficult to speculate on what effect looser fuel rules would create.

"It is not a black-and-white question," she says. "If OEMs were allowed to invest in the technologies consumers want and there is a tangible environmental benefit, everyone wins. But the big challenge is on fuel economy. There is not a national demand for hybrid (cars) and electric vehicles."

America's currently insatiable appetite for bigger, less-fuel-efficient vehicles could be the wild card in Trump's strategy. If fuel prices remain low, as many feared when the 2017-2025 rules were drafted, consumers may continue to eschew mandated fuel-efficient technologies and automakers will have to cut jobs to make up for unsold products.

"Whether it spurs or inhibits job growth is something that can be debated endlessly," Lindland offers.

The question also exists of where Trump's jobs would go. Some have argued the recently emerging promise of autonomous driving could replace R&D jobs lost to cutbacks in fuel-efficiency research. But at the same time, automakers are reluctant to add vehicle-production capacity in the U.S. for fear another sales downturn only would lead to a new round of painful plant closings.

According to WardsAuto data, capacity utilization of U.S. auto assembly plants last year was 103.1% based on a 2-crew, 5-day work week over 52 weeks. WardsAuto forecasts slightly lower capacity utilization in 2017 of 98.2%, which is still awfully tight and a difficult environment to add products and the jobs to make them without new brick-and-mortar.

Donald Grimes, a professor of labor, employment and economics at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, says Trump is correct in his view of fuel-economy and emissions rules as possibly being poor legislation. Not for the jobs element, he says, but because it does not address the dictator of consumer buying habits: gas prices.

"Policymaking has not been very smart," he says.

"(Obama) went for a politically easier answer than a higher gas tax. And no one will see these jobs. It is a very small amount either way.

"Trump is correct in his assessment of this specific policy, but not the broader context. There is no free lunch," he says.

But a fresh look at the rules signals automakers may have a new supporter in their corner, Chaison adds.

"The auto industry has an ally in Donald Trump, because they are a high-profile industry," he says. ■

Source: James M. Amend | WardsAuto

## Diabetes Prevention: Keeping Families Healthy

Diabetes doesn't just affect the person who's diagnosed; it affects the entire family. Help your children prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by encouraging them to eat a healthful diet, stay active, and keep a healthy weight. This doesn't just happen with a lecture; the entire family needs to get involved.

Choose healthy foods and drinks for your family. Stop bringing soft drinks into the house. Find a funky water bottle that your child will love taking everywhere, and encourage him/her to fill it up with water often. Stick to water to decrease sugar intake and limit calorie consumption.

Stock the refrigerator with fruits and vegetables. This will make it easier for you and your children to reach for a healthy snack when hungry, rather than a processed, caloric option. Keep grapes or bananas on the counter, and eliminate the candy dish.

If you end up stopping at the regular fast food joint after dance class, order salads with dressing on the side. Skip the crispy chicken; go for grilled. Better yet, drive past the fast food place and go home to a crock pot filled with vegetables and lean meats that have been simmering in goodness all day.

Get active as a family. Join a gym together. Throw front room dance parties. Go for a family bike ride. Coach your child's soccer team. Take a swim with your kid after their swimming lessons. Show your child how you incorporate fitness into your daily routine so they know they can do it, too.

Make activity goals as a family, and then turn it into fun! Try hosting a game night when your family has met a certain activity goal. Consider a trip to the ice skating rink for a family party. Create a scavenger hunt in your yard, or go on an adventurous hike. Use physical fitness activities to create happy, family memories for your children and yourself. ■



By Gillette Vaira, M.A.  
Communications Manager  
EBMS, INC.

### Educating Your Members Begins with You

The Montana Automobile Dealers Association has partnered with EBMS to provide you and your employees with a variety of resources to keep you physically and financially well on your journeys. So pass it on! Consider sharing this information with your employees so you can empower them to be their healthiest selves. After all, a healthy workforce means a healthy business.

### Warning Signs

Contact a healthcare provider if your child has any of the following type 2 diabetes symptoms:

- Increased thirst
- Frequent or nighttime urination
- Blurry vision
- Unusual fatigue

### Montana-Specific

Montana ranks fifth for the lowest incidence of diabetes, compared to all 50 states. Less than nine percent of Montanans had diabetes in 2015, while more than 24 percent were obese.

### Sources:

<http://www.diabetes.org/>  
[http://info.healthways.com/hubfs/Gallup-Healthways%20State%20of%20American%20Well-Being\\_2015%20Diabetes\\_vFINAL](http://info.healthways.com/hubfs/Gallup-Healthways%20State%20of%20American%20Well-Being_2015%20Diabetes_vFINAL).

