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February 11, 2020

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
Chair, Consumer Protection
and Commerce Subcommittee
2367 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member, Consumer Protection
and Commerce Subcommittee
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairwoman Schakowsky and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers:

On behalf of Honda North America, Inc. (Honda), I write to thank you for convening a hearing on the incredibly important topic of autonomous vehicles, also known as AVs. Here at Honda, our global safety philosophy is embodied by what we call “Safety for Everyone.” We strive to work towards a future of a collision-free society that benefits drivers, passengers, and other roadway users. Autonomous vehicles present a unique opportunity to bring us closer to this goal.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 94 percent of all accidents on U.S. roadways are caused by human choice or error – accidents which contribute to approximately 37,000 lives lost every year in the United States. AV technology could help address the primary cause of these accidents and ensure that more individuals, both inside and outside of vehicles, make it home every day. Unfortunately, regulatory roadblocks exist that could delay the roll out of this potentially life-saving technology.

Last Congress we saw an incredible bi-partisan effort to address these issues including underscoring the traditional state and federal regulatory roles to ensure everyone in the U.S. has access to AVs, updating Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards that have not kept up with technological advancements, and updating the exemptions system so that NHTSA can gather the data they need to move forward with the most effective rulemaking possible on AVs. Thanks to the leadership of you and your colleagues, both the Energy and Commerce Committee and the full House approved an AV bill without opposition.

While the Senate was ultimately unable to get its version of legislation to the Floor, we remain hopeful that the information gained at this hearing acts as a spark for the House to once again take the lead on solving the problems that continue to delay the roll out of this technology. We stand ready to work with you to help get these transformative vehicles on the road in way that is safe, efficient, and effective.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Thomas
Vice President, Government and Industry Relations
Honda North America, Inc.