

**Opening Statement of Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
As Prepared for Delivery  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Subcommittee on Innovation, Data, and Commerce  
Hearing entitled “Self-Driving Vehicle Legislative Framework: Enhancing  
Safety, Improving Lives and Mobility, and Beating China”  
July 26, 2023**

Good afternoon.

As many of you know, self-driving cars have the potential to transform lives.

I think about our oldest son, Cole, who has Down syndrome.

He recently turned 16, and like his friends, he’s dreaming of getting his driver’s license.

For Cole and others living with a disability, it’s exciting to imagine the amazing mobility options that self-driving cars will provide.

Self-driving vehicles have the potential to break down transportation barriers, unleash more opportunities, more freedom, and more independence.

It will mean a safe, reliable way to get to work, go to the doctor, get an education, and so much more.

They also have the potential to reduce death and injury on our roads, most of which result from human error and impaired driving...

...help ensure our transportation future isn’t reliant on supply chains from our adversaries...

...and prevent China from controlling the AI and machine learning technologies and insights gained from this technology.

The U.S. is currently at risk of ceding leadership to China.

China is currently moving ahead with ambitious plans to lead the development and deployment of this technology...

We cannot trust the Chinese Communist Party to set the standards for this industry and we certainly cannot trust them to protect our data and individual rights.

Those standards and regulatory framework must be led by the U.S.

Last Congress, Committee Republicans wrote to Secretary Buttigieg raising concerns about U.S. approval for Huawei to buy our semiconductor technology for its growing auto business. Sadly, two years have gone by and no response from the Administration.... and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration declined our request to testify here today despite weeks of notice.

China's ambitions in this industry present a critical economic and national security threat to our country, especially when China is testing their self-drive technology on American roads...

...technology that includes video cameras on every car it produces.

I'd like to thank Mr. Walberg for the language he contributed as part of our discussion draft today that reins in Chinese companies testing on our roads.

The importance of this technology cannot be overstated.

The journey alone to deploying self-driving vehicles is going to deliver so many benefits, some we haven't even thought of.

America must lead, not China.

Over the last century, the U.S. has led the way in the automotive sector.

We must ensure that we continue to lead for the next one hundred years, and fostering a robust self-driving vehicle industry is critical for achieving that goal.

I look forward to the testimony from our witnesses today

I'd like to now yield the remainder of my time to my colleague Mr. Latta, who has been leading on the SELF DRIVE Act for the past six years...