### March Trivia Contest Win a \$20 Gift Card and a Chance to Win 4 Tickets to the Cat-Griz Game



#### The winner of last month's trivia

**question** "Who was the first Governor of Montana" was Alisa Boehning with HKT Big Sky Motors with the correct answer, Joseph K. Toole. This month's trivia question is "Henry Plummer was the 'outlaw' sheriff of which Montana town?"

#### January Trivia Question

Who was the first governor of the STATE of Montana?

**Submit your answers to kwandke@mtada.** All correct responses to this month's trivia question will be put in a drawing for a \$20 Amazon Gift Card. The winners of the monthly trivia questions will be put in the drawing for the grand prize, four tickets to the Cat-Griz Game!!

**Good Luck!**



# Essentials of Pre-Owned Vehicle Sales Management

**April 24 & 25, 2017**

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**Target Audience:** All Pre-Owned Department Managers within the Retailer environment

**Course Objective** This 2-day course helps as our clientele is becoming more demanding and with the ever-increasing pre-owned profit expectations, is course is a must for the modern pre-owned manager.

Participants are guided through the process of leveraging what they learn by creating a “Guarantee of Action” plan that they complete during the course. The initial implementation of this “Guarantee of Action” occurs when they return to their dealership upon dealer approval.

**Day 1: a.m. - KPIs**

- 1. Responsibilities of the Pre-Owned Vehicle Manager
- 2. Pre-Owned Financial Metrics – Understanding your inventory’s makeup and ROI
- 3. Key Performance Indicators – Departmental Basics

**Day 1: p.m. – The Deal**

- 4. Pre-Owned Strategy
- 5. Sales Staff Management
- 6. Ways to Sell Pre-Owned
- 7. The Appraisal Process
- 8. CRM – Customer Relationship Management

**Day 2: a.m. - Inventory**

- 9. Key Performance Indicators – Department Basics Phase
- 10. Categories of Inventory
- 11. Sourcing – Auction, Wholesalers, Trades, Service Lane
- 12. Appraisal Process & Best Practices
- 13. Lease Pull-Ahead End of Lease Processing (EOL)
- 14. Certified Pre-Owned
- 15. Trade Walk – Inventory Walk



**Day 2: p.m. - Inventory**

- 16. Pre-Owned Vehicle Reconditioning
- 17. Developing and Executing Your Retail Pricing Policy
- 18. Vehicle Presentation – On Lot
- 19. Digital Marketing
- 20. On-Line Presentation
- 21. Digital Marketing Your Pre-Owned Vehicle Department

**Course Length – 2 Days**

\*A “What to Bring” document will be forwarded to all participants so they may learn from, and better understand their own dealerships unique metrics.

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## DEALER UPDATE

**Happy Retirement to Greg Eisinger of Eisinger Motors in Kalispell, MT! Best wishes from the Montana Auto Dealers Association as he officially retired 3/31/17. Thank you for all that you have done for your customers and community! Greg and Ben Eisinger. Ben Eisinger will be the new dealer principal for Eisinger Motors.**



## NADA Dealership Workforce Study

REMINDER; the NADA Dealership Workforce Study (DWS) is open for participation now through April 28, at [www.nadaworkforcestudy.com](http://www.nadaworkforcestudy.com). The DWS provides analysis of dealership pay plans and benefit packages, retention and turnover, employee benefits, work schedules and demographics. The study is based on actual payroll data and questionnaire responses submitted by NADA and ATD members. In return for participating in the study, dealerships receive two complimentary reports: (1) Automotive Retail: National and Regional Trends in Compensation, Benefits and Retention and (2) a custom report, which includes comparisons of the dealership(s) to peers nationally, regionally, by state and brand. All data must be submitted by April 28, 2017. To participate in the study, dealers should go to [www.nadaworkforcestudy.com](http://www.nadaworkforcestudy.com) to begin. For questions, please email [WorkforceStudy@nada.org](mailto:WorkforceStudy@nada.org).



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## Montana Legislative Wrap-up

As we wrap up the 65th legislative session, I couldn't be more proud to serve the Montana auto dealers across our beautiful state that put their heart and souls into their communities and businesses. Last week, Governor Bullock signed two very important bills that will protect dealers from overreaching and unfair contracts between manufactures and dealers. The two bills that were signed last week will protect dealerships for generations.

