



The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
 Secretary
 U.S. Department of Transportation
 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
 Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Under your leadership, the U.S. Department of Transportation (“USDOT”) has consistently recognized the immense potential for autonomous vehicles (“AVs”) to improve safety on our roads, provide new accessibility options, optimize supply chains, and improve environmental quality. AVs will help advance USDOT’s [Safe System Approach](#) to save lives, as well as its [innovation principles](#) to foster transportation technology and support public transportation.

The AV industry is at a critical juncture and in need of strong leadership from USDOT. We urge the Department to use existing authorities to assert its jurisdiction over the design, construction, and performance of motor vehicles, including those deploying emerging technology. For example, we were encouraged by the announcement of AV STEP by Acting Administrator Ann Carlson in July. AV STEP could hasten the deployment of vehicles whose designs require exemptions from the current Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and introduce a new era of accessibility and vehicle safety for the American public. We encourage the Department to move forward expeditiously with a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on AV STEP. This is an

opportunity for NHTSA to gain additional data and insights to accelerate its rulemaking and standards-setting around AVs.

AVs are already having a positive impact on communities. Upon landing in Phoenix, you can hail a robotaxi at the airport to get to your destination. California residents can order autonomous meal deliveries, and in states like Texas and Arkansas, major retailers are transporting freight via autonomous trucks. Autonomous shuttles are helping underserved rural residents, and Americans with physical disadvantages are using autonomous ride-hail to gain new independence in Las Vegas, Los Angeles, and elsewhere. AVs are here, rolling out services more safely and deliberately in communities around the country every day.

Our organizations believe AVs offer a rare opportunity to radically improve our transportation system in many ways:

- **Improve Road Safety:** Nearly 43,000 lives were lost on U.S. roads last year and millions more were injured. As you and the Department have expressed many times, AVs will reduce traffic crashes and fatalities because they eliminate human errors like fatigued, impaired, and distracted driving. The need to dramatically improve road safety has never been higher, and we need to take an “all-of-the-above” strategy that includes AVs alongside other safety measures.
- **Enhance Accessibility and Equity:** AVs provide new mobility solutions for people who have historically lacked equal access to transportation, including blind individuals, wheelchair users, persons with other disabilities, aging populations, and those in remote areas, enhancing their independence and quality of life.
- **Optimize Supply Chains, Economic Growth & Job Creation:** AVs stand to transform America’s supply chain, optimize freight movement and reduce transportation costs, and provide manufacturing opportunity in the U.S., while supporting billions in economic growth and creating thousands of new jobs.
- **Improve Our Environment:** AVs can pave the way for a cleaner planet by encouraging electric vehicle adoption, minimizing personal vehicle trips, increasing route efficiencies, and lowering fuel consumption through smoother autonomous driving.

The Department’s support for AV development is crucial to maintain our nation's competitive edge and secure our position as a global leader. The U.S. stands at a critical juncture in the AV race, with countries like China aggressively investing and advancing the technology.

USDOT’s continued guidance and support will keep the United States at the forefront of AV development and deployment. Commitment by the AV industry to collaboration and

transparency will ensure the technology advances safety while helping equip NHTSA with the information needed to continue its vital work. The data collected by NHTSA through existing mechanisms provides the public and the agency access to AV safety data, and numerous rulemaking efforts at NHTSA and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (“FMCSA”), including proposed regulations for the safe integration of ADS-equipped commercial motor vehicles, are advancing AVs.

We cannot lose sight of the need to improve transportation in the United States and ensure the immense benefits of autonomous technology are realized. Thank you for your continued leadership to shape a future where AVs enhance safety, accessibility, equity, and sustainability for all.

Sincerely,

Autonomous Vehicle Industry Association (AVIA)
ACES Mobility Coalition
Alliance for Automotive Innovation
American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA)
American Trucking Associations (ATA)
AUVSI
Chamber of Progress
Coalition for Reimagined Mobility (ReMo)
Consumer Technology Association
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA)
National Federation of the Blind
NetChoice
Partners for Automated Vehicle Education (PAVE)
SAVE Coalition
Securing America’s Future Energy (SAFE)
TechNet
United Spinal Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

CC: Ann Carlson, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Robin Hutcheson,
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration