



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
REPUBLICANS Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

Opening Statement of Representative Michael Cloud

Research & Technology Subcommittee Field Hearing *Smart Mobility: It's a Community Issue*

October 25, 2019

Good morning Chairwoman Stevens. I'd like to thank you for convening today's hearing and for inviting me to visit Michigan's 11th District. It's great to be here.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses this morning about how communities can, and are, using smart technologies to provide safe and efficient mobility solutions.

All of us on this Committee are aware of the challenges our nation is facing with aging infrastructure. To effectively address these challenges, we must support and maintain basic research to aid and inform our state and local governments as they make transportation investments.

Such fundamental research can also drive innovation that yields better and safer commutes for our constituents.

These technologies, like enhanced safety features in vehicles, smart infrastructure, and wireless communication between vehicles and infrastructure, benefit folks from rural south Texas or the suburbs of Detroit.

The promise of smart mobility is vast—it has the potential to increase safety and save lives, reduce congestion and pollution, and save taxpayers' money. However, we must ensure that smart mobility technologies also advance a better quality of life for all communities.

Citizens in urban, suburban, and rural communities use public transit to go to work or school, keep medical appointments, shop and run errands, and travel to recreational activities.

According to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, the rural transit systems in Texas faces an increasing demand from a growing population of older and disabled residents impeded by long travel distances to medical care and social services. Texas Department of Transportation data shows that rural transit districts statewide saw an increase in ridership from 2016 to 2017, providing about 5.4 million trips.

Individually, communities, especially rural ones, have limited capacity and capability to develop and deploy mobility advanced solutions.

In Texas, to assist in addressing this challenge, the Texas Department of Transportation has created the “Texas Innovation Alliance.” It is a network of local, region, and state agencies and research institutions that develop, launch and sustain a portfolio of advanced mobility projects across Texas. The Alliance provides a platform for cities and regions to leverage resources and expertise to address some of the state’s most pressing mobility challenges.

Like the Alliance, I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about the research, development, and technology activities being conducted by federally sponsored research institutions and the private sector, and how these advances are being utilized by state and local governments.

As a representative of a primarily rural district, I also hope to hear from our witnesses about how your work can be beneficial to rural areas and how we can best assist these communities for planning and preparing for the future.

I would like to thank all our witnesses for coming today and sharing your thoughts on the future of smart mobility. Thank you and I yield back the balance of my time.

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