Senate Bill 89 (An act revising standards for determining good cause in terminating or not continuing a new motor vehicle franchise), was passed in order to prevent manufacturers from arbitrarily terminating a dealership due to unattainable sales goals based on sales areas outside of their local market. Manufacturers will now have to have sales goals that are essential, reasonable, not discriminatory, and that take into account the franchisee's local market variations beyond adjusting for the local popularity of general vehicle types. Senate Bill 108, (Prohibiting enforcement of a right of first refusal), was passed to ensure that selling dealers are able to sell their dealership to a well-qualified individual of their choice. Selling dealerships now have the right to sell to a qualified customer of their choice without fear of the manufacturer swooping in at the last minute and selling to another buyer. This also applies to a dealer when purchasing a dealership . We are only the sixth state to get this legislation passed.

Passing these two bills required a great deal of time and effort. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all of those involved in getting these bills passed: Senator Gordy Vance who carried both of the bills and our attorney Jim Sewell who did a great deal of research and wrote the changes. I'd also like to thank all the dealers who made the trip to Helena and testified: Bill Underriner, Brad Mildenberger, Don Kaltschmidt, Bill Dee, Robbie Dee, and Carri Yturri who came out of retirement to testify. I'd like to also thank all of the members of our legislative committee for their late night dinners, insight, and weekly conference calls: Don Kaltschmidt, Erik Anderson, Eric Henricksen, Bill Underriner,

Jim Stanger and Joe Billion. We also want to thank Scott Reichner who was a great help with lobbying. Without all of your support, these victories may have never happened.

I am humbled and honored to represent the great auto dealers in the State of Montana.

*Please feel free to contact me anytime if I can ever be of assistance.*



**Bruce Knudsen**  
MTADA Executive Vice President  
& Government Relations



Back Row- Left to Right: Scott Reichner, Erick Anderson, Bruce Knudsen, Kelsey Wandke, Jim Stanger  
Front Row- Left to Right: Sen. Gordy Vance, Gov. Steve Bullock



Gov. Steve Bullock and Bruce Knudsen

## Mike Tilleman: Montana Football Hall Of Fame, Friday, March 17, 2017

By Colter Nuanez

Mike Tilleman's trademark head slap was so fierce, one opposing NFL offensive lineman once said he'd rather catch flying javelins than be on the receiving end of the behemoth's legendary force.

When Tilleman first arrived in Missoula, the crowd at Stockman's Bar told him playing for the Montana Grizzlies was going to be tough. Tilleman didn't flinch.

"I liked to fight so football wasn't so tough," Tilleman said with a laugh years later.

Tilleman used the toughness he cultivated growing up in small-town Montana combined with a once-in-a-generation frame to blaze a trail during a journey that brought him from Zurich to the NFL.

The former Montana Grizzly left school early to enter the NFL Draft. He was selected with the 163rd pick by the Minnesota Vikings in 1965. He played 12 NFL seasons with the Vikings, New Orleans Saints, Houston Oilers and Atlanta Falcons before moving back to Havre, Montana with his wife, Gloria.

From Zurich to Chinook High to the University of Montana to the NFL, Tilleman was always a man among men, a physical specimen rare for his time or any other. His physical prowess and ability to intimidate opposing offensive linemen helped him carve out a spot as one of the Treasure State's most accomplished products. Tilleman is among the inductees for the Montana Football Hall of Fame's Class of 2017.

"Montana, where I grew up, it was all about work ethic," Tilleman said. "Strength training was hay bales. I did 20,000 hay bales in the summers. Lift bales all day long, lift weights and run at night.

"This is a great honor. It's really cool. At this time in my life, the money is spent and the trophies are broke. The kids and grandkids have climbed on them. This is the nightcap honor for my career."

The 6-foot-7, 275-pound defensive tackle was a standout for the Montana Grizzlies in 1963 and 1964, earning All-Big Sky Conference honors both years. But in a move atypical of the time, particularly for a small school player, the man former Vikings' head coach Norm Van Brocklin called "Big Timber" struck while his stock was high, foregoing his final season to enter the NFL Draft.

