Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade
Hearing on "Vehicle-to-Vehicle Communications and Connected Roadways of the Future"
June 25, 2015

(As Prepared for Delivery)

I often remind you all that I'm from the auto state. It's because folks from Michigan take special pride in manufacturing vehicles that offer safety, comfort, efficiency, and superior driving experiences to consumers throughout the United States and around the world. We also take pride in being leaders and trendsetters in the development of automotive technologies that saves lives.

Today we examine the advancement of a transformative safety technology: vehicle-to-vehicle communications. This is a safety technology that helps drivers avoid crashes before they happen by allowing cars to "talk" to each other and sense another vehicle's movements. By alerting drivers to potential safety risks on the road and giving them an opportunity to proactively avoid them, it is projected that vehicle-to-vehicle communications will save thousands of lives and generate societal and economic benefits that extend far beyond the transportation sector.

Last year, following the Department of Transportation's Connected Vehicle Safety Pilot program conducted at my alma mater, the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, NHTSA announced plans to pursue a regulatory proposal that would require vehicle-to-vehicle communications devices in new cars. As NHTSA moves forward with its rulemaking, there are plenty of questions to answer.

Drivers will need to understand what the technology is, how it works, and why they should adopt it. Congress needs to know that NHTSA is in a position to do its job – by ensuring that this safety technology is safely and properly deployed. This is a technology that has a connectivity curve to it – the more cars and infrastructure that are connected the more benefits there are. This committee needs to understand the technology and the marketplace to ensure that the proper policies are in place to incentivize adoption – to achieve a connectivity critical mass.

Ensuring that V-2-V is done right is a committee wide priority, and I want to acknowledge the important meetings that Chairman Walden has been leading with Ranking Members Pallone and Eshoo to address the question of whether and how Intelligent Transportation Systems can co-exist with unlicensed uses. Our O&I subcommittee has taken the lead in sending out letters to ensure that cybersecurity is front and center in everyone's minds as we move forward. Today, however, we are not focusing on spectrum or cybersecurity. We are focusing on the safety aspects, deployment timelines, and NHTSA's role.

The deployment of vehicle-to-vehicle communications is right around the corner. This is a welcome endeavor that marks a revolutionary phase in the nation's transportation system. It represents the first ripple in what will be a torrent of new technologies. We all, as policymakers and consumers, need to be prepared for its implementation and I look forward to exploring those plans today.

I am pleased that this panel reflects Michigan's leadership with fellow Wolverine Dr. Peter Sweatman, who has helped oversee a pilot V-2-V program at GM. We look forward to your testimony and seeing these V-2-V equipped Cadillacs on the road. We have come a long way

since the seat belt was a breakthrough safety device. Now Jetsons technology is becoming a reality in our cars. It's an exciting time. I thank Dr. Burgess for convening this hearing and for the subcommittee's continued efforts to improve driver and vehicle safety.

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