

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 11, 2020

The Honorable Frank Pallone Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Janice D. Schakowsky
Chair
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection
and Commerce
Committee on Energy and Commerce
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection
and Commerce
Committee on Energy and Commerce
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Thank you for holding today's hearing entitled "Autonomous Vehicles: Promises and Challenges of Evolving Automotive Technologies." We appreciate the continued work of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce toward developing a legislative framework governing the safe testing and deployment of automated vehicles.

As you know, more than 35,000 people die in automobile accidents on our nation's roads every year, and more than 90 percent of these deaths are attributed to human error. Automated vehicles present an opportunity to greatly reduce roadway fatalities and make enormous gains in safety, mobility, and quality of life for millions of Americans, especially the disabled and the elderly.

We remain committed to working with your Committee and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to develop a bipartisan, bicameral legislative framework governing the testing and deployment of automated vehicles. The draft provisions released by both Committees this Congress represent fundamental priorities critical to any automated vehicle legislation, recognizing the need for a uniform national regulatory framework that promotes safety and innovation while preserving the traditional balance between federal and state authorities in regulating motor vehicle and traffic safety.

While the Department of Transportation has already made important strides toward safely testing and deploying automated vehicles, legislation would provide regulators with the tools necessary to perform essential near-term safety oversight while gathering data to help inform the development of new motor vehicle safety standards. We intend for this joint effort to represent the first legislative step in harnessing the safety, quality of life, and economic benefits of automated vehicles, but not the last.


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We continue to believe that a bipartisan, bicameral framework will provide the best chance of enacting this critical legislation, and appreciate the continued work of the Committee in support of this effort. Thank you again for holding this important hearing today.

Sincerely,



JOHN THUNE
United States Senator



GARY C. PETERS
United States Senator