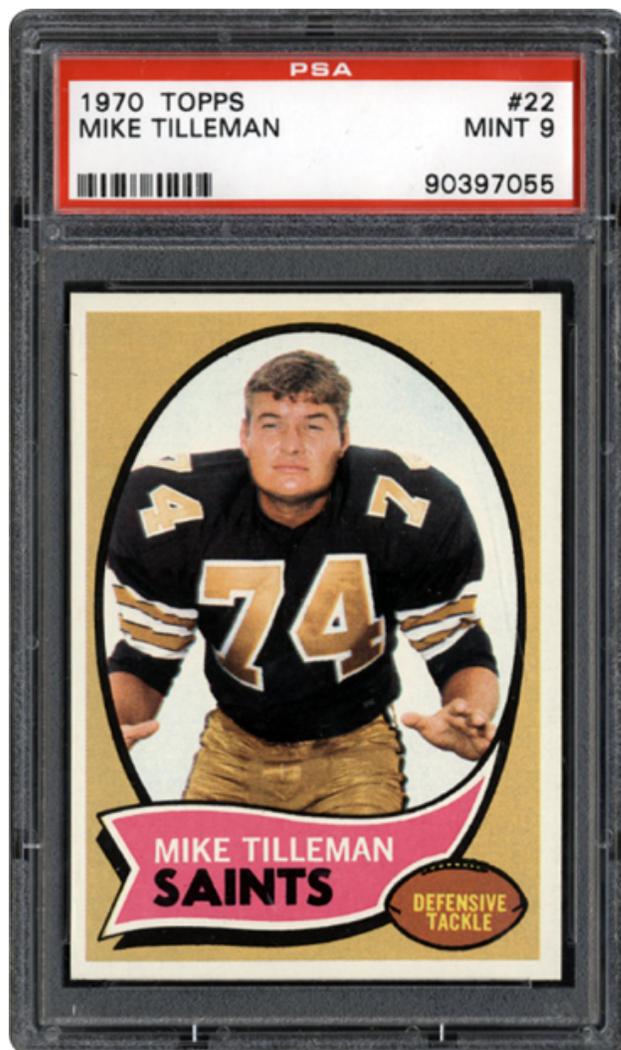
The Denver Broncos of the AFL and the Vikings of the NFL each selected Tilleman. He opted to sign with Minnesota because he felt the NFL was a stronger league. After growing up on a ranch in the middle of nowhere, signing his first NFL contract let Tilleman know he had arrived.

His 'Welcome to the NFL moment?

"Probably when the Vikings gave me an \$8,000 signing bonus," Tilleman said. "That could buy a couple of nice cars in 1965. And I was so young; my dad had to sign my contract for me to get the bonus."

The Tilleman family did not own a television until 1962. He said he watched "a game or two" of NFL football before arriving in Minneapolis. Back then NFL active rosters had a 40-man limit spread among the 13 teams. Defensive linemen generally battled for five active roster spots and the other five were relegated to the "taxi squad", Tilleman said.

Van Brocklin noticed Tilleman's potential right away but also noticed his penchant for fighting. The legendary bruiser had a reputation but Van Brocklin told him if he learned the finer points



Continued on Page 15

of football, he could play in the NFL for a long time.

His first year in Minnesota, Tilleman met Gloria, a flight attendant from Winnipeg who remembers the thrill of watching Hall of Fame quarterback Fran Tarkenton during her future husband's first NFL seasons.

During his second and final year in Minnesota, a friend of Tilleman's brought him to Houston to check out the upstart AFL. When the Vikings found out, the organization threatened to sue Tilleman for his signing bonus. Tilleman soon realized the team would in fact have to sue his father, Henry, because Mike was too young, so he returned to the Vikings.

In 1967, Tilleman became one of the "original Saints" as he was selected by New Orleans in the NFL's first expansion draft. He experienced some of his most memorable moments in New Orleans, earning team MVP honors in 1970. That same season, Tom Dempsey kicked an NFL record 63-yard field goal to beat the Detroit Lions at Tulane Stadium. Tilleman blocked perennial All-Pro Alex Karras on the winning kick.

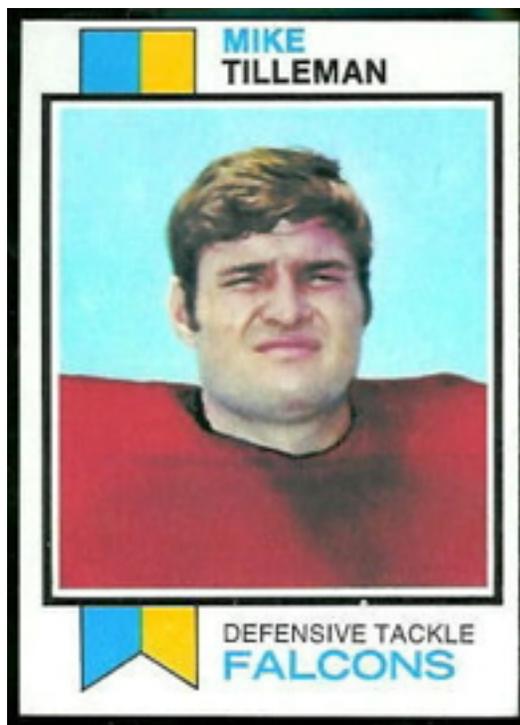
"People would not leave the stadium," Gloria Tilleman said. "It was emotional pandemonium."

