



Chairman Mario Diaz-Balart

*Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

Hearing – Emerging Transportation Technologies

May 18, 2017

Opening Statement As Prepared

The Subcommittee will come to order. Today we gather to discuss how new technologies are changing our transportation system. We will focus our time today on two specific technologies: unmanned aerial vehicles (or “U-A-Vs” for short), and automated vehicles (also known as, “A-Vs” or self-driving cars and trucks).

These are exciting times! Both of these technologies will make freight and travel far more convenient and efficient. They will change how we live and work in ways that are, quite frankly, hard to imagine. Even more exciting is the potential for a much safer and more reliable transportation network.

Last year, there were over 40,000 deaths from auto accidents and ninety percent of those were due to human error. By removing this human factor, automated vehicles could one day save tens of thousands of lives every year. It is difficult to fathom what an incredible achievement that would be.

On the unmanned aircraft side, it appears that the future is already with us. The promise of drone technology is already beginning to transform our day-to-day lives. Together we need to figure out how to support innovation in our skies, while maintaining the world-class safety record of our airspace.

To realize the benefits of these technologies, we must strike a balance between promoting private innovation and protecting public interest. These disruptive technologies offer a world of new possibilities, but the safety of the American people must come first.

All levels of government will play some role in safeguarding the public as these technologies come to market. And there is no doubt that the agencies funded by this Subcommittee will play very active roles in the research and regulation of both UAVs and AVs. In addition to understanding how these technologies will change the transportation market place, we must also understand the appropriate role for government.

To help us explore where we are now as well as where we are heading, Ranking Member Price

and I welcome four technology experts from both industry and academia. I am pleased to introduce:

- Professor Mykel Kochenderfer from Stanford University's Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics;
- Brian Wynne, President and CEO of the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International;
- Nidhi Kalra, Ph.D. and Senior Information Scientist for the RAND Corporation; and
- David Strickland, Counsel and Spokesperson for the Self-Driving Coalition for Safer Streets

I want to thank each of you for joining us this morning and I look forward to your testimony. With that, I recognize the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, the Gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Price, for his opening statement.

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