

March 14, 2019

Chairman Frank Pallone
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Greg Walden
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chair Jan Schakowsky
House Subcommittee on Consumer Protection
and Commerce
2367 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Cathy McMorris Rodgers
House Subcommittee on Consumer Protection
and Commerce
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member Walden, Chair Schakowsky, and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers;

On behalf of the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)TM and our more than 2,200-member companies, I would like to highlight the role advanced vehicle technologies and innovation can play in reducing roadway deaths. As the Committee holds its hearing on “Enhancing Vehicle Technology to Prevent Drunk Driving,” CTA asks you to consider significant developments in self-driving and ridesharing technology. Both promise safe alternatives to impaired driving.

In 2016, drunk driving contributed to 28 percent of highway deaths, and CTA believes a reduction in these and all road fatalities can be achieved through innovations seen in automated vehicle features and ridesharing services.

Ridesharing provides transportation options that are both accessible and affordable to consumers across the world. These services offer a convenient mechanism to hail a ride through the power of your smartphone. A recent University of California, Davis¹ survey of ridesharing users found 33 percent of participants use ridesharing “to avoid driving when I might have alcohol.”

The consumer trust and reliance for ridesharing while impaired illustrates a viable solution to drunk driving. According to a 2015 joint study with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and Uber, alcohol-caused crashes dropped among drivers under 30 years old in areas with Uber and the uberX ride-hailing option. With over 10,000 deaths a year caused by drunk driving², ridesharing can be an easy deterrent to getting behind the wheel while impaired, and most importantly, saving the lives of fellow drivers and in-vehicle passengers.

CTA represents innovators in the diverse vehicle transportation ecosystem who are developing an array of highly automated and self-driving technologies. Self-driving vehicles will lead to an enormous reduction in all roadway fatalities. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 94 percent of crashes are caused by human error, nearly all of them preventable. Highly automated vehicles – which cannot get distracted, fatigued or impaired while driving and have a 360-

¹ <https://steps.ucdavis.edu/new-research-ride-hailing-impacts-travel-behavior/>

² <https://www.madd.org/>

degree view around the vehicle – have the potential to reduce these tragic numbers drastically. With so many traffic violations that are preventable, the promise of self-driving technology has the power to save thousands of lives a year.

As the Committee deliberates the power of technology in keeping consumers safe on the road and behind the wheel while impaired, I encourage you to keep in mind the advancements of vehicle technology outlined here. CTA and our member companies look forward to working with you to ensure that the United States remains the world leader in consumer safety and innovation.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gary Shapiro". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" and last name "Shapiro" clearly distinguishable.

Gary Shapiro
President and CEO