In 1969, Tilleman suffered a ruptured appendix but returned to the field in 30 days. Following Tilleman's standout 1970 season and the AFL-NFL merger, New Orleans traded Tilleman to Houston for draft picks. In 1972, he failed his physical exam because of an internal health issue that ended up being a benign tumor.

"When I went for surgery, doctors told me I was getting truth serum instead of anesthetic," Tilleman laughed. "When I came out of surgery I woke up dreaming of baseball, so I introduced myself to Gloria as Wilbur Wood, the great knuckleballer with the White Sox."

After the operation, Tilleman returned for a standout season. He notched 15 quarterback sacks, earning NFL Comeback Player of the Year. That off-season, Van Brocklin traded for Tilleman to come to the Atlanta Falcons.

"Coach knew I was one of those people who could not be



intimidated," Tilleman said. "He liked my toughness."

Tilleman earned All-Pro honors his first season in Atlanta in 1973. He played three more seasons before retiring. Following the 1976 season, a family friend who worked for the Calgary Stampeders offered Tilleman more money than he ever made with the Falcons. Mike was playing with one of the couple's three children when he pulled a muscle in his back while weighing the offer. He decided it was an omen that his career was indeed over. He still jokes to this day that it was the "best damn muscle I ever pulled."

Tilleman had business opportunities in Atlanta but

opted to move back to Montana. He bought a Chevrolet dealership in Havre in 1979. Last year, their oldest son, Craig, added a Jeep, Chrysler and Dodge dealership to the family business. Tilleman Motor Company is still the primary GM dealership in Havre. He also runs Tilleman Equipment and has worked in the cattle industry.

"I probably paid more in deductibles than I made in the NFL," Tilleman said with a laugh. "My wife was an airline stewardess and she made more money than I did the first year. It's really changed. But the jump from Disneyland (the NFL) to the real world wasn't that bad. We worked in the off-season no matter what so you were ready when you retired."

Each fall, Tilleman hosts a celebrity pheasant hunt called "Legends for Lights" where former NFL stars come to Havre to hunt each fall. All the money is donated to Montana State-Northern athletics.

Through a career that spanned the U.S. and included plenty of highlights, football laid the foundation for Tilleman's life and the influence resonates today.

"Competitiveness and people knew who I was, wanted to do business with me so football still helps me today," Tilleman said. "Even in a small town I'm in, when I first got back, I was a celebrity. It was a calling card for my businesses and has been huge in my life." ■

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# KICK-OFF MEETINGS FOR THE MTADA CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVE



## MTADA Automotive Industry Technician Career Pathways Initiative

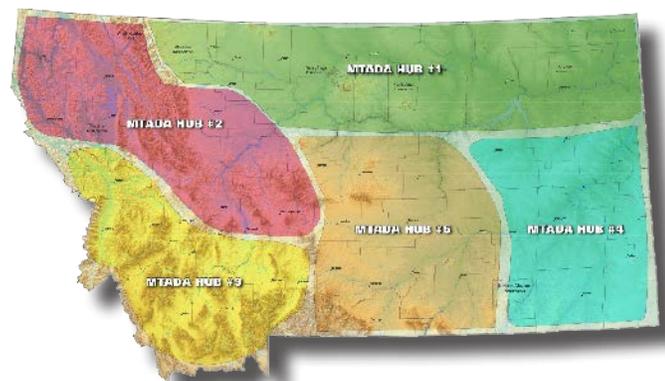
This is a great opportunity to have a voice within the industry, present opportunities to Montana's youth and to mold a curriculum that will develop competent technicians ready to work in your dealership

A series of five planning meetings were held in February throughout the state in Havre, Helena, Butte, Miles City, and Billings. There was involvement from state entities, educators, and dealerships across the state. During these meetings, we discussed potential career pathway opportunities and the goals of the program:

1. Promote awareness of career pathways within Montana's automotive industry;
2. Align high school & college curriculum with MTADA- designed or industry designed workplace competencies;
3. Integrate high quality work based learning experiences within secondary and post-secondary academic programs; and
4. Incentivize and promote participant engagement & progression in MTADA's career pathways.

If you would like more information about the MTADA Automotive Industry Technician Career Pathways Initiative or to get involved, please call Kelsey at 406-442-1233 or email her at

[kwandke@mtada.com](mailto:kwandke@mtada.com)





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