

February 10, 2020



The Honorable Janice D. Schakowsky
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and
Commerce
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and
Commerce
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Schakowsky and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers:

On behalf of the American Highway Users Alliance, representing approximately 300 organizations, including companies, trade associations, safety advocacy groups, and motoring clubs and serving as the united voice of the motoring public, we are pleased to submit this letter of support for the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce hearing on "Autonomous Vehicles: Promises and Challenges of Evolving Automotive Technologies." Thank you for holding this hearing today.

Our members represent millions of road users from the truck, bus, auto, RV, and motorcycling modes. Such users pay the bulk of the taxes and fees deposited into the Highway Trust Fund. **Advancing autonomous vehicles (AV) legislation is a top priority for the Highway Users and stems from our focus on the safety and mobility of the motoring public.** In 2018 alone, 36,560 people died, and 2.7 million individuals were injured on American roadways. This is simply unacceptable, and AVs could be the game changer we need to dramatically reduce crashes going forward.

Furthermore, autonomous vehicles have the capacity to optimize routing and avoid congestion, potentially saving our economy billions of dollars. In 2018, a report was issued, "[America's Workforce and the Self-Driving Future: Realizing Productivity Gains and Spurring Economic Growth](#)," which predicted that autonomous vehicles will contribute approximately \$800 billion annually in benefits from cost savings related to reduced crashes, fuel efficiency and better transportation access.

The societal benefits of deploying autonomous vehicles are immeasurable. These vehicles will create new freedom and independence for so many Americans who currently do not have the ability to operate a vehicle including people with a disability or some of the aging population. The ability to independently get to a work, a doctor's appointment, or the grocery store will be life changing for many.

Thank you for your bicameral and bipartisan efforts to craft sections of autonomous vehicles legislation this Congress. We have enjoyed having the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue. The Highway Users is supportive of updating the NHTSA Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) to ensure AVs can be developed and deployed nationwide and their life saving benefits can be fully realized. Every day that Congress delays breaking down the barriers to nationwide testing means lives are at risk and solutions to traffic congestion are not being implemented. Our goal is to create a reasonable path to new NHTSA regulations, one that is based on data from the nationwide testing of AVs that can result in increasingly safer vehicles.

As both a safety and consumer advocacy group, we strongly urge Congress to work with the experts in the auto and technology industries to move this technology forward through enacting bipartisan legislation to advance the testing and deployment of autonomous vehicles. Together we can drive our nation toward zero deaths on our roadways. Thank you again for holding this vitally important hearing today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Perrotta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Laura" and last name "Perrotta" clearly distinguishable.

Laura Perrotta, CAE
President and CEO